Book Reviews

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Book Review Editor

Content Organization in the New Millennium. Edited by A. Neelameghan and K.N. Prasad. Bangalore, India : Sarada Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science, 2001. 148 p ISBN 81-900957-1-4.

This is a collection of papers contributed to the "Seminar on Content Organization in the New Millennium" held in Bangalore, 2-4 June 2000. There are nine papers included, covering "a whole range of issues related to content organization for enhancing information retrieval efficiency from databases". The authors of the papers are primarily professors of library and information science, and the audience will be academics and researchers.

The opening address, "Knowledge Management and Content Organization", by L.J. Haravu, sets the tone for the seminar by placing its theme in the broad context of knowledge management. This paper concerns itself with the nature of knowledge, its topologies and the necessity for understanding the complexities of its processes. In doing so, it presents ideas on "physical and logical organization of content" and considers some technologies relevant to this environment. The author views knowledge from three perspectives. The first concern is with "ownership, control and value", and it focuses on " identifying, collecting and organizing codified knowledge". It assumes reliance on information technology (IT) "to manage, generate and share content "using databases and related technologies". From the second perspective, the author views knowledge as a process, focussing on the dynamics of "creating, adapting, learning, applying and communicating". A third perspective views knowledge as a complex organizing system and concerns itself with "patterns in understanding how knowledge is created, grows and multiplies". These three perspectives are seen as useful in understanding the different qualities of knowledge. In terms of knowledge complexity, the author has developed a "Learning and Performance Framework".

Each of the remaining eight papers addresses some special aspect or application of content organization as a basis for information retrieval. In "Content Organization as Aid to Knowledge Discovery", A. Neelameghan examines various search paths that lead to the discovery of new knowledge, and outlines the prerequisites to knowledge discovery, such as data, in-depth analysis, user interfaces and search engines, structuring and interlinking of concepts, statistical and informetric operations research tools, and facilities for using different types of media in the process. A list identifies knowledge tools and methods and, by way of illustration, there are four case studies. These case studies include a comparative study of the attributes of antibiotics and the discovery of new ones; the use of a geographic information system; the application of a depth-classification scheme for classifying and organizing micro-documents; and the demonstration of the use of interlinking within and across databases.

J.K. Ravichandra Rao describes "Quantitative Techniques for Content Analysis", looking specifically at relational analysis. The author outlines the basic steps and describes statistical and informetric techniques to conclude that quantitative techniques "provide an analytical frame work within which researchers can pursue their research questions", but warns that these techniques can be misused resulting in misinterpretation and misrepresentation. T.B. Rajashekar deals with "Content Organization for Internet-Based Information Services". The author is particularly interested in "integration of multimedia content, hardware and software independence, and seamless information access". The article contains very little text; rather, it is a series of illustrations (slides and/or computer screens) depicting factors that need to be considered in organizing contents and delivering services in web-based systems – factors such as web architecture, applications, content hosting and content formats.

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Shalini R. Urs and K.S. Raghavan are concerned with mark up languages and metadata. In "Organizing Web Resources : XML for Enhancing Retrieval Effectiveness", they examine the limitations of HTML "for web publishing in general and embedding metadata in particular". Also, they explore the usefulness of XML in the enhancement of search engines effectiveness. S.B. Viswakumar examines "Content Organization in Multimedia Databases". This author considers the organizing of multimedia to be "complex" but feels that for ease of the user it is an essential task".

B.A. Sharada recognizes the importance of language in databases and deals with the very special case of "Content Organization in Kannada Databases". Kannada is the major Dravidian language of Mysore, south India, and the study was carried out on the Kannada nighaNTu (dictionary) in eight volumes which was available in machine readable form. Entries and structure were examined, and a structure conforming to S.R. Ranganathan's facet structure (Personality, Matter, Energy, Space and Time (PMEST)) was recommended, to ensure consistency in analysis and organization. The methodology and data are described in detail.

Two final papers focus on education as it relates to content organization. M.A. Gopinath discusses "Training for Content Organization" using seven attributes that he considers necessary to deal with content organization for information retrieval: expertise, input skills, development process, intellectual skills, aesthetic skills, analytical skills and holistic skills. As a follow up, G. Bhattacharyya provides "Musings on Curriculum Design for Library and Information Science in the IT Environment with Special Reference to Content Organization". Under this topic the author discusses the purpose and value of a curriculum, methodology, and a common/general reference framework. In conclusion, he states that "the intention of this presentation ... is to specify the essential factors to be taken into consideration in developing a curriculum for a 'professional discipline' with reference to a common or general frame work". Bhattacharyya further asserts that this framework "is believed to be effectively applicable to any 'professional discipline' including Library and Information Science".

Content Organization in the New Millennium provides an introduction and general overview of major issues related to content organization in various types of information systems. The depth of analysis and discussion, however, is uneven across the contributions. Some of the papers have substantive content, while others appear to be based on notes used in the presentation. In particular, the paper on internet-based information services falls into the latter category. Discussion of topics and sub-topics is frequently very brief – one or two sentences only. The treatment of most topics is very general in nature. Five of the papers have no bibliographical references but those that do reflect a good knowledge of the work done by well known researchers in the field. There are illustrations, some of which suffer from the poor quality of paper used for this publication.

Three of the authors are well known internationally. One is currently a visiting professor in the United States, and all three have taught in library and information science programmes in various parts of the world.

All of the topics are of major interest in library and information science today. This fact alone confers value to the work. Its major purpose appears to be to provide a record of the material presented at the seminar. To that extent, the work achieves its goal. Its most immediate audience will be academics and researchers in the field of library and information science working in India. However, *Content Organization in the New Millennium* will also be useful to academics and researchers in other parts of the world who are looking for different perspectives on these major issues and wish to open lines of communication with others in the field.

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OLSON, Hope A., and John L. BOLL. **Subject Analysis in Online Catalogs**. 2nd ed. Englewood, Colo. : Libraries Unlimited, 2001. xv, 333 p. ISBN 1-56308-800-2 (pb).

This is the revised and expanded edition of the original work written by Aluri, Kemp and Boll that was published ten years ago. The topic, purpose and scope of the work, now under the direction of Hope A. Olson and John L. Boll, remain largely unchanged,

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