

C3B: Exploiting the Numerous Possibilities Web Technology Offers to Elevate Questions

Arnaud Wijnant, and Maurice Martens, CentERdata, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

Abstract:

Blaise IS provides the possibility to administer questionnaires over the internet. A next step would be to exploit the numerous possibilities web technology offers to elevate questions, share data sources or to create extensive statistics like paradata. This could be achieved by creating special web-applications that collect data and return a set of answers to the Blaise engine based on these collected data. These web applications are called custom questions.

The problem however, is that the development of these custom questions requires different skills than programming a questionnaire in Blaise. For this reason the Custom Questionnaire Control for Blaise (C3B) was created. C3B is a mechanism which has two sides: one side which can be used by a questionnaire designer to define custom questions in a Blaise IS questionnaire, the other side is used by web developers to create a context-aware web application which can communicate with the Blaise IS engine on a simple way. The control takes care of the mappings between these two sides.

The web developer is free to choose between different development platforms (like, for example, JAVA, .NET, ASP or PHP), different techniques (like, for example, JavaScript, AJAX) and even different servers where the custom question can run on.

The questionnaire designer can easily parameterize custom questions and even share them within different questionnaires, projects or even organizations.

At CentERdata several C3B-compatible custom questions have been created. Examples of these custom questions include question-to-speech, clicking and dragging images in a certain order, auto-completion of open answers. The number of available custom questions can rise quickly since the development of a custom question is not complicated and the web offers many possibilities.