Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs)

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Model-View-Controller (MVC)

- Model for GUI programming (Xerox PARC ’78)
- Separates GUI into 3 components
  - Model ➞ application data
  - View ➞ visual interface
  - Controller ➞ user interaction
MVC Model of GUI Design

• Model
  • Should perform actual work
  • Should be independent of the GUI
    • But can provide access methods
• Controller
  • Lets user control what work the program is doing
  • Design of controller depends on model
• View
  • Lets user see what the program is doing
  • Should not display what controller thinks is happening (base display on model, not controller)
Programming Models

• Normal (control flow-based) Programming
  • Approach
    • Start at main()
    • Continue until end of program or exit()

• Event-driven Programming
  • Event - Action or condition occurring outside normal flow of control of program (e.g., mouse clicks, keyboard input, etc.)
  • Unable to predict time & occurrence of event
  • Approach
    • Start with main()
    • Define system elements and register event listeners
    • Await events (& perform associated computation)
Event Handling in Action

Events

- $e_1$
- $e_2$
- $e_3$

Can handle an event of type $e_1$

Registered Event Handlers

- $E_1$
- $E_2$
- $E_3$
- $E_4$
- $E_5$
- $E_6$
- $E_7$
- $E_8$

Execution Environment
GUls are Event-Driven Software

User events invoke event handlers

- $E_1$: newDocActionPerformed (java.awt.event.ActionEvent evt)
- $E_2$: changeFontSizeActionPerformed (java.awt.event.ActionEvent evt)
- $E_3$: fileSaveActionPerformed (java.awt.event.ActionEvent evt)
Desktop Java Graphics APIs: From “Filthy Rich Clients”
by Chet Haase and Romain Guy, Chap1, Page 12
ISBN-978-0-13-241393-0
Book Web Site: http://www.filthyrichclients.org/
GUIs in Java

- AWT (Abstract Window Toolkit) (java.awt.*)
  - First graphical user interface toolkit for Java
  - Old GUI framework for Java (Java 1.1)
  - Reliance on native system libraries
  - Platform independence problems
  - Responsible for input event mechanisms

- Java 2D
  - Graphics Library of Java
  - Introduced in JDK 1.2
  - Basics and advance drawing operation, image manipulation, and drawing
  - Handles Swing’s Rendering operations

- Swing (javax.swing.*)
  - GUI framework first introduced in JDK 1.2
  - Includes AWT features plus many enhancements
  - Pure Java components (no reliance on native code)
  - Pluggable look and feel architecture

Some of this material is from “Filthy Rich Clients” (see reference in previous slide).
Steps for Creating a GUI in Java

• (Step 1) Define a container to hold components (e.g., JFrame, Japplet)
• (Step 2) Add GUI components to the container (JButton, JTextField, …)
  • Use layout manager to determine positions
• (Step 3) Add actions to GUI
  • Add (register) event listeners to GUI components
  • Usually one event listener class per widget (item user sees)
  • Inner class usually utilized to implement listener
  • Example of Java listeners & Actions Causing Event
    • ActionListener → clicking button in GUI
  • At run time
    • Java generates event object when events occur
    • Java then passes event object to event listener
• (Step 4) Schedule the GUI processing in the EDT (Event-Dispatching Thread)
Java Layout Manager

• Definition
  • Arrangement of GUI components in container
• Layout manager
  • Entity translating layout specifications into actual coordinates at runtime, depending on conditions
• Examples
  • FlowLayout (lays out component from left to right)
  • BorderLayout (designates portions of the container as North, South, East, West, and Center)
Schedule GUI Processing in EDT

- What is a thread?
- Event Dispatching Thread (EDT) is a background thread to process GUI events
- These events are mainly **updates** that
  - Cause components to redraw themselves
  - Represent input events
- Swing uses a single-threaded painting model
  - Event Dispatching Thread is the only valid thread for updating GUI components
  - **Avoid updating GUI components from other threads** (a source of bugs)
- Java Code that allows current thread to execute GUI code in dispatching thread
  
  ```java
  public static void main(String[] args) {
      javax.swing.SwingUtilities.invokeLater(new Runnable() {
          public void run() {
              createAndDisplayGUI(); // actually creates GUI
          }
      });
  }
  ```
Examples

• Main Examples
  • eventHandlingIntro
  • singleClass BorderLayout
  • timer

• Additional Examples
  • textFileReaderMultipleClasses
  • textFileReaderSingleClass
  • textFileReaderFont
Additional Resources

• Javadoc from the JDK

• Swing tutorial - http://java.sun.com/docs/books/tutorial/uiswing/components/

• Filthy Rich Clients http://filthyrichclients.org/