



IDEF - USERS GROUP

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

*"REINVENTING THE ENTERPRISE...
TECHNOLOGIES OF CHANGE"*

May 23-26, 1994
Richmond Marriott
Richmond, Virginia

**Demonstration: World Wide Web for Distribution
of Users Group Information on Internet**

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DEMONSTRATION: WORLD WIDE WEB FOR DISTRIBUTION OF USERS GROUP INFORMATION ON INTERNET

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Abstract

Internet is rapidly becoming the primary means of communication among millions of people including individuals, academia, government, and commercial organizations. This demonstration is an experimental use of an Internet "hypermedia document server and reader" facility to present information about the IDEF Users Group. Should the Users Group adopt the World Wide Web as one means for distributing information, the demonstration files are available for modification and hosting on a server so as to be available on the network. The Users Group demonstration includes links to the NIST FIPS documents on IDEF 0 and IDEF1X, which are now available for access.

Introduction

The use of computer aided modeling in the hypertext paradigm¹ was described at the October 1993 Users Group Conference. Following the presentation, several people remarked that hypertext offered interesting capabilities as a means of accessing information of general interest to the organization, in addition to the model reviewing capability. They also felt that actually demonstrating a general interest hypertext document would give the group a better grasp of the media advantages of both hypertext and Internet.

The demonstration will utilize a hypertext document server developed (during the past year) for use on the Internet by CERN (European Laboratory for Particle Physics) Switzerland and NCSA (National Center for Supercomputing Applications) at the University of Illinois. The server allows access to files written in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), and associated graphics, sound, and video files. Several readers (clients) have been developed for XWindows, Macintosh OS, and Microsoft Windows. These readers utilize the system connections to the Internet.

The demonstration will include an example developed especially for the Users Group, using the UG logo and other material found in the invitation to this conference. In turn, links were provided on the IDEF-UG home page for accessing a "list of Past Conferences," the "Invitation Letter," the "Invitation Information," a "Conference Registration Form," and examples from the NIST FIPS PUB 183 and 184 now accessible through World Wide Web. The next page has been printed from this demonstration.

¹Reference: Parks, C.; and Meagher, R.; "Improving the Quality of Model Reviews with Computer Hypertext



IDEF Users Group

IDEF stands for Integration Definition Method - A structured modeling and analysis design techniques for enterprise improvement programs. More ...

CONFERENCES are held in the spring and fall of each year. A list of past conferences indicates the locations of prior meetings of the organization.

Calendar of Meetings

- May Conference:
 - Invitation Letter
 - May Invitation Information
 - May Conference Registration Form

IDEF Organization Documents

The IDEF0 and IDEF1X language reference manuals published as Federal Information Processing Standards are available; other Organization documents may be obtained by contacting:

IDEF-UG Secretariat
1900 Founders Drive
Kettering, OH 45420-4011
513/259-4702

About the IDEF Users Group

IDEF-UG is a non-profit association. The Association was formed to include a broad range of expertise and interest in order to encompass the complete life-cycle approach to system level improvements.

The IDEF-UG provides a forum to discuss enterprise systems integration methods, related tools and techniques, and their application to complex enterprises. The Association provides a forum for the interchange of ideas and experiences. This leads to the identification of potential solutions that add value and efficiency to modernization initiatives, which can provide a competitive edge.

Many organizations have developed "home pages" so that people using World Wide Web can access information from the organization. On the home page shown, each of the underlined text is "hot text": when displayed on a client, the cursor can be positioned over such underlined text, and a click of the mouse button will send the appropriate request over the Internet to bring back and display the material associated with the underlined text. Normally the hot text is also displayed in color, and will change to a different color after that link has been explored. Buttons on the client window allow path retracing or direct access to a pre-designated "home." Menu options allow storing "hotlist" entries for often accessed material, and the material displayed can be printed.

Advantages to the Users Group

The use of a World Wide Web server by the Users Group could provide access to information about the organization to many people who have access to the Internet, but perhaps are not on the mailing lists. The server could also be a means of providing members with timely information about meetings, achievements, and publication references and availability. The documents they access could also contain sound clips, pictures (models?) and video clips; all accessed quickly through "hot text" links. The World Wide Web capability also includes "forms" so the reader can fill in text-entry areas for information and registration, or even surveys. The Mosaic client software for World Wide Web is available (free); a copy may be available from the reader's network administrator or can be downloaded using anonymous FTP from

`ftp.ncsa.uiuc.edu`

What is Next

Additional work may be needed to achieve the "official home page" and the documents that will accompany it. A server site (which must be an Internet node and have World Wide Web server software running) will need to be made available either to the Secretariat, or to someone who can quickly obtain source information from the Secretariat. In order for readers to find the Users Group home page, linking text needs to be submitted for entry into "external" files.

Filters to HTML are available for several common text editors, but the hypertext links must be added to the resulting files. Then, as the new files are added to the server, existing documents must be linked to the added ones.

Conclusions

For those who were not present at the conference, the example files may be obtained from the author or from the UG Secretariat. These files can be opened from any World Wide Web client application by using the menu item "Open Local." **These example files are not to be placed on a server.** Access to official material, when available, may be announced by the Users Group.

There are other information mediums available for the Users Group to consider, and a few of these can be accessed "on line." In addition, on-line material will need attention to insure that the information is current and consistent. The effort invested now may ease the transition into the National Information Infrastructure to come.