

Re: Creating Dynamic URLs

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/PHP/comp.lang.php/2006-10/msg00463.html>

- *From:* Colin Fine <news@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 08 Oct 2006 11:57:38 +0100
-

jflash wrote:

On Oct 7, 11:11 am, usenet+2...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

jflash:

I am wanting to set my site up using dynamic urlsWhy?

At least you are thinking about URL design before publishing your pages: that puts you ahead of the masses. Retrospective URL design is, in a word, iffy.

(I'm assuming that's what they're called, an example of what I have in mind is `index.php?page=[pagename]`). 'Dynamic URL' is a misleading though common term for URLs with query

parts. Misleading because there is nothing dynamic about URLs. That example, we can say, is a relative reference consisting of a path and a query part (square brackets aren't allowed in query parts). Nothing more. What the server does with that URL is up to you, but the URL, the string of characters, is not dynamic. Couple of points on your example:

1. "Indexes" rarely are indexes. Are you sure there isn't a better name? No name, even?
2. URL suffixes, unless you see the URL as pointing to a particular

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representation of the resource, serve no purpose. It is generally of no consequence to users whether you use PHP or some other language to create your pages.

However, I can not figure out how to do this. I think another poster has suggested one way.

I will eventually want to use SEF urls, I can guess what you mean by that, but again I think the term is

misleading.

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Jock

- > I forgot to mention one thing: how can I use this setup to call
- > information from a database. For example, I've seen this done where the
- > search query from a search on a site is entered into the URL and is
- > then searched for in the database. HOW, then, is this done if all of
- > the 'redirects' (for lack of a better word) have to be predefined?
- >
- > On Oct 7, 5:10 pm, "jflash" <ki4...@xxxxxxxx> wrote:
- >> Ron: I assume that I simply add that code to my 'initial' page
- >> (index.php in the example I started with). However, I am curious how I
- >> define a default page to load (i.e. in my index.php example, how would
- >> I specify what page to include/what content to display in the event
- >> that no parameters are entered)? Also, do I have to manually add each
- >> page for the parameter to include in the file, or is there some way
- >> that I can use a database for the list of parameters and their
- >> corresponding pages?
- >>
- >> Jock:
- >>
- >> 1. I had originally thought I could use dynamic URLs to pull content
- >> from a database and display it on a page based on the parameters
- >> defined in the URL. In any case, I hope that using the dynamic URLs
- >> will make it easier for my users, particularly once I get search-engine
- >> friendly URLs set up.
- >>
- >> 2. Actually, I already have a version of my site up, I mainly am doing
- >> this because I am doing a major overhaul for various other reasons,
- >> and since I have been wanting to implement this for a while now, it
- >> seems like a good time to do it.
- >>
- >> 3.1. I don't get what you're saying. I wasn't planning on using
- >> index.php as the base file name, I just used it for an example.

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>> Actually, now that you say it, I'm thinking I might use the 'index.php'
>> part of the URL to serve as a category, then define the specific page
>> later. I don't know, I'll decide that later.
>> 3.2. I'm just using PHP because I know for a fact my server supports
>> it, and I see no reason to try anything else and risk a lack of support
>> on the server end of things.
>>
>> Thanks for the help!

[Top posting fixed]

I don't fully understand what you are asking, but it seems to me that you have an imperfect understanding of how CGI works.

A CGI script (such as a PHP program on a website) is a program that generates as output the HTML that the web server will send to the browser.

Usually, the script takes arguments from the URL (usually the part after the '?') to decide what to display, and very often it will obtain some of the data on the page from a database.

Often, the script is capable of producing utterly different pages depending on the input: for example, many CGI scripts display information relating to a particular key in the database (a particular site, person, company, date or whatever) and if called without the key will display a different page that asks the user to specify the key. Then the 'Submit' from that will go to the *same* script, but this time with the data it needs.

If the URL has no CGI arguments, the program must cope with that case and do something appropriate, for example request the information it needs as in the previous paragraph.

If you want not just to generate distinct pages, but to go to different existing pages, you can do it by generating a HTTP header that redirects to the appropriate page.

Does this help, or have I misunderstood your issue?

Colin

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