The AMOS Project

IST-2001-34717

The Interface Internals

Deliverable D14

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Date of current release:	December 2003
Type of deliverable:	Report

Abstract

This document describes the internal interface that is needed within the Amos tool to allow communication between the matching engine and the web-based user interface. In order to make the search web form more user-friendly, some searching parameters needed by the matching engine have been abstracted using common linguistic expressions that reflect in an informal way search requirements. In [GCM04] and [CGC+04] the search user interface is explained in depth. This document describes the code and interfaces involved in such communication.

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1 Introduction

The matching engine [CMM04] uses a number of parameters in order to guide the searching algorithm. These parameters are represented by means of an internal query language interpreted by the matching engine. The part of the external interface related to the search of assemblies translates the user query to that language, and invokes the matching engine to obtain the assemblies that satisfy the searching parameters specified by the user.

In the Amos system there is a clear conceptual distinction between the user interface and the algorithms and techniques involved in the search for package assemblies. In order to provide a seamless integration between both of the main components of the system, the communication protocol between the web-based user interface and the Amos matching engine is performed by means of Ciao Prolog module interfaces. This approach improves the functionality of the system while at the same time eases the implementation.

The searching user interface is based on a Ciao Prolog CGI program that generates the HTML forms for interacting with the user, transforms the user input into the internal query language, and performs the query on the Amos database, presenting the resulting assemblies to the user with a dynamically generated html page.

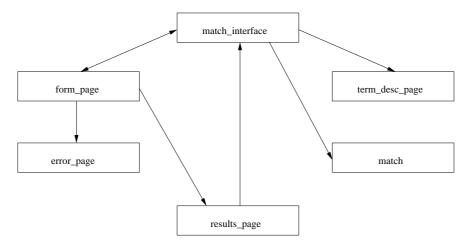


Figure 1: Module description of the search interface internals

The matching engine and the user interface for searching have been implemented through a set of modules, represented in Figure 1. Each module provides a different function, as follows:

• The module match_interface is the starting point of this part of the Amos

system. It is a CGI program that generates the HTML pages for requesting query parameters and displaying the results of a search performed by the matching engine, transforms the query input by the user and sends it to the matching engine. This module uses the rest of the modules, as shown in 1. This module uses form_page for actual HTML page generation.

- form_page generates the main search page. The main search page is composed by a form to enter search parameters and options, and can be followed by a section with the resulting assemblies of a previous page, or a section with informative messages about problems found in the previous user input. In order to do this in a modular way, it uses the modules error_page and results_page. form_page also accesses the Amos database to load into the search page the dictionary terms to facilitate user interaction.
- The modules error_page and results_page generate dynamically the informative messages and the list of assemblies that results from a given search, respectively.
- Finally, match contains the code of the matching engine. It receives a query in the internal query language, and produces a list of assemblies which satisfy the given query.

In following sections these modules are described in depth.

2 match_interface (library)

This module performs the interaction between the user and the matching engine by means of a web interface based on efficient CGI scripts. When the web interface starts for the first time, an initial query with default search options is shown. The user can then select the description terms to find, and adjust the searching parameters as well, in order to get more precise results. When the user eventually performs the query (by pressing the appropriate button on the web page), assemblies satisfying the query parameters are obtained, and a result page is shown to the user. The assemblies that result from a query evaluation are presented to the user together with another search form, in order to enable incremental searches. The information introduced by the user is kept in this new form to let him refine the search.

The underlying implementation of the search web interface is based on a single HTML form which encodes the application state given by the values/1 procedure. Basically, this procedure abstracts away the implementation details of the HTML page, mapping each state element as an HTML input, which can be either hidden, visible or a human readable menu which disguises the representation of the matching engine parameters. Depending on whether the application has been started or not, the main procedure form_handling/0 executes one of these actions:

- 1- to emit an initial form with default values, or
- 2- to receive the CGI input, extract the event identifier (represented by an element of type id), input fields and previous state encoded as input fields, process them into a new state, and generate an updated form.

