

Introducing Carousel Ecommerce API

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CAROUSEL

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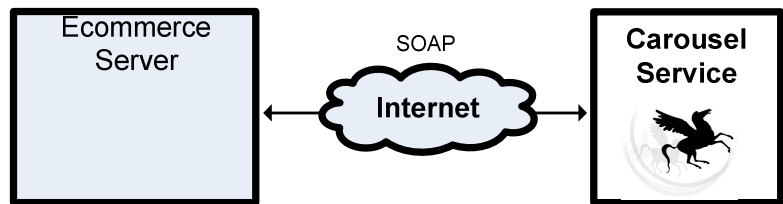
CAROUSEL



Introduction

This document describes the Carousel Optimization Engine Architecture and describes how to access the Carousel API from within an existing software that shows items for Ecommerce campaigns.

The Carousel Service adopts a *Service Oriented Architecture* (SOA) and lets developers design computer programs that interact directly with the Carousel engine. Doing that, ecommerce servers and third-parties can integrate and use the Carousel optimization engine and algorithms.



The SOAP API Interface

The core messaging technology for the Carousel API is Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP), which is an XML and HTTP-based protocol with wide support in the industry. The Carousel API is exposed via a WS-I Profile 1.1 web service, called Carousel Service. The Carousel API SOAP interface supports a growing number of languages - including Java, .NET, Perl, PHP, Python, OCAML, Ruby and XML.

To access the Carousel engine programmatically, you build web service clients that use the Carousel Service. Typically, to use the Carousel Service, you would download a toolkit that knows how to interpret WSDL files and how to encode and decode XML request and response messages. When a Carousel API Web Service receives a request, it sends back the response as an XML message. The web service toolkits know how to parse the response and return a data structure or object back to the caller, as appropriate for the language.

The exact toolkit you would use depends on the language you are using. Some toolkits do more for you or work better than others. If you use a SOAP toolkit, you should rarely have to write XML code to use the Carousel Service, since the toolkits handle the XML generation.

To learn more about SOAP, see the SOAP Tutorial at W3Schools: <http://www.w3schools.com/soap/default.asp>



Getting Started Using the Carousel Service

To use the Carousel API, write a client program in a language of your choice (such as Java, Perl, Python, C, C++, PHP). Write your client program to send a request to one of the Carousel Service methods, such as the *CreateCampaign* or the *GetRecommendationRules*. The relevant service will process the request and send back a response, which your client program needs to parse.

Since the Carousel API runs as a web service, there is nothing that you need to install related to the Carousel API. The only software you need to install to use the Carousel API is the software for the language and toolkit that you will be using to write your client programs. For example, if you intend to write your client programs in Java, you will need to install Java and also a SOAP toolkit such as Axis.

WSDL: The operations provided by a web service are defined in a WSDL (web services definition language) file which is posted on a website. To connect to a web service, you need to know the URL for the WSDL. The Carousel Service WSDL is available at:

<http://67.228.14.85:8099/ecommerce/EcommerceService.asmx>

Ecommerce Server Integration

This section illustrates the integration scenarios between the Carousel Technology and an existing Ecommerce Server.

A campaign optimization process is split into 2 phases:

1. **Sites and Campaign configuration:** the first step, before the campaign begins. You have to call some web service methods in order to configure your campaigns and to let Carousel be aware of your scenario. Carousel must know the shop window, the items to display, the target user profiles, and so on.
2. **Campaign optimization:** when the campaign is configured and started, the Ecommerce Server must receive and follow Carousel suggestions. Moreover, the Ecommerce Server must periodically send Carousel the feedback (item impression number, item click number).

Let's suppose you have successfully configured the sites and the campaign to optimize (this topic is covered in the *Carousel Ecommerce API Developer's Guide*).



When the campaign is started, the interaction between the Ecommerce server (Server) and the Carousel Service is the following:

1. The Server calls the *GetRecommendationRules* method, asking for the updated rules.
2. The Server receives a message with the new rules.
3. The Server picks the new rules from the message.
4. The Server replaces the old rules with the new ones.
5. The Server shows items to users following Carousel rules.
6. The Server intercepts clicks and saves the statistics.
7. After some time, the Server calls the *SetFeedback* method, containing the feedback statistics (e.g. clicks and impressions). The feedback lets Carousel learn and update the rules.
8. It repeats the cycle until the Ecommerce campaign ends.

