

Article

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Replacing ZEN - Part 3 - Progress to date 01

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Hi All

It's been 6 weeks since my original article 😞

- - - -but I have been busy on this project 😊

I have been looking at/thinking about a replacement for ZEN for around 12 months but only really started in depth 4 months ago.

Also been in IT for long enough that I can "get a feel" for a product/technology and make decisions accordingly without going into great detail.

Any new technology has a learning curve and I don't want to waste time and effort on something that won't fly.

And, as always, I am looking to minimise the learning curve as I want to concentrate on delivering business benefit. My methodology has been:

- Look around the web
- Watch YouTube videos
- Examine open source download out
- Look at the number of releases of products
- Get a feel for the longevity for the products and number of contributors

There's quite a good overview of some factors [here](#) it's a bit dated (2009) but the factors are still relevant today.

So, here's what I have I been looking at and my decisions...

- Client Development will be Angular 2 To me Angular 2 has... a. Has a nice oo feel to it b. Provided by Google with a large development/support team c. Very active development - Angular 6 has just been released d. Open Source d. Large amount of web learning resources I have worked though a number of tutorials but created no code/projects myself yet - that's the next step (see below) Note - AngularJS (Angular 1) and Angular 2 are very different not to be confused. Also Angular 2 is the covering name for *all* new versions - version 6 has just been released.
- Editors will be Caché Studio and Visual Studio Code (VS Code) I looked at Eclipse and Atelier - at first sight it looks cool, a single editor that will do both Caché and an Angular 2 plugin But...
 - Compared with Studio the current code completion in Atelier is not so great
 - I know how to use Studio and can make it fly
 - There are not many Angular 2 plugins available and most are single developer offerings
 - VS Code is open source provided by Microsoft so well supported with active development
 - VS Code is optimised for TypeScript (a super set of JavaScript) and Angular2
- Version Control will be Git/Git Hub The aim is to have a single repository that contains the Caché classes *and* the VS Code files. This is important to make deployment (Local Dev -> Test Server -> Live Server) as robust as possible. ie all the assets move together see [this thread](#) for some discussion. It's available "out of the box" with VS Code. And there are Caché Studio hooks available -see the [this thread](#) if GitHub fails there is always GitLab see the post here [here](#) from Eduard Lebedyuk
- Is it possible to leverage existing ZEN code - YES I have over 250 %ZEN.DataModel.ObjectDataModel

classes for my main client. These are responsible for CRUD data transfer between ZEN browser client and the stored data. Most contain complex business logic - re-creating this would be a huge task not least in User Acceptance Testing. So, is it possible to extend these classes to send and receive data via JSON over a Rest call? The answer is YES - I have it working

- Next Steps I have developed a small ZEN app as a test bed that models a pattern that I widely use in the current ZEN app This together with the extended ObjectDataModel class will be available shortly on GIT Hub I then plan to reproduce the same functionality in Angular2 / Rest Calls / JSON to and from the extended ObjectDataModel
- Learning Curves As I said in my last article it's awesome and fearsome - I already have Angular2, NPM (Node Package Manager), Node.JS, NVM (Node Version Manager), VSCode on my development VM. And all these are new to me and to be kept up-to-date, it took around ½ day to update these from Angular 2 (version 5) to Angular 2 (version 6)

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