Mobile Timekeeping Application Built on Reverse-Engineered JPL Infrastructure

NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California

Every year, non-exempt employees cumulatively waste over one man-year tracking their time and using the timekeeping Web page to save those times. This app eliminates this waste.

The innovation is a native iPhone app. Libraries were built around a reverse-engineered JPL API. It represents a punch-in/punch-out paradigm for timekeeping. It is accessible natively via iPhones, and features ease of access.

Any non-exempt employee can natively punch in and out, as well as save and view their JPL timecard. This app is built on custom libraries created by reverse-engineering the standard timekeeping application. Communication is through custom libraries that re-route traffic through BrowserRAS (remote access service).

This has value at any center where employees track their time.

This work was done by Robert J. Witoff of Caltech for NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory. For more information, contact inoffice@jpl.nasa.gov.

This software is available for commercial licensing. Please contact Dan Broderick at Daniel.F.Broderick@jpl.nasa.gov. Refer to NPO-48449.

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The Mars Relay Operational Service (MaROS) comprises a number of tools to coordinate, plan, and visualize various aspects of the Mars Relay network. These levels include a Web-based user interface, a back-end "ReSTlet" built in Java, and databases that store the data as it is received from the network. As part of MaROS, the innovators have developed and implemented a feature set that operates on several levels of the software architecture.

This new feature is an advanced querying capability through either the Web-based user interface, or through a back-end REST interface to access all of the data gathered from the network. This software is not meant to replace the REST interface, but to augment and expand the range of available data. The current REST interface provides specific data that is used by the MaROS Web application to display and visualize the information; however, the returned information from the REST interface has typically been pre-processed to return only a subset of the entire information within the repository, particularly only the information that is of interest to the GUI (graphical user interface).

The new, advanced query and data mining capabilities allow users to retrieve the raw data and/or to perform their own data processing. The query language used to access the repository is a restricted subset of the structured query language (SQL) that can be built safely from the Web user interface, or entered as freeform SQL by a user. The results are returned in a CSV (Comma Separated Values) format for easy exporting to third-party tools and applications that can be used for data mining or user-defined visualization and interpretation. This is the first time that a service is capable of providing access to all cross-project relay data from a single Web resource.

Because MaROS contains the data for a variety of missions from the Mars network, which span both NASA and ESA, the software also establishes an access control list (ACL) on each data record in the database repository to enforce user access permissions through a multi-layered approach.

This work was done by Paul Wang, Michael N. Wallick, Daniel A. Allard, Roy E. Glaadden, and Franklin H. Hy of Caltech for NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

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