

6.6

WIGFAN - A SYSTEM TO INGEST AND DISPLAY INTERNET DATA ON AWIPS

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Web Image Grabber For AWIPS Netscape (WIGFAN) software package was designed to bring images available on the World Wide Web (WWW) into AWIPS for operational use. Since the AWIPS Local Area Network (LAN) is a secure network not physically located on the WWW, a means to grab, ingest, and display operationally useful internet data on the system was designed. The WIGFAN package runs mainly on the LDAD but also has display components within the AWIPS firewall.

2. DATA FLOW

The WIGFAN package runs a Perl script, *webget.pl*, on the LDAD. The script is run via the cron at a periodicity the user chooses. When executed, the script will check for a list of user-defined web images. If the image is new or updated, the Perl script will retrieve the image and place it into the LDAD /data/Incoming directory (Fig. 1). The image is then ingested into AWIPS and placed on the Data Server (DS) into the /data/fixa/web directory.

The data images reside on the DS (under /data/fixa/web) and any AWIPS workstation can access this information. Using Netscape, the html files and their images can be loaded for display and the user/system administrator can bookmark the local paths to those files. Since the images reside locally, the image load time in Netscape is minimized.

3. USE IN OPERATIONS

WIGFAN was designed to bring operationally useful WWW images to the AWIPS platform. By doing so, AWIPS is maximized as a "stand-alone" system and the need to utilize multiple platforms is minimized. Another benefit: the imagery is stored on the local disk so the display on Netscape has little dependence on bandwidth and no dependence on internet throughput.

At the National Weather Service La Crosse, WI office, the MRF ensemble graphics are routinely ingested using WIGFAN. The MRF ensembles are displayed using a simple html page which is bookmarked on Netscape on all the workstations. Wintertime graphics include the winter ingredients-based forecast gif panels generated at

the University of Wisconsin. Any image can be downloaded provided the name remains static. For example, a file containing the date within the name would need additional code to be downloaded daily (the name would change based on date).

4. SUMMARY AND WEB SITE

The WIGFAN package is available via the AWIPS Local Applications Library. It is also available with complete installation instructions at the WIGFAN home page:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/arx/webgrab.htm>

The downloaded tar file has all needed components to run WIGFAN as well as example html files for immediate operational use.

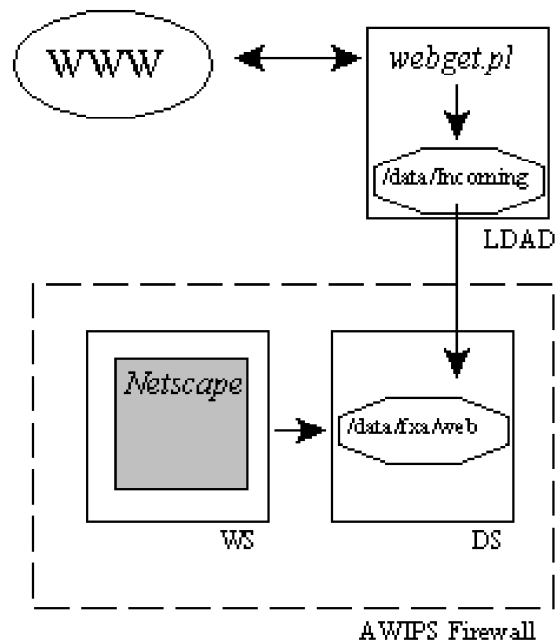


Fig. 1. Data flow diagram for WIGFAN platform.

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