404s – What's Missing?

Aims Of This Exercise

This exercise is intended for hands-on and discussion group use. The aims of the exercise are to identify features which should be provided by an institutional web site's 404 error message.

1.1 Your 404 Error Pages

Go to your institution's web site and view the institutional 404 error message (e.g. if you are from Bath University, go to the non-existent URL <http://www.bath.ac.uk/foo>).

Make a note of the key features of the 404 page.

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1.2 Other 404 Error Pages

Go to the URLs <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/foo>, <http://www.keele.ac.uk/foo>, <http://www.ulst.ac.uk/foo>, <http://www.soton.ac.uk/foo>, and <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/foo> and view the 404 error pages accessible from there.

Make a note of the key features of the 404 pages you find.

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Group Discussion

In either your group or with a neighbour discuss the following issue.

1.3 The Ideal 404 Error Pages

What are the features that should be provided in the ideal 404 error page?

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Further Information

For further information see <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue20/404/>.