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Sunday, November 6, 2005

More fun with the Yahoo! Maps API

I spent a few hours with the Javascript-Flash Yahoo! Maps API today. The result is here:

<http://lerdorf.com/map>

Have a look at the source. There is a source link at the top-right on the page. It is about 90 lines of HTML and Javascript and virtually no server-side scripting.

I usually throw PHP code at all sorts of problems, but in this case I could do pretty much everything I wanted to directly from Javascript via the excellent API. The initial zooming from way out is a bit distracting and doesn't work too well, but I wanted to play with that a bit. Once you are zoomed in and searching for things, the search is updated as you move around the map and everything is event-based so the page doesn't need to be redrawn from scratch.

Both input fields are free-form. You can put a city name, a zip code or a full address in the Location field and in the What field you put what you are looking for. There is a special hack that checks for something like 4* and the filters the results to only show you those entries that were rated 4* or higher on Yahoo! Local. You can of course also just put something like "pizza" or "mexican" in that field.

Most of the magic here is done by 2 things. The LocalSearchOverlay and the event handling. Note how Map.EVENT_MOVE and Map.EVENT_ZOOM_END are registered events in the onInitialize() function. When you scroll the map or zoom it the onOverlayInit function will get called and the LocalSearchOverlay will be recalculated for the new map coordinates. Same thing happens when you change something in the input fields. The updateMap() function is called which will center the map at the new location and update the LocalSearchOverlay appropriately. There are a few more Javascript tricks here and there in it, like updating the link at the top so you always have a way to grab a link to your current search and send it to someone, but other than that there really isn't all that much to figure out here. Once you understand which events happen when and which methods are available where, you can do some really powerful things with this. It is all documented here:

<http://developer.yahoo.net/maps/flash/V2/flashReference.html>

and people are discussing it here:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yws-maps/messages>

In my last entry I showed how to parse a geocoded XML file and put markers for each entry on the map. Someone asked me how I would do the using the JS-DHTML API instead of the JS-Flash API. It's a whole lot harder in DHTML, but it works. You can see it here:

<http://lerdorf.com/php/ymap/dquakes.php>

And I talk a bit about it here:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yws-maps/message/612>

Posted by Rasmus in Software at 17:09

Ras,

I caught your picture in info week recently, send me a note to catch up...

Eric

Anonymous on Nov 23 2005, 12:27