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Sunday, February 27. 2005

I love Greg Beaver!

I really do! Yesterday he released the first official version of PEAR 1.4.0 (alpha, of course) which provides a lot of new features. The most interesting feature is the ability to install files from different channels, which is really great for our non-PEAR packages at php-tools.net. But that's not all, Greg did to get my love: He also developed a PEAR_Server with a simple HTML frontend that can be easily installed using PEAR 1.4.0. So this morning I decided to play with it a bit and after several minutes, I had our own channel server online which is already able to serve patError and patTemplate (more projects will follow). If you'd like to try it, download PEAR 1.4.0a2 and then add our channel and start installing the packages:

```
pear upgrade PEAR-alpha
pear channel-discover pear.php-tools.net
pear install pat/patTemplate
```

If you are interested in documentation and technical insight, the following postings might be of interest to you:

Several PEAR-related posts in Greg's blog

A look at package2.xml and how to create a PEAR 1.4 package by Tobias Schlitt

Set up you own PEAR channel by Tobias Schlitt

I'll keep you updated on our new channel server. And once more:

Thanks Greg, you've done the most amazing job I can imagine.

Posted by schst in PHP at 15:46

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Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Welcome to patPortal, Wieg

Yesterday a new developer joined patPortal, by committing a new Response Filter to the project. patPortal is a component-based and event-driven framework that uses an extremely high level of abstraction, as you never access any session, GET or POST directly directly, but use a request object for this. This allows us to use the same API for HTTP-based applications as well as SOAP requests et al.

The same principle is used for the response, as you are never sending data directly to the client but pass it to a response object instead. Daniel's response filter now allows you to strip unnecessary whitespace from the response prior to sending it to the client.

Daniel decided to join us for this project, so welcome aboard the pat-team. You can reach him at [wieg\[at\]php-tools\[dot\]net](mailto:wieg[at]php-tools[dot]net).

Posted by schst in PHP at 15:18

Monday, February 14. 2005

New release of PEAR::Date_Holidays

Some minutes ago I released a new version of Date_Holidays (now it's version 0.13.0). This package is quite powerful in calculating holidays and other special days.

I am writing an article about it for the upcoming issue of the International PHP-Magazine. This gave me the reason to add some useful new features: I adapted some of the existing calculation drivers and added a new one that calculates the birthdates of the PHP geeks who sent me their date of birth (look at this) I implemented filter-objects that allow detailed filtering of the calculated holidays. This includes blacklists, whitelists and composite filters. Big thanks goes to Stephan Schmidt who patiently proof-read the article and gave me some hints.

If you ever stumbled across the problem of calculating holidays and didn't find a good solution at all, this article will certainly be worth reading. I hope the people of the PHP-Magazine will provide it as online-article because it would be a great addition to the documentation of this package.

Posted by luckec in PHP at 23:31

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

The day you were born ...

Hi folks,

would you mind telling me about your date of birth, please? You want to know why I am interested?

I want to write a driver that calculates the birthdates of all php.net-people for Date_Holidays. I want to use this driver for some demonstration purposes for an article in one of the upcoming issues of the International PHP-magazine. You'll see the result when it's done.

So again, what I would need: Your

- name
- date of birth
- country where you live

Would be really great, if you could mail me this information to luckec -at- php -dot- net. Thanks in advance...

Posted by luckec in PHP at 20:04

Thursday, February 3, 2005

Services_Ebay 0.11.0 released

I just released a new version of Services_Ebay, which provides two cool new features, as well as several new API-calls. One of the new features is the new caching system, I added to the model classes. As API calls to the eBay API tend to be quite time consuming (and expensive) most users probably will be trying to cache the return values from the eBay API. So I decided to add this as an optional feature to Services_Ebay. Using the cache is extremely easy:

After instantiating a new cache container, you set the type of expiry you want to use for caching the data. Currently only a fixed expiry time is supported, but this can be changed easily (as expiry checks are objects) and thus an expiry check will be added that caches data of eBay items shorter the nearer the end of the auction draws. I'll probably also add cache containers based on databases, as they are more flexible than filesystem caches.

The second feature I added (with some help by the fabulous Adam Trachtenberg) is the support for product finders. Product finders are those neat and advanced forms that eBay provides on their website, which lets you choose the style, color, size of clothing or any other item you are looking for. eBay's API provides calls that help you add those interactive search tools to your site as well: GetProductFinder, which returns XML code with the raw information (form elements and values for a certain category) and GetProductFinderXSL which returns the stylesheet eBay uses to render the HTML from the raw XML data. Services_Ebay makes working with these calls extremely easy, as it provides a ProductFinder model:

Using this code will result in 4 drop-down menus as well as some javascript, which will update them, whenever the user selects an item.

The new release is also the first release which features code by Carsten Lucke, who added two new API calls (that deal with Dutch auctions and member messages) as well as the needed models for these calls.

Posted by schst in PHP at 18:53