

DIGITAL LIBRARY SYSTEM: BRIDGING THE HIGH COST OF JOURNALS IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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ABSTRACT: Due to the high cost of research journals, the objective is to acquire and publish in web format, marine science papers from the IAMSLIC and other databases to make these freely accessible, but restricted to the scientific community registered as users from developing countries. With the sponsoring of IAMSLIC, ODINCARSA (Ocean Data and Information Centers for The Caribbean and South America) intends to get contributions of journal publications, single researchers, libraries, and research-educational institutions. ODINCARSA will manage the web site to allow continuous updating of the research works and users database. The users will meet some requirements such as coming from a developing country and working in a research or educational center to access the system. The expected results are that the scientific community from developing countries could take advantage of scientific works from high-level researchers and contribute to the progress of the marine science of these countries.

KEYWORDS: Digital Library, Librarians, Communication, Web format, Web site, Digital agent.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project is to develop a low cost digital library system for the use of the scientific community of The Caribbean and South America, using the existing capabilities of research institutions and the IAMSLIC organization.

METHODOLOGY

This project should be managed and economically supported by a group such as ODINCARSA and the cooperation of IAMSLIC, as a way to take advantage of an active organization and international contacts.

The proposed virtual library will have components such as shared workspaces, links to specific sites, electronic meeting rooms, phone and video conferences and general news. The project will be divided in three steps:

First step: Structure definition

Using the Institutional Sponsoring Program from IAMSLIC, ODINCARSA members will become active members of IAMSLIC, to get the benefits of accessing papers and publications, through contacts with publishers, links to marine science libraries, and other means of getting information provided by the Organization. On the ODINCARSA web page will be published information about institutional members, links to other Regional Groups web sites, general information about IAMSLIC, and links to key web pages of IAMSLIC.

ODINCARSA will manage a list of researchers that have the three basic requirements: to come from a developing country, to work in a research or educational institution or be an independent researcher. The list will be made using a web registration form, reviewed and processed periodically by the ODINCARSA-IAMSLIC web manager. Besides this list, the web page manager will publish a list of qualified scientists or researchers of the region interested in obtaining affiliation with IAMSLIC using the grant program of IAMSLIC to become active members

Tasks:

- Identification of the participant institutions. These institutions will define which research works to publish and what links they want to set in the virtual library page.
- Design and creation of a web page including registration form, news section and classified links.
- Registration of the institutions with IAMSLIC for 3 free years.

Second step: Communication tools

Communication is essential in a digital library, to facilitate sharing of information and ideas between potential users. Two basic tools, digital agents and electronic meeting rooms, will be added in a second step.

Tasks:

- Development of digital agents to classify and distribute information related to the area of interest of the researcher.
- Development of electronic meeting rooms using (as possible) free electronic messenger systems.

Third step: Advanced communication tool

Like the previous step, adding a videoconference system will be very useful as a way of efficient communication between librarians.

Task:

- Development of phone and videoconference system using (as possible) free tools.

CONCLUSIONS

- The project has a low cost involved, mainly related to web page maintenance.
- To get the planned objective, it is important to obtain a cooperation agreement between IAMSLIC and ODINCARSA
- Initially, the proposed digital library will not accomplish everything needed in a virtual library; the steps noted above will be developed according to the funding.

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