

JSMX - Another AJAX API?

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Today I was working on some AJAX code and realized that I would rather get my data from a CFC than from XML data. A few minutes of research later and I have JSMX up and running.

I already had a CFC with the method I needed to get my data with access="remote" (hopefully more on why I have this later - a new approach that seems promising). I thought it would be nice to add another remote method to generate the XML I needed for my AJAX.

This turned out to be rather easy, but I had to set returntype="void" and output="yes" and output the XML straight to the CFC page. This worked, but seemed a bit "hacky".

I was sure that someone had thought of a better way, so off to Google I went to find it.

JSMX advertises itself as an AJAX API - which it is (actually it advertises itself as "The Universal AJAX API"). It has some distinct advantages over other AJAX APIs that I have looked at (and never used). For one, it is just one 13K JS file. For another, it can easily digest data in a number of formats.

Notably, it can digest WDDX data. This is significant because that is the format of data you get if you do an HTTP "Get" on a remote method in a CFC.

The site has a few good [examples of use](#), but none on WDDX. I was unable to find out how it structured the WDDX data in JavaScript. Fortunately, **DP_Debug** came to the rescue. This is basically cfdump for JavaScript - very handy.

I used the following syntax to test the results:

```
<script type="text/javascript">
http('GET', 'mycomp.cfc?method=mymethod', DP_Debug.dump);
DP_Debug.dump(MyObject)
</script>
```

This revealed that the results are basically identical to what you would get if you used <cfwddx> with action="CFML2JS". This made the JavaScript to digest the data even easier than it was to digest the XML.

My steps to implement JSMX:

1. Copy the .js file to my site.
2. Reference the .js file on my page.
3. Change my JavaScript syntax appropriately (about a 5 minute job in my case)

The result is that my JavaScript got smaller and easier to use and I was able to remove the file to serve up XML data and rely on the CFC to provide that data.

My only complaint about JSMX so far is that it could be much smaller than 13K if the comments and white-space were removed. Other than that small complaint, it is a thing of beauty!