

FIZ CHEMIE Berlin offers new products and services for the Internet / Subject-specific knowledge networks for interdisciplinary use currently in planning / Basic platform can be expanded at will

FIZ CHEMIE Berlin: After the Portals now the Knowledge Networks

Berlin, 14th May 2003 - Germany's well-known "Chemistry Information Centre" (Fachinformationszentrum Chemie GmbH, FIZ CHEMIE Berlin) is continually developing its spectrum of products and services for the Internet from the simple provision of information on the Web to a fully integrated system for extensive information and communications management. Its specific Internet search engines "ChemGuide" (for chemistry), "MedPharmGuide" (for medicine and pharmacology) and "PublishersGuide" (for scientific and technical publishers and journals), all free-of-charge, were re-launched at the beginning of April with increased content and improved functionality. Registered users can now initiate automated searches (SDIs, alerting services) with these search engines, allowing for the easy monitoring of changes within the Web. All together, the "guides" now cover more than 15 million Internet pages (URLs) and all Internet servers included within have been evaluated by FIZ CHEMIE Berlin. SDI search results may be obtained as a monthly electronic compilation, either in html or in XML as desired.

The Scientific and Technical Managing Director of FIZ CHEMIE Berlin, Prof. René Deplanque, explained the background and goals of the organisation's Internet-based product strategy as follows. "The next logical step in scientific co-operation via the Web is the creation of a subject-specific, multidisciplinary "knowledge network", in which each participant within the network considers and manages this network as being part of their own Internet appearance." In such an information and communication system, each institute would itself be responsible for making available to the others, the knowledge gathered within its walls. "Knowledge must be cared for at those places where it is produced", says Prof. Deplanque. FIZ CHEMIE Berlin has already completed a concept for the development of such a platform which, by virtue of its modular design, can be used to implement functionalities for all aspects of scientific communication via the Web. By connecting to the network, the concept envisages that users will be able to use distributed multimedial information sources, communicate via e-mail or forums and, if required, manage multicentre projects. In addition, topics such as job vacancies or information concerning apparatus availabilities, could also be offered. And another important feature could be the early (electronic) publication of unreviewed research results (pre-print publication); important when considering user rights to patents, for example. FIZ CHEMIE's concept describes the application software, hardware requirements and safety recommendations necessary for implementing the platform, whereby subject-specific search engines represent a large part of the necessary software required for the construction of the address servers in such a knowledge network. FIZ CHEMIE Berlin is offering consultancy and project management services for institutions interested in integrating knowledge network platforms in their servers.

"We want to bring together institutes that are working in the same fields without centralisation" explained Prof. Deplanque. In that way, a virtual institute dealing solely with the research being carried out in a particular scientific field could be created, of unlimited size. By carefully integrating the knowledge network in each institute's server, the identity and individual Web appearance of each member institution within the platform would remain visible, both internally within the network and when accessed externally.

For additional information

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