

Build Managers

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1 Build Managers

Build Managers

A *build manager* is a tool for scripting the automated steps required to produce a software artifact.

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What Should a Build Manager Do?

A good build manager should be

- easy to use
 - easy to set up for a given project
 - efficient in performing the build
 - avoid redundant/unnecessary actions
 - detect and abort bad builds in progress
 - incremental
 - allow focused/partial builds
 - flexible
 - allow for a variety of build actions
 - on a variety of platforms
 - configurable
 - permit the management of multiple artifact configurations
-

2 Some Sample Project Builds

Some Sample Project Builds

Here are some of the project builds I have had to automate in the opening weeks of this semester (Spring 2013).

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2.1 Student Programming Assignment

Student Programming Assignment

Set up to allow students to easily compile code for an assignment.

- Build each missing or out-of-date .o file by compiling a corresponding .cpp file.
 - Record which .cpp files and .h files were used during the compilation so that future builds can determine what would future source code changes would make this .o file outdated.
 - Link all .o files to produce an executable
-

2.2 Code Annotation Tool

Code Annotation Tool

The code annotation tool is a program I use to convert C++ and Java code with optional markup comments like this

```
#include <iostream>
```

```
using namespace std; /**col*/
```

```
int main (int argc, char** argv)
{
    // Let's be friendly
    cout << "Hello world!" << endl;
    /**/return 0;/**-*/
}
```

.....

Code Annotation Tool Output

...into this or this:

```
#include <iostream>

using namespace std; ❶

int main (int argc, char** argv)
{
    // Let's be friendly
    cout << "Hello world!" << endl;
    return 0;
}
```

.....

Building the Code Annotation Tool

The steps involved in building this tool are:

1. Run the program **jflex** on each file in `src/main/jflex`, generating a pair of `.java` files that get placed in `src/main/java`.
2. Compile the Java files in `src/main/java`, placing the results in `target/classes`.
3. Compile the Java files in `src/test/java` (using the `target/classes` compilation results, placing the results in `target/test-classes`).
4. Run the JUnit tests in `target/test-classes`.
5. If all tests pass, package the compiled classes in `target/classes` into a `.jar` file.

It's worth noting how many of the steps in this project build are *not* simply compile and link steps.

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2.3 Class Assignment Setup

Class Assignment Setup

In preparing to release a programming assignment to a class, the steps are

1. Setup:
 - (a) Copy all of the files that I will provide to students from a `Public` directory into a `Work` directory.
 - (b) Copy all of the files from my `Solution` directory into that `Work` directory
2. Build solution
 - (a) Compile any `.cpp` files in the `Work` directory
 - (b) Link the resulting `.o` files.
3. Run the executable produced in the last step on each `test*.dat` in the `Tests` directory, capturing the output as a corresponding `.out` file.

4. Copy all source code from the `Work` directory into a `winWork` directory.
5. Use a cross-compiler to compile and link the `.cpp` files in `winWork` into a Windows executable
6. Install:
 - (a) Copy the two executables and the contents of the `Public` directory into a release area accessible to students.
 - (b) Set the permissions on the copied files so that they can be accessed.
 - (c) Copy any `.html` and graphics files for the assignment to the course website.

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2.4 Posting Slides and Lecture Notes

Posting Slides and Lecture Notes

The lectures notes for this course are prepared through a process:

1. Setup
 - (a) If the directory has a DocBook document and no corresponding TeX file, and if we are on a machine where **db2latex** is installed, run **db2latex** to create a TeX file.
 - (b) Convert all graphics to PNG or PDF:
 - i. For each desired document format, copy a corresponding template into this directory, substituting for various course properties (e.g., course name, website URL), saving this as a `.ltx` file.
 - ii. For each GIF file in the directory with no corresponding PNG file, run **convert** to produce a PNG.
 - iii. For each FIG file in the directory with no corresponding EPS file, run **fig2dev** to produce an EPS.
 - iv. For each Dia file in the directory with no corresponding EPS file, run **dia** to export as EPS.

