Incentives for Social Annotation

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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of community-driven annotation, such as social bookmarking, depends on user participation. Since the participation of many users is motivated by selfish reasons, an effective way to encourage participation is to create useful or entertaining applications. We demo two such tools – a browser extension and a game.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.4 [**Information Systems Applications**]: Miscellaneous

General Terms

Design, Human Factors

Keywords

Social tagging, interactive IR and visualization, web 2.0 IR

1. DEMONSTRATIONS

Social bookmarking allows Web users to actively annotate individual Web resources. Researchers are exploring the use of these annotations to create implicit links between online resources. We explore the use of these implicit relationships in the context of `GiveALink.org`, a social-bookmarking system developed for research purposes [1].

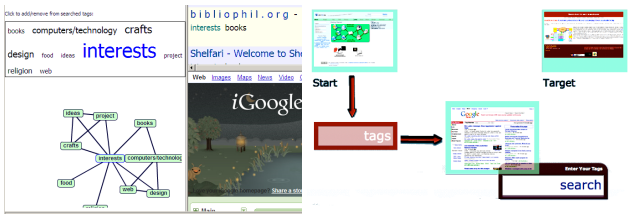
GiveALink relies on bookmark donations. Its effectiveness depends on the critical density of these annotations, and thus on user participation. An effective way to encourage users is to incentivize participation through applications that provide added value or that entertain. We have developed one of each – a browser extension providing tools for bookmark management and web navigation, and a game to generate annotations [2].

2. BROWSER EXTENSION

We have developed a browser extension for Firefox 3 providing a set of GiveALink tools to users (Fig 1(a)). Bookmark management tools aid users in maintaining their own bookmarks, which in turn provides GiveALink with more data for supporting applications such as search, recommendation, and navigation.

Bookmark Management: A link manager provides users with a single interface for maintaining their bookmarks. They can manage online bookmarks in the browser, using an interface that allows tagging, searching, and moving through their bookmarks, and visualizes the networks of relationships between and among tags and resources. The manager will increase the amount of annotation by making it convenient to organize resources. In turn, this data can enhance user experience by improving GiveALink's performance.

Web Navigation: Currently, browsers do not visualize a page's semantic context beyond its content. Visualizations of the relationships provide a semantic map, allowing the user to see where the current page is in terms of related tags and pages. Users can use the map as an alternative way to understand the content and context of the page, as well as an alternative way to navigate the web, by visiting or exploring related pages and tags.



(a) Browser extension (b) Tagging game

Figure 1: Two applications to encourage tagging of online resources

3. TAGGING GAME

As an incentive for users to annotate resources, we are designing an online game (Fig 1(b)). Users tag pages to find a path from a given starting resource to a given target resource. The game will entertain users while simultaneously addressing an important problem, namely the sparseness of the semantic networks. As users tag resources in the game to find a path from one resource to another, GiveALink stores the tagging metadata. When tags have been confirmed by enough participants in the game, this information is added to the database for calculating the relationships among tags and resources.

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5. REFERENCES

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