

Title	多面的な情報の整理を考慮した情報の活性化を支援するシステムの構築-インターネット時代の情報整理法-
Author(s)	今川, 崇司
Citation	
Issue Date	2007-09
Type	Thesis or Dissertation
Text version	author
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10119/3745
Rights	
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Development of Integrated Service for Organizing and Activating Information

:Information Organizing Service
for Internet Age

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September 2007

Keywords:Information Organizing, Information Activating,
Group Ware, RSS, Internet Service

Nowadays, the amounts of information around us are increasing day by day. Therefore, it seems much difficult for us to manage and organize large quantities of information in order to remind and reuse them. This is called “information overload”.

In 1993, Y. Noguchi wrote in his book “With personal computers, human will only do what human can do as a main task. The tasks like organizing and retrieving information will be the computers’ role.” But now, we know this is not true. We sometimes feel the difficulty to retrieve information when we want to display it in spite of using personal computers. Our ‘desktop’ in a computer display would often be cluttered with icons; many files which we thought them important for later works would hide in the hierarchical folders that we could hardly remind. Though there have been several attempts for organizing information, we know there is no simple way to do it. It is said that no single concept or system can be considered a “silver bullet” (a magical solution to a problem). Therefore, we have to combine and integrate these concepts.

In this research, we have developed a system which supports gathering and organizing information by integrating several concepts for organizing

information. This system is based upon eight concepts as follows:

- (1) Reducing organizing costs since users do not prefer to make efforts to organize information,
- (2) Organizing information using several ways such as times, spaces, categories, frequencies and so on,
- (3) Making it possible to retrieve related information about information,
- (4) Formatting information so that different type of information such as URLs and local files can retrieve by the same way,
- (5) Accumulating information in one place not to be dispersed and making it possible to use anywhere through internet ,
- (6) Using dynamic queries such as interactive graphs for retrieving information,
- (7) Making a platform independent,
- (8) Sharing by many people.

In evaluation experiments, ten participants were asked to use this service for about two months. We recorded data of their activities for analysis. We had carried out two evaluation experiments. After the experiments, each participant was asked to give rating among five levels for various items and to give free comments.

The evaluation is based upon the analysis of recorded data and the questionnaires, transcribing their voice of IC recorder.

The result of the evaluation experiments was as follows:

- (1) It can be said that our system is effective to retrieve information for its capability to gather and organize information by several ways. Especially organizing and retrieving by color is much effective.
- (2) Retrieving both information and its related information by time or space is effective. User can easily access the related information to activate them.
- (3) It can be said that the capability of sharing information with others is effective. Users can get more information and can enjoy using our system than using only for personal use.
- (4) It can be said that the capability of operating through the internet is effective. Users can access registered information unless they are in the different place where they had registered it.

In conclusion, our system is effective for organizing and activating related information. Participants could retrieve information more easily than they had done before and could share it among the other people through the internet.