- v. For each EPS file in the directory with no corresponding PDF file, run **epstopdf** to create a PDF
- (c) Annotate source code:
 - i. For each C++ or Java file with no corresponding HTML file, use the code annotation toll to generate an HTML file.
 - ii. For each C++ or Java file with no corresponding TeX file, use the code annotation toll to generate an TeX file.
- 2. For each desired document format, run **latexmk** to produce a PDF for that format.
- 3. Deployment:
 - (a) Synchronize this directory with the corresponding directory of the website, or
 - (b) Prepare a zip file with the contents of this directory that can be uploaded to a remote webserver (e.g., Blackboard).

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3 Types of Build Managers

Why Not Just Write a Script?

We could simply write a simple script to perform each of the steps in sequence...

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Scripting

But how does this fare according to our earlier build manager goals?

- easy to use? ✓

- easy to set up for a given project? ✗
- efficient in performing the build?
 - avoid redundant/unnecessary actions ✗
 - detect and abort bad builds in progress ?
- incremental?
 - allow focused/partial builds ?
- flexible?
 - allow for a variety of build actions ✗
 - on a variety of platforms ✗
- configurable?
 - permit the management of multiple artifact configurations ?

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3.1 IDE project managers

IDE project managers

Most IDEs come with a built-in project manager.

- typically limited to compiling and linking
- maybe some support for packaging

Compare to our sample projects.

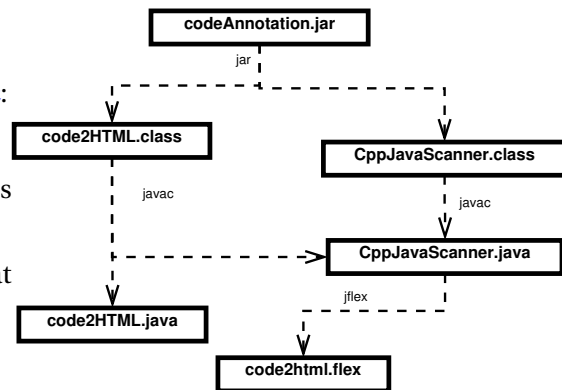
.....

3.2 Dependency-Based Managers

Dependency-Based Managers

Some build managers are based on the idea of a *dependency graph*:

- Boxes are files.
- Arrows denote dependencies. “A depends on B” means that if B is missing or changed, then A must be (re)generated.
- Labels on arrows indicate the program used to generate the file at the base of the arrow.



Analysis of such a graph facilitates

- efficiency - easy to tell what needs to be rebuilt after a change
 - incrementality - can determine required build step for any file, not just the “final” one
- make** is the canonical example of a build manager of this type.

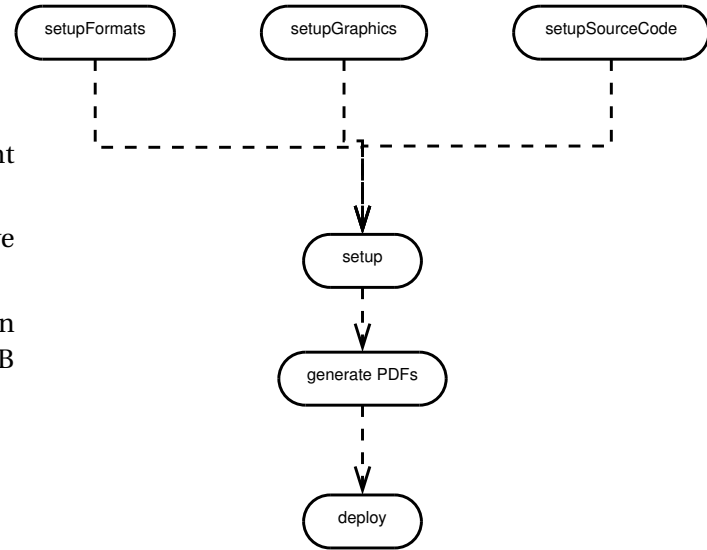
.....

3.3 Task-Based Managers

Task-Based Managers

Other managers are based on the idea of interdependent tasks.

- Ellipses are tasks (activities). Each task can involve multiple steps.
- Arrows denote success dependencies. “A depends on B” means that A will be run after B and only if task B finished successfully.



This approach facilitates

- easy to set up: usually less detailed than a full file-based dependency graph
- incrementality - can request any intermediate step

ant is based on this approach.

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