Subject: Task and Session Management Using Workflow
Posted by nnones on Mon, 23 Apr 2007 06:27:23 GMT
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I'd appreciate feedback that Tony (or anyone else) can give on the approach we're taking for managing tasks and sessions using workflow.

The issue is: when a transition is fired and it launches Task X, how should the workflow routing and/or navigation be set up when Task X has one or more navigation buttons? A navigation button will always launch another task; say, Task Y, that the workflow engine (which is listening to Task X) won't know anything about.

I think the solution is to treat Task Y as a child of Task X, instead of making it part of the workflow. Consequently it should navigate back to its parent Task X (using the getPreviousTask function, for instance) when itâ€™s finished. In explicit OR split situations, Task X, in turn, should inspect one or more session variables set in Task Y to determine the appropriate routing. I believe this approach is feasible because of the way Radicore manages tasks and sessions; i.e. when you invoke a child task, the parent task is suspended but its state is still retained in the session variables, so when you navigate back to the parent from the child it resumes where it left off.

We are going to conduct some experiments using this approach and of course I will share the results of those experiments on this Forum. In the meantime, however, I'd appreciate knowing if there are any better (proven) ways of addressing this issue.

Subject: Re: Task and Session Management Using Workflow
Posted by AJM on Mon, 23 Apr 2007 08:08:36 GMT
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Why should the fact that a task in a workflow calls other tasks via navigation or popup buttons have any effect on the workflow? The whole purpose of a workflow is to identify tasks which must take place in a specific sequence, with the option to direct the sequence down different paths depending on certain conditions.

Take for example the simple sequence of Task A -> Task B. This says that when Task A is finished the workflow moves on to Task B. The fact that while processing Task A it was necessary to branch out to other tasks is totally irrelevant - this is simply activity within Task A that happens before Task A is completed.

The workflow system tells the user "you need to complete Task A", and it will not do anything else until that task is completed, which is recognised with a database update. Anything which happens before the task is completed is of no concern to the workflow system.

Subject: Re: Task and Session Management Using Workflow
Posted by nnones on Mon, 23 Apr 2007 08:31:21 GMT

Tony, like you, I don't see any reason why some other task or navigation button should affect a workflow. So, it seems that you agree with the approach I suggested but I will go ahead and share the results of our experiments in the Forum anyway for the benefit of all.

Thanks for clarifying this so quickly.