

Wagn: co-creating advanced web systems with simple wiki building blocks

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Abstract

Wagn is a free and open-source software platform that enables non-programmers to create sophisticated web systems. Using simple wiki-inspired building blocks called "cards", a built-in query language, and an elegant rules system based on set theory, nontechnical "Wagneers" can collaboratively engineer powerful web systems. A recently introduced "mods" API makes Wagn a complete web-development platform.

Wagn has been hailed as "advancing the state of the art" for wikis and was described by Ward Cunningham as "one of the freshest contributions to wiki since I coined the term".

In the 90-minute tutorial slot, we will introduce Wagn and discuss current and potential Wagn applications, its core design principles, advantages of atomic data and set-based configuration, its simple queries, its architecture, called MoVE, improvements slotted for its rebranding release: Decko 1.0, and future directions

The remainder of the half-day class will be participatory. Attendees will collaboratively create a website for tracking OpenSym presentations and other events. We will begin with a fresh Wagn installation (or "deck"), and proceed to build a web system together from scratch.

Biography

Ethan McCutchen is Co-Founder and Executive Director of Grass Commons, the nonprofit behind Wagn. He is the top contributor to the Wagn project and the chief architect behind MoVE, the theoretical framework guiding Wagn's development.

Ethan is also leading the development team for Wikirate.org, a site built using Wagn and the subject of a separate OpenSym demo.

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