CyberStacks(sm): A 'Library-Organized' Virtual Science and Technology Reference Collection

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Abstract
A common critique of the World Wide Web (WWW), and the Internet in general, is that while there are numerable and usefulness information sources that are accessible, identification of significant resources is not as efficient and effective as many desire. To facilitate access to selected WWW and other Internet resources, a prototype demonstration service called CyberStacks(sm) (http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/) has been created that has adapted the classification scheme used by the Library of Congress and other major research libraries to identify and organize significant reference resources in a variety of scientific and technological disciplines.

Disciplines
Library and Information Science

Comments
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A common critique of the World Wide Web (WWW), and the Internet in general, is that while there are numerable and usefulness information sources that are accessible, identification of significant resources is not as efficient and effective as many desire. To facilitate access to selected WWW and other Internet resources, a prototype demonstration service called CyberStacks(sm) (http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/) has been created that has adapted the classification scheme used by the Library of Congress and other major research libraries to identify and organize significant reference resources in a variety of scientific and technological disciplines.

The Library of Congress classification system is a well-established scheme that has been used by libraries worldwide for organizing a variety of other publications and media for generations. Within its schedules, this classification system not only denotes subject coverage and content, but information format and conceptual relationship as well. It is believed that the scheme offers the context and structure that can facilitate identification of relevant WWW and other Internet resources.

CyberStacks(sm) has applied the classification scheme at a deep level of specificity and description and has incorporated resources within a hypertexted framework that allows users to browse through a virtual library stacks with resources in order by their respective classification number. CyberStacks(sm), thus, seeks to make full use of capability of the WWW itself and the versatility of Web browsers in its description and presentation of selected resources. Key to the CyberStacks(sm) system is a browsable classification scheme that allows users to scan broader or narrower subject categories at will, and then if desired to connect directly to a selected resource. The structure, organization and access provided by CyberStacks(sm) represents the convergence, merger and fusion of a subject-ordered catalog and an associated collection, where like materials stand together in the stacks.

Through a variety of links, users themselves have the option of nominating resources for inclusion within CyberStacks(sm), or to request that a specific type of publication be made available as a Web publication within it. Several Virtual Advisory Boards are in the process of formation to assist with its further development and
refinement, and interested specialists are encouraged to participate.

In its selection of resources for incorporation, CyberStacks(sm) has adopted many of the same philosophies and guidelines used in the selection of non-Internet resources by most librarians. As with its overall scheme, CyberStacks(sm) seeks not be a digital library per se, but a true 'virtual' collection.

CyberStacks(sm) is a demonstration prototype that has been made available to a community of potential users for review and critique. As much of it is still 'Under Construction', it would be premature to bookmark or link to it at this time. It is hoped that with the appropriate level of support, CyberStacks(sm) will become a functioning service by July 1, 1996.

CyberStacks(sm) is an ongoing personal research project and its availability does not constitute an endorsement by Iowa State University, the Iowa State University Computation Center, nor the Iowa State University Library.

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