1 Allakhazam's Magical Realm

1.1 Andy Sharp <asharp <at> nector.com> exclaimed:

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- Traffic: 1,800,000 Unique Page Loads per day

- URL: http://everquest.allakhazam.com, http://camelot.allakhazam.com, http://eqbeastiary.allak-hazam.com.

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Almost everything on the site runs in mod_perl.  We have 4 systems
running the site, one static server (PIII 450, Linux,
Apache/mod_proxy).  Two database servers (Dual P800, FreeBSD, Mysql)
which are replicated, and the one mod_perl server (PIII 800, FreeBSD,
Apache/mod_perl).  The idea to use the proxy server to intercept any
requests for text or images which was not dynamic came directly from
the mod_perl guide (http://perl.apache.org/docs/1.0/guide/).

It's been a rough ride sometimes, as I've been in the process of
learning the guts of Apache and more about perl than I ever thought
I'd need to know.  Since the site first started, I've migrated from a
Module based system, to Apache::Registry (I wasn't writing good enough
perl for the module based system to work well), and more recently have
been migrating high volume scripts back to the Module/Handler based
system.

That's been the true benefit of mod_perl in developing this site.
It's been a learning process as we roll out a new application or area
of the site, watching our hit load go up and up, and then spending
hours looking for performance bottlenecks in code which was never
intended to run as often as it does.

mod_perl gives us an incredibly fast development time.  Sometimes, the
speed of development does mean than lower quality code creeps into the
production environment, but it allows us (me) to get things done which
would take much much longer in another application environment.  Perls
"there are many ways to do it" extends into mod_perl, meaning that I
can try something new quickly, and come back later to optimize it.

Amoung the features we have on the site:

Application layer security, based on a custom written Session tracking
system.  A recursively threaded forum system on every page, this
system accounts for the bulk of the page views.  It's also real time
in tems of both comments being added, and ratings to the messages
propigating through.  User uploaded data through out the site, we
allow players to track their characters, add meta information to
database entries.  Detailed web based administration system based on
the Application security layer.

The speed of development of perl, coupled with the rich resources of
CPAN, and the incredible power of mod_perl have made this site
possible.

Running the same site in other technologies would have been possible,
but would either require more hardware, or more time to develop.
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Table of Contents: