World Wide Web Interfaces at SLAC

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Lack of Early Alternatives to CGI

To date, the bulk of the WWW interface used at SLAC has been through a CGI script CGI-Wrap. This is due to the lack of effective alternatives at the time that the PEP-II Project Database began to incorporate the WWW into its database access.

Current investigations

Currently we are investigating several promising alternatives to custom written CGI scripts. Among these are:

- **Oracle Designer/2000** - Oracle Designer/2000 is a CASE tool for designing databases and database applications. With this version of Oracle's CASE tools, WWW capability has been incorporated into the tools, with the ability to design forms for input and reports for output to be used either on WWW or standard Oracle desktop interfaces (Oracle Forms and Oracle Reports). Its major advantages are:
    - Single repository for all database and application design specifications.
    - WWW forms do not require more than Forms and Tables from the WWW browser.
    - Can use JAVA SCRIPT for data verification prior to submitting data to the DB, however...
    - No JAVA nor JAVA SCRIPT requirement.

  Among its disadvantages are the cost in terms of licensing Oracle CASE, in terms of disk space (>300MB for developer workstations), and in terms of training developers, although this is somewhat mitigate when one is only doing WWW development for an existing database.
- **Interdev** - Interdev is a WWW API development environment for Microsoft Windows NT. Its major advantage is its smaller footprint on the workstation relative to Designer/2000. Its major disadvantage is that it isn't finished. While one begins with a GUI development environment, the automatic process ends by presenting the developer with a large and complicated text file. Although there are tools to generate most of the rest of the code required, it is up to the developer to discover where the code belongs within the file.

Several other possibilities have been explored and rejected for such reasons as cost and inability to generate complex queries.