Future Internet Assembly, Aalborg

Session 1.4 – Impact of HTML5

_Rapporteurs/organisers: Vishal Jain (451 Research), Philippe Cousin (ETSI-MOSQUITO)_
_Other contributors: Dominique Hazael-Massieux (W3C), Stephen Haux (Netbiscuits), Claudio Venezia (Telecom Italia)_

Session summary
The session provided a first-hand opportunity to see what is coming up in HTML5 and _Dominique Hazael-Massieux_ of W3C provided an excellent overview of the latest set of technologies that can be used by developers. Reconfirming W3C’s vision of an OpenWeb platform, he talked about developments in Canvas, CSS Media Queries and CSS Transforms that could help game developers and other publishers. The next offerings include the use of Skype-like functionality within the browser. He also explained the work being done on connectivity layers, making it possible to establish peer-to-peer connection between two browsers. Augmented reality (AR) is another exciting technology, he said. A demo was given along with how – including a few lines of code – it is possible to build an AR-embedded application.

While these developments sounded promising, _Stephen Haux_ of Netbiscuits shared some facts on the ground and how the varied level of HTML5 support amongst browsers made life difficult for developers who were looking to target several smartphones with a single piece of HTML5, CSS3 and JavaScript code. _Claudio Venezia_ of Telecom Italia shared his company’s experience on working with standardisation bodies in order to find an opportunity that did not rely on the native app ecosystem. However, given the stage of evolution of HTML5, operators did not seem fully ready to build a business case for HTML5. _Philippe Cousin_ from the MOSQUITO project shed light on the fragmentation within Android itself that made it difficult and expensive to develop and test applications for multiple devices. He hinted on the issue of IPR and the general lack of empathy for developers, on the part of device-makers and OS makers, as the prime reason behind fragmentation.

The session rounded off with a panel discussion, led by _Vishal Jain_ of 451 Research. One of the key concerns was whether the industry and the developer community should wait for the standardisation effort to be completed. Based on 451 Research survey data, HTML5 has emerged as the preferred platform for development, after iOS and Android, which suggests that there is a higher take-up in industry. However, this momentum underlines the need for cooperation between standardisation bodies and heavyweight industry players. For smaller developers, the suggestion from panellists was to look closely at the tools and platform available for HTML5 development. The panel also suggested that in a few years’ time, as connected endpoints become prevalent, HTML5 would emerge as the platform of choice. Hence developers should not just look at HTML5 as an alternative to native app development but also look at the depth of technologies it brings across for the entire mobile web infrastructure.
Links and info


http://www.w3.org/2012/Talks/dhm-fia/