Yahoo! provides Yahoo! Search API, a RESTful service for developers that allows submitting a search request and retrieving results in the form of an XML document. Thus, using any programming architecture that has access to send and receive HTTP requests, you can build a service that provides web search capabilities.

Before being able to use Yahoo! Search API in your project, you will need to apply for an Application ID from Yahoo, at the URL below. You will need to already have a general Yahoo! (email) account in order to reach the URL.

https://developer.yahoo.com/wsregapp/

You will then be able to send a query to the Yahoo! API’s URL, attaching all necessary parameters to the end of the query, following standard HTML URL query string construction.

Ex:

The Yahoo! Search API allows specifying many parameters, including query, region, type, results, country, output, etc. For example, the results parameter specifies how many results you would like returned, and can be an integer from 0 to 100, with a default value of 10. For a full description of all parameters, see the Web Search Documentation for Yahoo! Search page at the URL below:


The response of a call to the Yahoo! Search API is in the form of an XML document containing a ResultSet element. The ResultSet provides, as attributes, metadata about your response, such as “totalResultsAvailable” and “totalResultsReturned”. Additionally it contains zero or more Result elements, each providing information such as title, summary, url, clickUrl, etc. The Web Search Documentation for Yahoo! Search page at the URL above contains a full description of this XML document.

Within your search engine service, you will need to:

- retrieve the user’s query text
- decide your search parameters
- build a query string and submit to Yahoo! Search API
- retrieve the XML document response
- parse the XML document retrieved
- display the text and links contained in the Result elements of the parsed XML document

For those of you who program in PHP5, Zend offers a multi-purpose framework (Zend Framework), which contains the Zend Service Yahoo class, an API that further abstracts the Yahoo! Search API. Zend Service Yahoo allows you to submit your request directly using a Zend Service Yahoo object, abstracting the HTTP transport of the request, and additionally processes the XML document returned. It then returns a WebResultSet object consisting of zero or more WebResult objects containing the search result information. Please see the URL below for additional information on Zend Service Yahoo.


---

1 Generally denotes a web application that receives requests via an HTTP request and responds via an XML document. See Wiki for additional info: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Representational_State_Transfer
2 If you are not familiar with query strings, read up on Wiki: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Query_string
3 http://framework.zend.com/