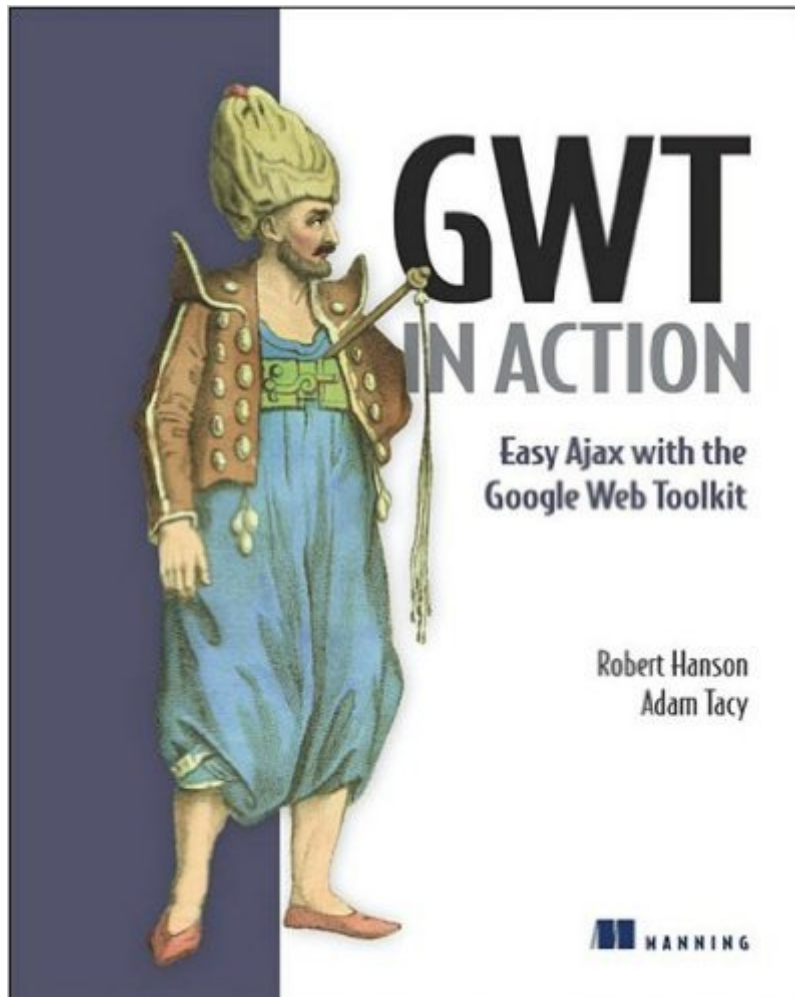


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GWT In Action: Easy Ajax With The Google Web Toolkit



Synopsis

The Google Web Toolkit is a new technology that automatically translates Java into JavaScript, making Ajax applications easier to code and deploy. GWT in Action is a comprehensive tutorial for Java developers interested in building the next generation of rich, web-based applications. This book was written by Robert Hanson, creator of the popular GWT Widget Library and Adam Tacy a major contributor to the GWT Widget Library. There is a new emphasis on building rich, web-based applications. These applications can be difficult to build because they rely on JavaScript, which lacks the sophisticated object-oriented structures and static typing of Java, they are tricky to debug, and they require you to manage numerous browser inconsistencies. In May of 2006 Google released the Google Web Toolkit (GWT). GWT enables developers to create Ajax applications in Java. With GWT, you can build your applications using a real object-oriented language and take advantage of Java tools like Eclipse that are already available. Instead of trying to bring tool support to Ajax, Google brought Ajax to a place where the tools already existed. GWT in Action shows you how to take advantage of these exciting new tools. Readers will follow an example running throughout the book and quickly master the basics of GWT: widgets, panels, and event handling. The book covers the full development cycle, from setting up your development environment, to building the application, then deploying it to the web server. The entire core GWT library is discussed, with details and examples on how it can be extended. Purchase of the print book comes with an offer of a free PDF eBook from Manning. Also available is all code from the book.

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Customer Reviews

Background: I've worked with GWT for 18 months. I also happen to work at Google - I say this not imply any kind of company endorsement - but just to give you an idea of the amount of GWT information I have access to. I have found this book really useful for getting to grips with some of the more cutting edge and esoteric features of GWT. It covers such things as superdev mode and generators - features that you'll find little information on elsewhere. Because of the book's size and depth it might be intimidating to a complete beginner, but the authors do provide plenty of worked examples to tinker with. In contrast to some other GWT books I've tried I also found this pretty readable. In summary, I'm a fairly seasoned GWT developer and I still found much to learn from this book. I wish I'd had it a year ago.

