

# **Virtual Libraries – Conceptual Considerations**

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Library of

the Veterinary School Hannover,  
Germany

# The Library of the School of Veterinary Medicine Hannover - Where are we?



Yes, at the "H" in  
Germany, right here!



## What are we?

- The home of the German Core Collection of Veterinary Medicine and General Parasitology
- The home of the Virtual Library of Veterinary Medicine and General Parasitology, Germany

Both subsidised by:



# **Principal questions in the development of a virtual library:**

Which contents?

How to select?

Data filing

# Resources

- Linklists compiled by libraries etc.
- Directories

BUBL

Open Directory Project

## Resources 2

- Existing virtual libraries

[NetVet](#)

[Vetgate](#)

It does not make sense to merely duplicate from these, but to choose for one's own. –  
Systematic surfing is highly recommended!

# What should a webpage look like ?

Plain and simple?

Gorgeous and flashy?

While the latter of the two may look more attractive, we decided to concentrate on contents rather than on presentation.

# Contents (a few impressive examples)

- Databases
- Fulltext documents especially IVIS
- Graphics, photographs, animations

Scenes from the medical profession

<http://molvis.sdsc.edu/visres/index.html>

<http://www.umass.edu/microbio/chime/hemoglob/2frmcont.htm>

## Contents 2

- Congress calendars
- Catalogues

<http://rzblx1.uni-regensburg.de/ezeit/index.phtml?bibid=7&lang=en>

- URLs of tools and plug-ins

## **Selection of resources**

Given the wealth of available resources, developers may have to limit themselves to quality resources as defined by:

<http://biome.ac.uk/guidelines/eval/howto.html>

and

<http://hitiweb.mitrettek.org/docs/criteria.html>

However, the observation of so many criteria may be too time-taking. Therefore we tried to economise, applying only six criteria:

## **Selection of resources 2**

### Our own quality criteria

- Relevance to subject
- Authority
- Regularity in updating
- Clearness of presentation
- Loading of page
- Stability of host server

## Selection of resources 3

With these clear definitions given and some experience in the selection of sites, it is evident that a developer would find the following kind of homepage not eligible for inclusion:

”Welcome to the homepage of.....

Our address is.....

Business hours.....“

# Systematising of resources

Systematic display becomes necessary with growth of the virtual library.

It needs no further discussion in this context.

## Use of metadata

The subject of metadata would require a separate lecture. A deeper insight is possible here:

<http://dublincore.org>

One detail matters most to our project: the 15 categories of metadata established in Dublin Core unmistakably describe an internet resource. Thus a page set up with metadata included will be retrievable by a search-engine.

## **Subject specific internet search engine**

This is one of the harder aspects of the virtual library. We have not tackled it yet. It may have to be programmed by a third party or may come as a module of I-Port of OCLC | PICA:

Iport

This module will be available in our regional library network on January 1st, 2003.

# Link checker

Several products are available on the internet as freeware, our choice:

[Xenu's Link Sleuth](#)

A link checker is highly recommended.

# Durability

- Persistent URLs

Still more a perspective than a widely used method to make a site retrievable, no matter whether the URL changes. Learn more at:

[PURL](#)

- Open Archive Initiative

A way to durable existence on the internet for your digitised documents is to join the:

[Open Archive Initiative](#)

## **More in store**

While the Virtual Library of Veterinary Medicine and General Parasitology has taken shape, there is already a new project ready to go online, the

### Biologieportal Hannover

which is a combined effort of the three libraries the logos of which are presented on the starting page, but was initiated by us.

# The Future

Gateway network with other virtual libraries.

# Recommendations

1. Reassess goals continuously
2. Discuss with staff and colleagues
3. Keep informed of the developments
4. Install a log-file-evaluation programme

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Err.....  
anything else?

Oh, yes!!!