The actions of the web interface which require the Amos matching engine are Search, Next page (to show the next page of search results when the last query resulting assemblies do not fit a single page) or Previous page (to show the previous page of search results). The connection with the matching engine to retrieve the search solutions is made by make_search/2. Any other action simply updates the input state without performing any search.

The search parameters are translated to the internal query language needed by the matching engine. The translation is straightforward, with the exception of the parameters to control the search heuristics (described in sort_method/1). This interface makes use of linguistic modifiers to link the meaning of numeric weights (explained in match) in order to make them more intuitive for humans, as follows:

- number of packages: very few (-2), few (-1), any number or (0), a few (1), many (2)
- unsatisfied requirements: very few (-2), few (-1), any number or (0)
- auxiliary requirements: very few (-2), few (-1), any number or (0)
- number of capabilities: very few (-2), few (-1), any number or (0), a few (1), many (2)
- ratio of fullfilled capabilities: a very small (-2), a small (-1), any (0), a large (1), a very large (2)

2.1 Usage and interface (match_interface)

• Library usage:

:- use_module(library(match_interface)).

• Exports:

- Predicates:

start/0.

- Regular Types:

id/1, values/1, results/1.

• Other modules used:

- Application modules:

```
search(form_page), search(term_desc_page),
search(match), search(utils),
amos(configuration).
```

- System library modules:

pillow/http,pillow/html,prolog_sys,lists,
aggregates,terms,pillow/pillow_types.

- Internal (engine) modules:

hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.

2.2 Documentation on exports (match_interface)

start/0: PREDICATE

Usage:

- Description: Main procedure to start the CGI.

id/1: REGTYPE

Usage: id(X)

- Description: Identifier of the action.

values/1: REGTYPE

```
values(values(Terms, Ini, Len, SortMethod, Mode, InP, ExP)) :-
    atm(Terms),
    num(Ini),
    num(Len),
    sort_method(SortMethod),
    match_mode(Mode),
    atm(InP),
    atm(ExP).
```

Usage: values(X)

- Description: Internal state of the search CGI.

results/1: REGTYPE

```
results(Results)
```

A list of assemblies which are the result of a search, plus the total number of solutions Total and the computation time Time.

2.3 Documentation on internals (match_interface)

form_handling/0:

PREDICATE

Usage:

Description: Gets the CGI input and sends back the corresponding HTML page to the client web browser.

process_form/1:

PREDICATE

Usage: process_form(Info)

- Description: Generates and sends an HTML page.

- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Info is a dictionary of values of the attributes of a form. It is a list of form_assignment (form_dict/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

decide_page/3:

PREDICATE

Usage: decide_page(Id, Info, HtmlCode)

Description: Processes form input information Info and the action identifier Id, and generates HtmlCode.

- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Identifier of the action. (id/1)

Info is a dictionary of values of the attributes of a form. It is a list of form_assignment (form_dict/1)

HtmlCode is a term representing HTML code. (html_term/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Id is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

HtmlCode is a free variable. (var/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Id is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

HtmlCode is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

concat_with_spaces/2:

PREDICATE

Usage: concat_with_spaces(Xs, Y)

 Description: Y is the concatenation of the elements of Xs separated with blank spaces. - Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Xs is a list of atms. (list/2)

Y is an atom. (atm/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Xs is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Xs is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Y is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

default_values/1: PREDICATE

Usage: default_values(Values)

- Description: Values is the default state of a newly loaded search page.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Internal state of the search CGI. (values/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

get_values/2: PREDICATE

Usage: get_values(Info, Values)

- Description: Decodes the information Info obtained by the CGI from the input form and returns it in Values.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Info is a dictionary of values of the attributes of a form. It is a list of form_assignment (form_dict/1)

Internal state of the search CGI. (values/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

no_results/1: PREDICATE

Usage: no_results(Results)

- Description: Results is an empty result
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

results(Results)

(results/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables).

(ground/1)

make_search/2:

PREDICATE

Usage: make_search(Values, Results)

- Description: Converts the search parameters Values stored in the CGI state to the internal query language and performs the query.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Internal state of the search CGI.