Usually, I really like the "in action" series, but "GWT in Action" disappointed me. The book focus on examples "in action" almost to the exclusion of having the reader understand the concepts. It wasn't until the end of the book that I really understood what was going on. I did like the step by step instructions on how to get started. The examples were good if you needed to do what the example did. It was tough to extrapolate to other scenarios though. Some of the code examples were rather long and involved. The end of the book was also good. It went into detail on HTML form controls, JSON, testing, deployment and most importantly - how GWT works. These would have been nice earlier in the book. Especially the HTML form section. The majority of AJAX at this time is related to forms. Since the cover says "easy AJAX with GWT", I expected more on form based AJAX examples. I felt that the book was trying to reach too broad an audience. For beginners without an understanding of JavaScript/HTML/DOM, I think it is overwhelming. The book provides "what's new in GWT 1..4", but the book is overkill for someone already using GWT. Most of the time the book treats what happens under the hood of GWT as magic and other times it becomes important. This switching of focus is a bit confusing.

This is the 2nd book I bought to do GWT. "GWT in Action" is by far the best book to learn GWT (at least when I bought it in summer 2007). Since I had already been using GWT, I used this book to successfully resolve a number of issues I was having, especially with event handling. An area that could use improvement in future editions is explaining how to integrate with existing javascript code libraries, something that really has to be assumed is a requirement with GWT. A good javascript reference, like O'Reilly's "Javascript: The Definitive Guide" should also be acquired. I use Instantiations GWTDesigner Eclipse plugin to do my code work.

I ordered this book with the assumption that it would be a nice reference for obscure things I would like to do with GWT. Then I received it, and turns out this book is much more than that. This book covers things I've never used, and opens up a world of functionality that I had previously been unaware of. The biggest thing: RequestFactory is no longer a mystery to me. Another big plus: this book helped me clean up my MVP implementations. I had a little bit too much going on in my view layer previous to reading this book, and now, all cleaned up. I highly recommend this book to anyone who uses GWT even if you are an expert. It's well written with barely any errata. Well done!

Relatively incoherent and dated. The later is more the fault of the GWT developers than the authors; it's hard to hit a target that is moving that quickly. In general, I expect a book to present the development of a topic, and to define terms before using them. This book (which both seems to have been written by a committee and was written by a committee) freely references concepts that it not only hasn't defined first, but hasn't defined at all. GWT is changing quickly, and one of the frustrations of GWT documentation is that it's often out-of-date.

This book has been a great asset in learning to use GWT effectively for me. I have a background in Java web development but am new to GWT technologies. Although most of the topics covered in this book can be found in online documentation or tutorials, the book and examples given are much more clear, much less cluttered, more in depth, and much easier to understand.

I'm in the final stages of porting an Android app to GWT. I'm not sure I could have gotten this far without this book, but I'm sure that it would have taken much, much longer for me to have done so. Many times I gave up on the GWT docs in frustration and turned to this book's index and found the answer I was looking for. Also I appreciate the book's supportive tone and its graphically-annotated code examples that clarify what's going on right next to the relevant code snippet.

I started to learn about GWT for the first time about 6 months ago, and this was one of three GWT textbooks that I purchased (The others were GWT In Practice and Google Web Toolkit Applications). Overall, I used GWT In Action as a book to go to when GWT In Practice was a little harder to understand. GWT In Practice teaches GWT, but at a faster pace and using stronger software development techniques. When I needed to dive in deeper to a specific subject, GWT In Action was the perfect book. I found the explanations easy, straight to the point, and very thorough -

something which wasn't quite the same in other textbooks. Whereas GWT In Action may not be an advanced textbook in creating commercial applications, it is a perfect intro book to get the core concepts learned thoroughly and well. The textbook is a little dated now, and the sample applications show it. However, as of the time of this review, most of the material is still perfectly relevant. There are some new features / objects available in GWT now that were not before, but all the old ones are still there. The textbook is not too outdated - it's still worth the purchase if you want a thorough coverage of the core GWT features. Simply put - an easy to understand, thorough book on GWT.

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