

## ITR5 Information Usage

### Lecture 3

Thomas Krichel

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### Reading

"Information Architecture" by Louis Rosenfeld and Peter Morville,  
O'Reilly 1998

chapter 5 (not worth reading)

### Structure

Organizing the information on the web site

1. why label
2. individual labels
3. labelling systems

## labelling

a label is short expression that represents a larger set of information.

example: "contact us"

labelling is an outgrowth of site organization, that we have discussed previously. labelling communicates the organization.

## why bother

- we need to guess at how users respond to a label
- users will not spend much time interpreting the label
- appropriate tone, no "hot", "cool", "stuff"
- danger of designer-centered thinking: should reflect thinking of the user, not of the owner
- it is easy to have unplanned labelling

## sticking with the familiar

- main, main page, home, home page
- search, find
- browse
- contact, contact us, feedback
- Help, FAQ, Frequently Asked Questions
- About, About Us, About *name*

Labels may be augmented with scope notes

grammatical consistency

- contact us, search our site, browse our content
- contact, search, browse
- contact information, search page, table of contents

labels as indexing terms

- use in `<meta>` tags, or in `<title>` tag
- use as controlled vocabulary in the database

some search engines do not use metadata

textual label

born in *Vöklingen, (Saarland)* in 1965, I studied Economics and Social Sciences at the universities of *Toulouse, Paris, Exeter* and *Leicester*. Between February 1993 and April 2001 I lectured in the *Department of Economics* at the *University of Surrey*. In 1993 I founded *NetEc*, a consortium of Internet projects for academic economists. In 1997, I founded the *RePEc* dataset to document Economics. Between October and December 2000, I held a visiting professorship at *Hitotsubashi University*.

## labels as headings

good practice:

- consistency in terminology: wording on labels is uniform and cohesive
- consistency in granularity
  - chunks covered by labels at the same level is roughly equal
  - chunks covered do not vary by their depth

## iconic labels

- a limited “vocabulary” of commonly understood labels
- fine for some key concepts
- need to be very consistently placed
- can communicate a graphic identity for the page
- are easy to find on a page (provided that page is not long)

## setting up a good labeling system I

- start from existing one
  - put in table or tree (on paper)
  - make small changes towards consistency
- “benevolent plagiarism” from competitors and academic sites
- use controlled vocabularies, example yellow pages

### setting up a good labeling system II

- use a thesaurus, example legislative indexing vocabulary
  - “see” link
  - “see also” links
  - broader terms
  - narrower terms
- labels from contents: best judged by an outsider
- labels from query logs
- labels from user interviews
- labels from modeling user needs

### fine tuning a labelling system

- remove duplicates
- sort alphabetically
- homogenize case and punctuation and grammar
- remove synonyms according to audience
- make labels as different from one another as possible
- search for gaps
- look into the future
- keep scope focussed
- consider granularity

### non-representational labelling systems

- may be good to stimulate user interest in the odd case
- may work on a fun site