

Title: Linking Hypertext Researchers & Information Architecture Practitioners
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Description:

The theme for Hypertext 2012 is about building systems for linking people, data, resources and stories. I am interested in organizing a workshop that will link hypertext researchers and information architecture practitioners, establishing relationships that will help enable those systems in the long run.

Using a Hypertext conference workshop to help bridge the research-practice gap has been done at least once before [1] and this may be a good time to do it again. The need for addressing gaps between researchers and practitioners with the broader user experience field has been getting more attention lately: see [2, 9] for recaps.

The information architecture practitioners have made several attempts over the years to connect with researchers (mostly in library-science) [3, 4, 5, 6]. With a bit of a plan for moving forward [7], groups like the Information Architecture Institute are establishing programs like the Journal of Information Architecture [8], which should help the community move to the next level of collaboration and addressing key gaps.

This workshop would be 1 specific part of the plan: to connect the hypertext research community, with its established body of knowledge and extensive reach, with the IA practitioner community to look for common goals, mutually beneficial activities to coordinate on, and other opportunities.

I believe this sort of "community building" activity fits in with SIGWEB's overall mission. The workshop should draw in several practitioners who would not normally attend the Hypertext conference. Over time, some form of relationship with the IA community should benefit both SIGWEB and the Hypertext conference.

Target audiences:

- * Hypertext researchers who are interested in both helping information architecture practitioners understand their research, and listening to challenges in practice to make their research more applicable.
- * Information architecture practitioners who both want to be able to understand and apply hypertext research and are willing to collaborate with researchers in the long term.
- * Anyone who is currently working to bridge the hypertext research / information architecture practice gaps (e.g., someone who is active in both fields today).
- * Community leads from related organizations, such as ACM SIGWEB and the Information Architecture Institute who are interested in exploring partnerships to help address research-practice issues.

Draft Call for Participation:

Note: this would actually be a Call for PARTICIPATION, not a call for PAPERS since practitioners do not like writing "papers".

Are you a hypertext researcher who would like your research understood and applied by practitioners? Would you like to hear what information architecture practitioners, designing some of the largest and most important information systems in the world, are struggling with and dying to have researched? Would you like to start to form partnerships with practitioners? If so, this workshop is for you!

Are you a practitioner dealing with huge challenges in today's information environment? Are you looking for innovative solutions to your information architecture problems? Have you tried to read the hypertext literature but been unable to make sense of it? Are you willing to try to connect with hypertext researchers to form partnerships? If so, this workshop is for you!

Are you a leader in the hypertext research or information architecture practitioner community and interested in helping address the researcher-practitioner gaps? We cannot solve many of the challenges, but we can find common ground and work on specific activities to address some of the challenges. If you would like to look for solutions to parts of this gap, then this workshop is for you.

If you are interested, read over the general description of the workshop and submit a few paragraphs about why you want to participate. Tell us your background, what challenges you are facing (as either a researcher, a practitioner, or both), and your ideas for solutions to these challenges.

Type of Workshop: Full day (probably: I have never seen how a half day workshop would work, too short)

Schedule for the workshop day:

Community-building workshops like this require a large amount of time for "getting to know each other". So part of the day would be introductions, background, sharing individual challenges and perspectives.

Given that previous workshops have built a framework of issues and ideas for solutions [2], then some time can be saved to help attendees get to a common ground about the challenges and start to talk about potential solutions.

So I see the day breaking down, in general, to 3 segments:

1. Getting to know one another. Each person presents who they are, why they are here, what they hope to get out of the day.
2. Brainstorming on solution ideas.
3. Next steps to take for the most promising solutions.

The results of the day should be shared during the conference with attendees (a poster or informal birds-of-a-feather). And a report would be written as more formal recap of what happened and to encourage others to contribute.

Program committee & participants:

No one has agreed to be on the "program committee" for the workshop yet.

People who we would hope would agree, if this workshop has any chance of happening, include:

- * SIGWEB officers
- * IA Institute officers, such as Andreas Resmini, who is both an IAI officer and has been involved in research-practice efforts
- * Researchers and practitioners who have participated in similar efforts in the past (see References): Jamie Blustein, Karl Fast, Dan Russell, for example.

Participant recruiting would be most effective thru the personal networks of the committee members. There is an existing network for the UXRPI topic. The IAI has members who would be invited. Related channels for WWW (w3c), Web science, Usability, Library science (ASIS&T) would be used.

About the organizer: Keith Instone is the Information Architecture lead for IBM's digital presences. He was active long ago in SIGLINK (as ACM volunteer, newsletter editor and regular Hypertext conference attendee). He was one of the founders of the IA Institute and is currently a co-organizer of one of the 14 locations for World Information Architecture Day. He has organized researcher-practitioner interaction meetings/workshops/panels at the CHI conference, the IA Summit, and the Internet User Experience conference. His keynote for World Usability Day (Dayton) was also about research-practice gaps and what we can do to start solving for them. His personal site is <http://instone.org/>.

References

- [1] Hypermedia Research and the Web Workshop, Hypertext 96 conference, 1996. <http://instone.org/hypresweb>
- [2] Researcher-practitioner interaction update (UXRPI), 2010. <http://instone.org/uxrpi-update>
- [3] Keynote at SIG USE research symposium, 2008. <http://instone.org/siguse-keynote>
- [4] The Confluence of Research and Practice in Information Architecture, Karl Fast, ASIS&T Bulletin, June/July 2006. <http://www.asis.org/Bulletin/Jun-06/fast.html>
- [5] Setting the IA Research Agenda, IA Summit, 2006. <http://instone.org/iasummit2006researchagenda>
- [6] Information architecture - another great topic (for HICSS-40 mini track on Using Information), Dan Russell, 2006. <http://hicss-newtech.blogspot.com/2006/04/information-architecture-another-great.html>
- [7] Research and Practice in IA, Andrea Resmini & Keith Instone, ASIS&T Bulletin, August/September 2010. http://www.asis.org/Bulletin/Aug-10/AugSep10_Resmini_Instone.html
- [8] Journal of Information Architecture. <http://journalofia.org/>
- [9] Closing the UXRPI gap, World Usability Day - Dayton. <http://instone.org/wud-uxrpi-prework>