

Summaries

ARTICLES

Flemming Hvam Lippke og Peder Michael Pedersen: Nordkons Internet guide (Nordkons Internet Guide)

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This paper presents a complete solution for a reference service on the Internet. "Nordkons Internet Guide" is developed, designed, and produced for Nordjysk Musikkonservatorium (Northern Jutland Music Academy), and basically the service is a comprehensive model for any type of library. The service was developed as part of our final project at The Royal School of Library and Information science, 1999 and is based on theories of information ecology, value-added processes in information systems, and information life circles.

Benedicte Kirkegaard og Gitte Rosenø: Folkebibliotekernes Netguide - FNG (The Public Libraries' Net Guide)

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Folkebibliotekernes Netguide (FNG) is a guide to internet resources covering all subject areas. The guide, which may be used free of charge, is aimed at the general users of the Danish public libraries. At present the guide contains about

2,000 annotated resources - and new titles are added every day. The aim is to register all the Danish resources - added with Nordic and other foreign resources - which meet the established quality selection criteria. The resources are selected and annotated by approximately 90 librarians from 21 large public libraries. The guide is expected to reach a content of 5,000 resources during the next two years. Guidelines, policies and other information about the project are published on the Info Web-site (<http://info.helsbib.dk/net-guide/>).

Steen Ammentorp og Christine Josiasen Urskov: Det elektroniske referenceinterview (The Electronic Reference Interview)

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The traditional reference interview has proven not to be an easy thing to conduct. It's often hindered by miscommunication between the patron and the librarian and by the fact that the patron is often unable to verbalise his information need. However, with the knowledge of these difficulties and with the right tools the librarian is able to conduct a successful reference interview. The question now arise, whether it is possible to conduct a successful electronic reference interview handling the patrons questions when offering a electronic ref-

erence service. Our examination of the electronic reference interview showed it to be no less problematic than the traditional reference interview. However, by applying a fill-in form on the World Wide Web for handling the patrons' questions and by incorporating the experiences and tools from the traditional reference interview, we found that it's possible to avoid most of the troubles, primarily caused by a difficult and an asynchronous question negotiation by E-mail, in the electronic reference interview. This resulted in our presentation of a suggestion for a fill-in form for handling the electronic reference interview.

Gitte Sølberg: Projekt Spørg Biblioteket – en stumper service for bibliotekarere (Ask the Library Project” - a Stumper Service for Librarians)

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The idea of this project was to examine the possibility for a Danish library of serving as a terminus for difficult reference questions. The questions have been checked for an answer by asking libraries before mailing them to the stumper list. The reason why it has not been possible to answer the more difficult questions before is the lack of resources within the individual library. The librarians are not paid, but put their enthusiasm in the project. Technically we are working on a mailing list. There is also established a homepage for the service of non-members. Anyone can see the answers and the questions. But the questions are answered by librarians. The purpose was 1) to create a teamwork as broad as possible between librarians in public libraries as well as librarians in research libraries and similar institutions, all having great experience in presenting valid information in an interesting and understandable way, 2) to take advantage of the Danish librarians' private knowledge. The way of registration is by sending a personal e-mail to *listserv@gentoftebib.dk*. Our homepage is *www.sporgbiblioteket.dk* or on the homepage for the Libraries in Gentofte *www.gentofte.bibnet.dk*.

Lisbet Olesen: BiblioteksVagten (BiblioteksVagten)

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The traditional reference service in public libraries is changing as a consequence of the appearance of the Internet. Several users are able to seek the needed information themselves. However, the need for an intermediary is still present for more complex information retrieval, and the libraries, therefore, have to develop new services to meet this challenge. 'BiblioteksVagten' is an experimental service with the aim of offering all citizens in Denmark a free mediated library service, day and night. It is also an experiment of co-operation between the participating libraries and librarians (Herning, Silkeborg and Gentofte). As the service has just started in the autumn 1999, results concerning the use and the users are still not available, but the success of the experiment is without doubt depending on the promotion of the service through the libraries' web-sites all over the country. The perspectives of the service are 1) an extension of the service with co-operation from several libraries, 2) identification of new roles for librarians, and 3) a general promotion of public libraries in the information society.

Marianne Hummelshøj og Bo Gerner Nielsen: Folkebibliotekernes referenceservices på Internet ved starten af det nye årtusinde (Public libraries and reference services on the Internet at the beginning of the new millennium).

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The article is partly a presentation of an empirical study partly a presentation of an analytical model. The empirical study examines the reference services on the Internet in 118 public libraries in Denmark. The analytical model on which the study is based consists of: information services, value added services, communication services and transaction services. The article outlines the most important findings of the study and concludes that the public libraries needs to focus more on the development of Internet access to local community information, thematic access to the library's web-site and actively mediate the national information services.

Dorthe Aurvig: Hvorfor er det så svært at skrive en god manual? (Why is writing a manual so difficult?)

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The above question is one that fairly often turns up in everyday life – usually accompanied by colourful language expressing resentment, frustration, and disappointment. But, most of all, there is a feeling of amazement. How on earth can it be so difficult to write a manual in a language that the user will understand and which will enable him to use the product? The aim of this article is to provide an introduction to the subject and create an overview of the many aspects, which are the reason why it isn't so simple, after all. Man's interaction with the computer is the underlying theme. It results in a large number of problems common to users of all computer systems, irrespective of their purpose. Thus, computer based systems form the pivotal point of the article, but questions particular to information retrieval are drawn in. People differ from one another. This simple truth is the main reason why it is so difficult to write a good manual. The text discusses some 20 points, which influence the construction of user documentation. The article concludes that the perfect manual is an ideal, which it will not be possible to meet. A certain manual may be suitable for one person under certain conditions, but it will not be useful to all persons in any situation. These rather dismal prospects may lead to defeatism; but as some sort of documentation will be necessary, one will have to take a pragmatic view. It may not be possible to create a perfect manual, but there is knowledge to be drawn upon, and it is possible to communicate considerations and decisions to the user. Acknowledging that writing a manual *is* difficult may be a step towards producing documentation, which will help a considerable number of people, who will be using them.

REVIEW

Jan B. Steffensen: Internet World Wide Web Netværskommunik@tion. (Internet World Wide Web Network Communic@tion)

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A collection of ten articles edited by Jens F. Jensen, is divided into three themes. The three contributions in the first theme are focusing on the netmedia, but the very thorough analyses have been written several years ago, and they are not up-to-date with the newest developments on the Internet. The second theme deals with concepts like interactivity and multimedia, and the authors discuss theoretical approaches to these dominating concepts, e.g. the development of interactivity. Finally, the four contributions in the last theme are concerned with the concept of cyberspace as well as the presentation and discussion of 3D worlds on WWW. Together the ten articles form an attempt to analyze and characterize major trends in the development of the modern Internet society.