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Meta-Information Systems: a design study

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Abstract

Metadata systems are concerned with the management of data which describes other data, whether datasets, catalogues or entire database management systems. Metadata systems can be used to store richly detailed forms of information, perform seamless wide-ranging searches of information distributed across networks, and to integrate information stored in disparate repositories. Here we describe the design and methods of implementation derived from the experience of the Leicester University Metadata Project (LUMP). Our approach utilises the incorporation of semantic metadata in addition to resource metadata, resulting in a generally more powerful system than existing global directory services. A feature of the LUMP design is flexibility of implementation, with the ability to provide a coherent metadata system functioning above heterogeneous autonomous distributed databases.

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