Internet Resource Guides: Stories for the Net

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- Louis Rosenfeld
- **lou@umich.edu**
- University of Michigan/Argus Associates, Inc.

Problems we already know about the Net

- scale : there is too much information on the Net
- heterogeneity : format and content vary wildly
- quality : most of it is garbage
- distribution : the good stuff is hard to find

Some solutions

- Internet navigational tools
  - Gopher
  - WWW
- Internet retrieval tools
  - Archie
  - Veronica
  - JumpStation, WWW Worm
  - WAIS
- Internet intelligent agents
  - Knowbot
  - NetFind
  - Stanford Netnews Filtering Service

Failings of these approaches

- primitive technologies
- “one-size-fits-all” mindset
- many actually make the problems worse
- divorced from intellectual efforts

An integrative approach

- create content or subject-oriented guides and respositories of secondary information
- synthesize the above solutions with intellectual effort
- makes “value-added” repackaging possible

Subject-Oriented Internet Resource Guides

- identify Internet resources relevant to a specific subject
- describe and evaluate resources
- organize resources in the context of a usable package (preferably not using a tool-based categorization scheme)

Who uses these guides

- general users
- server builders
- net trainers

How to build these guides

- “quick-and-dirty” searching
- contact relevant communities (via Usenet and LISTSERVs) and request assistance
- search and browse the Net
- assemble resources
- consult with subject specialists

How to build these guides (cont.)

- periodic updating for communities
- describe resources (structured or free-form)
- evaluate resources
- organize resources
- package with tables of contents, indices, and other “meta-data”

Where to find these guides

- Clearinghouse for Subject-Oriented Internet Resource Guides
- available via anonymous FTP, Gopher, WWW
- full texts are WAIS-indexed
- URL: **`http://http2.sils.umich.edu/~lou/chhome.html`**
- high demand indicates success of the value-added approach