

WebWatch Service Required

I am interested in the following services:

1. A WebWatch analysis of my website. _____ ☐

URL of website _____

Please state what you would like to find out through the WebWatch survey.

2. A WebWatch analysis of my community (e.g. UK HE Library websites). _____ ☐

Please state what you would like to find out through the WebWatch survey.

My involvement with the community (e.g. chair of national UK HE library committee).

3. *Joining the WebWatch Technical Advisory Group* _____ ☐

Please state your interest in robot software.



UKOLN Briefing Sheet

The WebWatch Project

Introduction

After a phase which has seen the Web become a ubiquitous and simple medium for information searching and dissemination we are beginning to see the emergence of a range of tools, services and formats to support a more mature information space.

Although this rapid growth in enhancing the functionality of the Web, the variety of tools, services and architectures available to providers of Web services is increasing the costs of providing the service. In addition the subsequent diversity may result in additional complications and expenses. This complication makes it critical to have better information about what is in use, what the trends are and what commonality exists.

About WebWatch

WebWatch is a one year project funded by BLRIC. The WebWatch project aims to help institutions, funding bodies and policy makers by developing automated tools to analyse use of web technologies and to work closely with relevant communities in interpreting the findings.

The aims of WebWatch are:

- To develop robot software to retrieve web resources.
- To develop software to analyse the web technologies used.
- To produce reports on the communities surveyed.
- To make recommendations to the communities.

How WebWatch Can Help The Community

WebWatch can help national policy makers and funding bodies by:

- Providing information on the uptake of new technologies (such as XML and Dublin Core).
- Spotting trends.
- Providing support for national initiatives and services.

WebWatch can help institutional policy makers by:

- Informing institutions on national trends.

WebWatch can help website administrators by:

- Providing advice on best practices in website configuration.
- Providing automated error detecting.

WebWatch can help the wider web community by:

- Providing advice to robot software developers.
- Providing feedback to the web development community on website profiles.

WebWatch Trawls

The WebWatch project has analysed a number of communities including:

- **UK Public Library Websites:**
A survey was carried out in October 1997, on the day of the launch of the report on *New Library: The People's Network*. The survey analysed the sizes of public library websites. A report on the survey was published in LA Record, December 1997 Vol. 99(12).
- **UK Universities and Colleges Institutional Entry Pages:**
A survey was carried out in November 1997. The survey analysed the main entry page for UK Universities and Colleges. A report on the survey was published in the web version of Ariadne, issue 12.
- **eLib Project Websites:**
A survey was carried out in November 1997. The survey analysed eLib project websites.

WebWatch Futures

Plans for the WebWatch project include:

- **Providing a WebWatch analysis service for institutions:**
Institutions who would like WebWatch to analyse their institution's website should complete the accompanying form.
- **Providing access to WebWatch data:**
We intend to store the data collected by WebWatch trawls in a database and to provide restricted access to the data using a number of standard queries and a query language.
- **Making the WebWatch robot and analysis software:**
We are considering providing access to the robot software for institutions who wish to use the software to analyse their own website.
- **Providing advice and support for robot developers:**
Providing pointers to resources for robot developers. Writing reports on the development of the WebWatch robot.

Further Information

Further information about the WebWatch project is available on the World Wide Web at <URL:<http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/web-focus/webwatch/>> This resource includes:

- Background information about the project
- Technical information about the project
- Articles and reports

The WebWatch Officer is Ian Peacock (email i.peacock@ukoln.ac.uk). The WebWatch project is managed by Brian Kelly (email b.kelly@ukoln.ac.uk). General enquiries should be sent to webwatch@ukoln.ac.uk

WebWatch is based at UKOLN (UK Office For Library and Information Networking), University of Bath.

WebWatch Contact Form

Please complete this form if you wish to collaborate with the WebWatch project or if you have any comments on the project.

Your Details

Name _____

Email _____

Organisation _____

Address.

Involvement with web activities

Website Details

Purpose of your website.

Estimated size (number of pages) _____

WebWatch Feedback

I have the following comments on the WebWatch project.

The WebWatch project is funded by BLRIC (British Library Research and Innovation Centre).

UKOLN is funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) of the Higher Education Funding Councils and The British Library Research and Innovation Centre (BLRIC).

Please return this form to Brian Kelly, UKOLN, University of Bath, Bath, BA2 7AY
or send email to B.Kelly@ukoln.ac.uk