

Introduction to XUL Development

An introduction to XUL development and discussion about what worked while I worked on a XUL project for Opensource Connections.

Introduction

- Recent experience creating a Firefox add-on or extension for a client
- Things I wish I had known
- XML User Interface Language (XUL) pronounced “zool” is the programming language created by Mozilla
- Can be used to create Firefox extensions and cross platform applications.
- Similar to HTML, Javascript & DHTML

Show the Demo

Tips

- XUL files can be opened in Firefox making it much easier to quickly view the changes you make to your code.
- Use the Error Console in Firefox to view error messages your XUL code may produce which can be found under the Firefox Tools menu.
- The Extension Developer has a nice “reload all chrome” option, but it closes all the web sites you currently have open and crashed Firefox on my computer if I had Gmail open.

Tools

- Spket IDE (<http://www.spket.com>) is the best IDE for editing XUL I was able to find and is based on the Eclipse IDE.
- Extension Developer (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/7434>) is a Firefox add-on for building extensions.
- Firebug (<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/1843>) is an awesome Firefox add-on for debugging web pages.
- XUL Explorer (http://developer.mozilla.org/en/docs/XUL_Explorer) is a nice little application to help you get started with XUL development

Resources

- Mozilla Developer Center (<http://developer.mozilla.org/en/docs/XUL>) is the official web site for XUL with documentation.
- Born Geek (<http://www.borngeek.com/firefox/toolbar-tutorial/>) contains several great tutorials.
- XUL Periodic Table (<http://www.hevanet.com/acorbin/xul/top.xul>) has a nice web page containing most of the user interface components with source code.
- XUL Planet (<http://www.xulplanet.com>) is the unofficial web site for XUL with documentation.