Chapter VIII

Visual Portals to Multimedia Information Systems

http://puebla.turista.com.mx/

What is a portal?

- **Portal** = an entry mechanism for an information system
- **A good portal** = a portail allowing the access of all important information
- Problem: how to organize portals?

What is a sitemap?

- Structure allowing the access to ALL information of a website
- Portals: selection of the more important information
- Links between portals and sitemaps
- Metaphor of the news magazine
  - Cover ➔ portal
  - Contents ➔ sitemap

Objective of this chapter

- Analyze the pros and cons of visual portals and sitemaps
- Analyze the more frequent metaphors
- Give recommendations for design

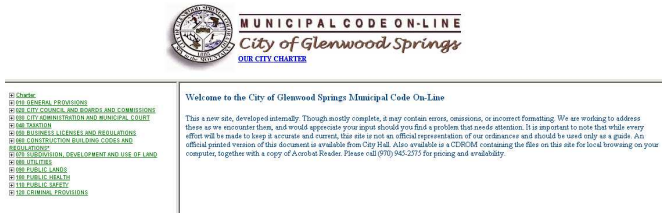
Contents

- 8.1 – Alphanumeric portals and sitemaps
- 8.2 – Visual Metaphors
- 8.3 – User-oriented portals
- 8.4 – Portal design
- 8.5 – Conclusions

8.1 – Alphanumeric Portals and Sitemaps

- Text-only

Example



City of South-Milwaukee in 2002
http://www.ci.south-milwaukee.wi.us/

City Administration Building
2424 15th Avenue
South Milwaukee, WI53172

e-mail the City of South Milwaukee

The City of South Milwaukee is located ten miles south of the City of Milwaukee.

This page is updated on a regular basis.

Welcome to South Milwaukee

- City Departments
- City Government
- Elected Officials
- Churches
- Your Vote
- Parks
- Hometown Publications
- Assoc. of Commerce
- Schools & Recreation
- Map
- Calendar of Events
- History
- Fire Study
- Municipal Codes
- Boards & Committees - Agenda & Meeting Minutes
- EPA-Barrel Site (Marina Cliffs/Northwest Barrel)
- Comprehensive Plan Development
- Fourth of July Celebration
- Heritage Days Parade
- Heritage Days Activities
- Emergency Information
- Community Websites
- Economic Development
- Beach Testing - Grant Park

City of Leicester

Information about the City of Leicester and links to other City resources

Leicester is a thriving student city.
During term time over 12% of Leicester's population are students.

General Information
- BBC Leicester
- Leicester City Council
- Leicester City Guide
- Tourist Information Centre
- LeicesterWeb
- A Walk Around Leicester City Centre
- This is Leicestershire
- Government Office for the East Midlands
- Leicester Promotions
- East Midland Network Project
- EastMidland Net
- The Centre

Environment City
- Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust
- Leicester Conservation Volunteers (LCV)
- Environ
- Leicester Environment City
- Friends of the Earth
- Institute of Energy and Sustainable Development

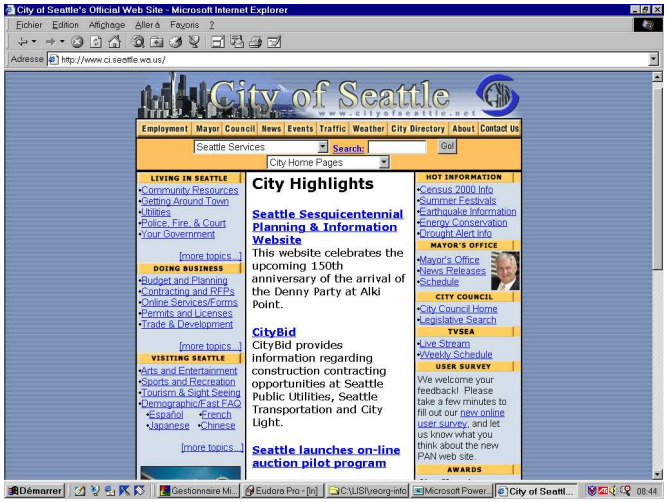
Local Societies and Groups
- British Association for the Advancement of Science (Leicestershire Branch)
- Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society
- Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society
- Blaby District Council
- Blaby on the Net

Sport
- Leicester Football Club Ltd (Tigers) [1]
- Leicester Football Club Ltd (Tigers) [2]
- Leicester City Football Club [1]
- Leicester City Football Club [2]
- Leicestershire Cricket Club
- Leicestershire Golf Club
- Leicestershire Mixed Hockey Club
- Renault Leicester Riders
- Leicester Volleyball Club

