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Extension
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[Firefox Extension Links the Web by Using Language Commands](#)

The experimental Ubiquity Firefox extension provides a user-oriented mash-up like service

The [Mozilla Labs](#) have [released](#) an experimental version of a Firefox extension called Ubiquity. The software aims at providing a mash-up like service for users by allowing them to gather information from various web resources in an automated manner and use this information directly within the browser.

In web development, the term mash-up is used to refer to a web application that combines data from multiple tools into one, thus creating new features than none of the original tools provided. Accessing and searching through all kinds of web resources in order to gather the information you need is time consuming. Mash-ups help in this regard, but the problem with them is that they require web programming skills and end-users can only use the functions web developers intended them to have.

Ubiquity is built to allow users to create their own custom web mash-ups without the need of programming knowledge. The official announcement provides a video example where a user wants to invite a friend to dinner to a new restaurant through e-mail. To achieve this task, Ubiquity allows him to easily insert a map from Google maps, restaurant reviews from Yelp and put them all directly into the webmail client.

What is special about Ubiquity is the interface which is very user friendly. "Ubiquity's interface goal is to enable the user to instruct the browser (by typing, speaking, using language) what they want to do," explains the head of user experience for Mozilla Labs, Aza Ruskin. For now, the user interacts with the interface using [simple commands](#) like map location (to insert a map of the location from Google maps), yelp name (to insert a review from Yelp), wikipedia term (to insert a wikipedia description for term), etc.

According to the official release announcement, the prototype version "lets you map and insert maps anywhere; translate on-page; search amazon, google, wikipedia, yahoo, youtube, etc.; digg and twitter; lookup and insert yelp review; get the weather; syntax highlight any code you find; and a lot more". These resources are also accessible through a context menu.

In comparison to a search engine, with Ubiquity users type what they want to do instead of what they want to locate. For example, if you type "mail this to John", the extension will automatically interact with your e-mail address book and find out who John is, then send him the mash-up you created. Using such language-specific commands is possible because the extension is capable of understanding pronouns and determining which is what, etc.

According to the developers, adding custom commands and resources to the extension is very easy to do even for less-technical users and people are encouraged to extend it and share their commands with the community. The extension is open source and is released under a GPL/MPL/LGPL tri-license.