

What is the easiest and/or best way to convert a legacy text-based user interface to a web front end?

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Question:

If I have an application that uses text-mode (no graphical controls) DISPLAY and ACCEPT statements with no screen sections, then what are my options for getting my application to run within a web browser?

Are there 3rd-party packages that will intercept my terminal output and turn it into a web or graphical front end, then take the user's inputs and interaction with the GUI and turn it back into input to stdin that my application will think came from a terminal? I know there are tools like this for COBOL CICS TN3270. Are there similar tools for text-based COBOL programs running in isCOBOL?

What screen scraper tools do you recommend? I'd like something that will look at my text-based screens while the program is running and "import" them and generate a graphical screen section.

Answer:

Starting with isCOBOL 2009 SP1 you can use any 3rd-party package that wraps character-based interfaces for GUI, Web interface or other service. These packages, known as screen scrapers, can pretend to be a user at a terminal, run the text-based green-screen application, emulate the keystrokes needed to navigate the old user interface, process the resulting display output, extract the desired data, and pass it on to a modern system.

To use the isCOBOL text-based terminal interface set the following property:

```
iscobol.guifactory.class=com.iscobol.gui.client.charva.GuiFactoryImpl
```