Abstract

End-user developers are often left to their own devices when trying to support development efforts. One place it would seem natural to look for support would be the Internet where several different sources can be found. On-line sources could alleviate several issues current support for end-user developers suffer from.

This paper presents, analyses and evaluates the main on-line sources, such as, manuals, wikis, blogs, software libraries and virtual communities with a focus on the needs of end-user developers. The analysis is based on four factors derived from existent literature on end-user development, context, cooperation, interactivity and immediacy that seem important for end-user developers.

The on-line sources have strong and weak support for different factors and as such we suggest some sources will fit the needs of end-user developers better than others. Of the sources explored in this paper, the virtual communities seem best with many benefits for the end-user developer, e.g. the strong support for contextual information and interactive functions. As such virtual communities could be instrumental in providing support for end-user developers currently and in the future.

Keywords: end-user development, on-line support

TUCS Laboratory

Laboratory for Data Mining and Knowledge Management