CS 422 – User Interface Design – Spring 2004
HW Assignment 1 - Development Tool Analysis

Due: Friday 21 January at 5:00.

Overall Assignment

For this assignment you are to investigate and evaluate at least four different development tools for the development of user interfaces, and write a short report summarizing your findings.

Some Suggestions

Some of the possible development systems that you might want to consider include the following. Note that this is not a complete list, and that the URLs provided may or may not be the best source of information for the listed suggestion.

- Java Swing (http://java.sun.com)
- FLTK (Fast Light Toolkit, http://www.fltk.org/)
- Visual Basic
- TCL / Tk (http://www.scriptics.com?)
- Microsoft MFC (Dev Studio)?
- HTML (Forms) / Perl / CGI / Flash / DreamWeaver?
- OpenGL (http://www.opengl.org)

Some Considerations

Some of the things you might want to consider include the following. Again, this is not a complete list:

- Do you already know how to use it, easing on the learning curve?
- Is it something you don’t know yet, offering an opportunity to learn a new tool?
- Is it available on university computers?
- Do you have it on your computer? If not, how much would it cost?
- What operating system(s) and hardware platforms does it run on?
- How widely accessible is it to end users?
- Does it provide support for special hardware and/or handicapped users?
- What features does it offer? How many different widgets area available, and how flexible are your development options?
- How easy is it to use and/or learn how to use?
- Are the instructors familiar with it?

Report Contents

Your report should describe the major and/or important features, benefits, advantages, and disadvantages of each tool evaluated, in a format that supports comparison. Your conclusion should indicate which tool(s) you would like to use for developing user interfaces this semester, and why. Your report should also include a properly formatted bibliography documenting the reference sources used in generating the report. (http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html may have some useful guides for formatting electronic references.)

What to Hand In:

1. Two copies of your report, one to the instructor and one to the TA. Those can be handed in either as printed hard copy or electronically via e-mail. Any materials e-mailed should include “CS 422 HW1” as part of the message subject.

2. Note: Turnin procedures may be modified, subject to discussions. Any changes made will be announced in class.