(values/1)

results(Results)

(results/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables).

(ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables).

(ground/1)

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables).

(ground/1)

decode_package_list/2:

PREDICATE

Usage: decode_package_list(PA, P)

- Description: P is the result of decoding PA.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

PA is an atom.

(atm/1)

P is a list of packages.

(list/2)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

PA is currently ground (it contains no variables).

(ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

PA is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

P is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

check_request/2:

PREDICATE

Usage: check_request(Values, Problems)

- Description: Checks the types of Values and generate a the possible list of problems Problems
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Internal state of the search CGI. (values/1)

Problems is a list of problems. (list/2)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Problems is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

check_request_number/4:

PREDICATE

Usage: check_request_number(Name, Value, P0, P)

- Description: Inserts the corresponding problem (identifing the culprit input Name) into the difference list PO-P if the type of Value is not a number.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Name is an atom. (atm/1)

Value is an atom. (atm/1)

P0 is a list of problems. (list/2)

P is a list of problems. (list/2)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Name is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Value is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

P is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Name is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
Value is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
P0 is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
P is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)

$check_request_empty/4$:

PREDICATE

Usage: check_request_empty(Name, Value, P0, P)

- Description: Insert the corresponding problem (identifing the culprit input Name) into the difference list PO-P if the type of Value is empty.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Name is an atom.	(atm/1)
Value is an atom.	(atm/1)
PO is a list of problems.	(list/2)
P is a list of problems.	(list/2)
- The following properties should hold at call time:	
Name is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
Value is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
P is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Name is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
Value is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
P0 is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
P is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)

which_page_id/2:

PREDICATE

Usage: which_page_id(Info, Id)

Description: Obtains the identifier of the current page Id from Info. This
identifier can be blank if the form is in its initial state or a particular value
telling which button or action was selected by the user.

- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Info is a dictionary of values of the attributes of a form. It is a list of form_assignment $(form_dict/1)$

Identifier of the action. (id/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Info is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Id is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

3 form_page (library)

This module generates the initial search form, used to perform queries. The initial search form must be generated dynamically, as it depends on the description terms stored in the Amos database.

3.1 Usage and interface (form_page)

• Library usage:

```
:- use_module(library(form_page)).
```

• Exports:

- Predicates:

```
generate_form_page/4,
generate_selected_termnames/1.
```

• Other modules used:

- Application modules:

```
portalfiles(web_utils),
portalfiles(standard_page), search(utils),
search(results_page), search(error_page),
search(match_interface), search(balboa),
search(db_names), balboa_term_desc.
```

- System library modules:

```
pillow/http,pillow/html,aggregates,lists,
between,pillow/pillow_types.
```

- Internal (engine) modules:

```
hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.
```

3.2 Documentation on exports (form_page)

generate_form_page/4:

PREDICATE

Usage: generate_form_page(Values, PageId, Results, HTML)

- Description: Generates in HTML the code of the main search page, using Values as the values to fill in the fields of the search form. This HTML page may contain results of previous queries, that can be specified in Results, if it is available.
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Internal state of the search CGI. (values/1)

Identifier of the action. (id/1)

results(Results) (results/1)

HTML is a term representing HTML code. (html_term/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

PageId is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

PageId is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

HTML is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

generate_selected_termnames/1:

PREDICATE

Usage: generate_selected_termnames(TermNames2Add)

- Description: Obtains the names of the selection lists of description terms in the search form page.
- Call and exit should be compatible with:

TermNames2Add is a list of atms.

(list/2)

- The following properties should hold upon exit:

TermNames 2Add is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

4 results_page (library)

This module generates a HTML page that contains resulting assemblies of a given query. This HTML page is embedded in the general search form page (generated by form_page), in order to allow sequences of queries.

4.1 Usage and interface (results_page)

• Library usage:

```
:- use_module(library(results_page)).
```

• Exports:

- Predicates:
 results_page/3.

