



TECHNOLOGY

Graphical Interface for Digital Libraries (GRIDL)

OVERVIEW

Digital library search results are usually shown as a textual list, with 10-20 items per page. Viewing several thousand search results at once on a two-dimensional display with continuous variables is a promising alternative. Since these displays can overwhelm some users, researchers at the University of Maryland, College Park created a simplified two-dimensional display that uses categorical and hierarchical axes, called hieraxes. Users appreciate the meaningful and limited number of terms on each hieraxes. At each grid point of the display the researchers show a cluster of color-coded dots or a bar chart. Users see the entire result set and can then click on labels to move down a level in the hierarchy. Handling broad hierarchies and arranging for imposed hierarchies led to additional design innovations. Hieraxes have been applied to a digital video library of science topics used by middle school teachers, a legal information system, and a technical library using the ACM Computing Classification System.

We refer to this tool as Graphical Interface for Digital Libraries or GRIDL.

For more information please Office of Technology Commercialization at the Office of Technology Commercialization of the University of Maryland, College Park. 301-405-3947, or by e-mail at otc@umd.edu.

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