• Other modules used:

- Application modules:

```
amos(configuration), search(utils),
portalfiles(standard_page),
portalfiles(web_utils), search(match_interface),
search(balboa), search(db_names),
balboa_term_desc.
```

- System library modules:

```
pillow/http,pillow/html,lists,terms,
pillow/pillow_types.
```

- Internal (engine) modules:

```
hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.
```

4.2 Documentation on exports (results_page)

results_page/3: PREDICATE

Usage: results_page(Values, Results, HTML)

- Description: Translates the search results stored in Results plus the search parameters Values given by the user in the search form to a formatted HTML view HTML
- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

Internal state of the search CGI. (values/1)

results(Results) (results/1)

HTML is a term representing HTML code. (html_term/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Values is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

Results is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

HTML is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

5 error_page (library)

This module generates an HTML page showing a list of error messages.

5.1 Usage and interface (error_page)

• Library usage:

:- use_module(library(error_page)).

• Exports:

- Predicates:
 error_page/2.
- Regular Types: problem/1.

• Other modules used:

- System library modules: pillow/http, pillow/html, hiordlib, pillow/pillow_types.

- Internal (engine) modules:

hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.

5.2 Documentation on exports (error_page)

error_page/2: PREDICATE

Usage: error_page(Problems, HTML)

 Description: Generates an HTML page HTML for showing a list of problems Problems detected in the data introduced by the user in the search form page. It is used throughout the system to generate user friendly error messages when necessary. - Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

```
Problems is a list of problems. (list/2)
```

HTML is a term representing HTML code. (html_term/1)

- The following properties should hold at call time:

Problems is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

- The following properties hold upon exit:

Problems is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

HTML is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

problem/1: REGTYPE

```
problem(empty(X)) :-
    atm(X).
problem(no_num(X)) :-
    atm(X).
```

Usage:

- *Description:* Type for use in error_page/2.

6 term_desc_page (library)

This module generates a HTML page showing the description of all dictionary terms included in the Amos database.

6.1 Usage and interface (term_desc_page)

• Library usage:

:- use_module(library(term_desc_page)).

• Exports:

- Predicates:
 generate_term_description/1.

• Other modules used:

- Application modules:

```
search(utils), portalfiles(standard_page),
portalfiles(web_utils), search(balboa),
search(db_names), balboa_term_desc.
```

- System library modules:

```
pillow/http,pillow/html,aggregates,
pillow/pillow_types.
```

- Internal (engine) modules:

hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.

6.2 Documentation on exports (term_desc_page)

generate_term_description/1:

PREDICATE

Usage: generate_term_description(HTML)

- Description: Generates a HTML page with the description of all dictionary terms included in the Amos database.
- Call and exit should be compatible with:HTML is a term representing HTML code. (html_term/1)
- The following properties should hold upon exit:HTML is currently ground (it contains no variables). (ground/1)

7 match (library)

This module contains the implementation of the matching engine. Given a query expressed in the Amos internal language, it produces a list of packages that satisfy the query.

7.1 Usage and interface (match)

• Library usage:

:- use_module(library(match)).

• Exports:

- Predicates:

match_sort_interval_list/9.

- Regular Types:

```
match_mode/1, match_sort_result/1, sort_method/1,
weight_package_number/1,
weight_unsatisfied_deps/1,
weight_tighter_assemblies/1,
weight_capabilities/1,
weight_best_capabilities_ratio/1, package/1,
capability/1.
```

• Other modules used:

- Application modules:

```
search(balboa), search(db_names),
balboa_term_desc, search(utils).
```

- System library modules:

sets, hiordlib, sort, lists, aggregates.

- Internal (engine) modules:

hiord_rt, arithmetic, atomic_basic, attributes, basic_props, basiccontrol, data_facts, exceptions, io_aux, io_basic, prolog_flags, streams_basic, system_info, term_basic, term_compare, term_typing.

7.2 Documentation on exports (match)

match sort interval list/9:

PREDICATE

Usage: match_sort_interval_list(SortMethod, Mode, Wanted,

IncPack, ExcPack, Ini, Len, MatchList, Total)

- Description: This is the main procedure for performing a search expressed in the internal language. This procedure generates a list MatchList containing the resulting assemblies of a given query. A query is expressed in the internal query language, and is defined as follows:
 - * SortMethod specifies the sorting method used for the query. Several values are allowed, as described in sort_method/1.
 - * Mode selects the search type. Allowed values are described in match_mode/1.
 - * Wanted is the list of capabilities to search. It must be provided to the matching engine as a list of description terms.
 - * IncPack allows to specify that the results of the matching engine must contain a mandatory set of packages, represented by a list of package names. If there are no packages to include, IncPack must be an empty list.
 - * In the same way, ExcPack specifies a (possibly empty) list of packages which should not appear in the resulting assemblies given by the matching engine.

The assemblies provided by the matching engine that satisfy the query are sorted using the criteria specified in SortMethod, and returned in subsets of length Len, starting with the Inith element of the complete results list (the first element of the list is numbered 0). In Total the total number of results found is returned.

- Calls should, and exit will be compatible with:

SortMethod Weights assigned for the different sort options in the internal query language. (sort_method/1)

Mode Matching modes available in the search engine. Available modes can be:

- * all returns all the assemblies which match the query.
- * best (N) selects the best N assemblies which satisfy the query.
- * gen(N,M) extends the matching of assemblies taking into account possible generalizations: N determines the maximum level of generalizations in preconditions (the description terms that a package requires), while M specifies the level of generalizations in postconditions (terms that a package provides).

	(mat	cch_mode/1)
	Wanted is a list.	(list/1)
	IncPack is a list.	(list/1)
	ExcPack is a list.	(list/1)
	Ini is an integer.	(int/1)
	Len is an integer.	(int/1)
	MatchList Sorted result of a search (match_sort	result/1)
	Total is an integer.	(int/1)
_	The following properties should hold at call time:	
	SortMethod is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Mode is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Wanted is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	IncPack is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	ExcPack is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Ini is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Len is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
_	The following properties hold upon exit:	
	SortMethod is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Mode is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Wanted is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	IncPack is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	ExcPack is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Ini is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Len is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	MatchList is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)
	Total is currently ground (it contains no variables).	(ground/1)

match_mode/1: REGTYPE

Usage: match_mode(X)

Description: X Matching modes available in the search engine. Available modes can be:

- * all returns all the assemblies which match the query.
- * best(N) selects the best N assemblies which satisfy the query.
- * gen(N,M) extends the matching of assemblies taking into account possible generalizations: N determines the maximum level of generalizations in preconditions (the description terms that a package requires), while M specifies the level of generalizations in postconditions (terms that a package provides).

match_sort_result/1:

REGTYPE

- Description: X Sorted result of a search

sort_method/1: REGTYPE

```
sort_method(key_weights(P,U,T,C,B)) :-
    weight__package_number(P),
    weight__unsatisfied_deps(U),
    weight__tighter_assemblies(T),
    weight__capabilities(C),
    weight__best_capabilities_ratio(B).
```

Usage: sort_method(X)

Description: X Weights assigned for the different sort options in the internal query language.

weight_package_number/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: weight_package_number(X)

 Description: X Weight assigned to the number of packages provided by the matching engine.

weight_unsatisfied_deps/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: weight_unsatisfied_deps(X)

 Description: X Weight assigned to the number of unsatisfied dependencies (less dependencies get higher weights).

weight_tighter_assemblies/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: weight__tighter_assemblies(X)

Description: X Weight assigned to the number of tighter assemblies (looser assemblies get higher weights).

weight_capabilities/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: weight_capabilities(X)

- Description: X Weight for number of capabilities.

weight_best_capabilities_ratio/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: weight_best_capabilities_ratio(X)

Description: X Weight assigned to the ratio satisfied/unsatisfied capabilities.

package/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: package(X)

- Description: X is a Amos package

capability/1:

REGTYPE

Usage: capability(X)

- Description: X is a Amos capability

References

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