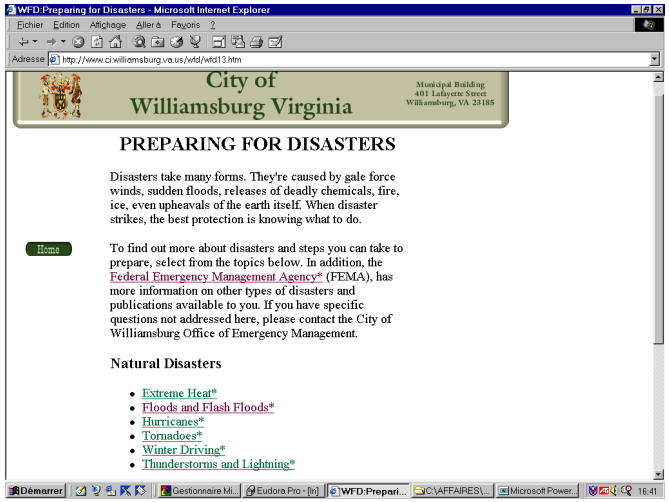
Entertainment
- Cinemas in Leicester
- Haymarket Theatre
- Little Theatre
- Phoenix Arts Centre
- Oxygen Nightclub
- Ultimate Gig Guide

Eating Out
- Covatis

http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us



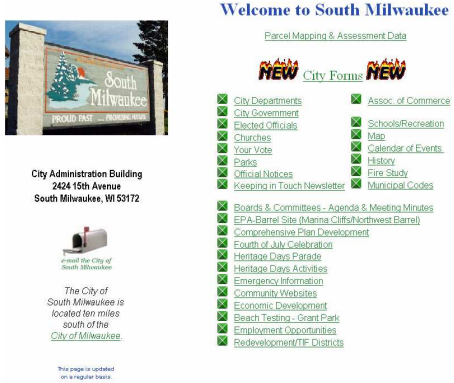
http://www.ci.williamsburg.va.us/wfd/wfd13.htm



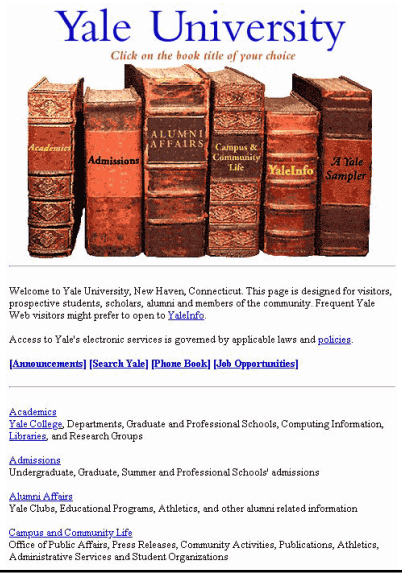
8.2 – Visual Metaphors

- Service directory
- Tendermaps (Cartes du Tendre)
- Structure of hypermaps and argumaps
- Metroline
- Virtual city
- Cover of news magazines

Still South-Milwaukee



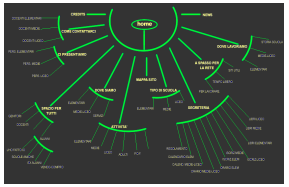
Service directory



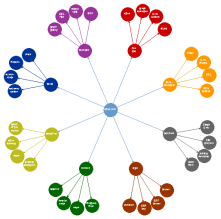
http://www.cnrm.meteo.fr/present/present.htm

Confluences - Lyon

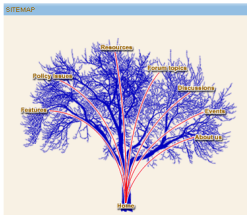
http://confluences-lyon.cef.fr/accueil.htm



http://perso.wanadoo.fr/ist-leonardoparis.org/mappa

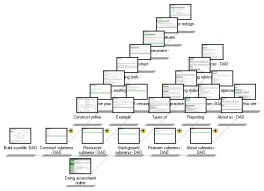


http://www.aisee.com/png/sitemap.htm.

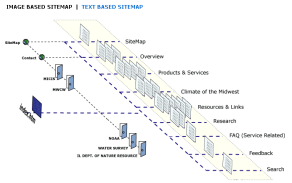


http://www.forum.mn/

http://www-utenti.dsc.unibo.it/~bergonzi/ig/mappa%20sito.html

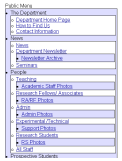


http://www.tafe.swin.edu.au



http://mcc.sws.uiuc.edu/sitemap/sitemap.htm

http://www.cmi-services.org/site_map.html.

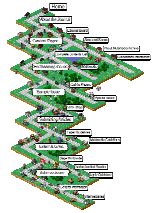


http://www.cs.york.ac.uk/search/sitemap.php.

http://www.promofit.it/mappa.php

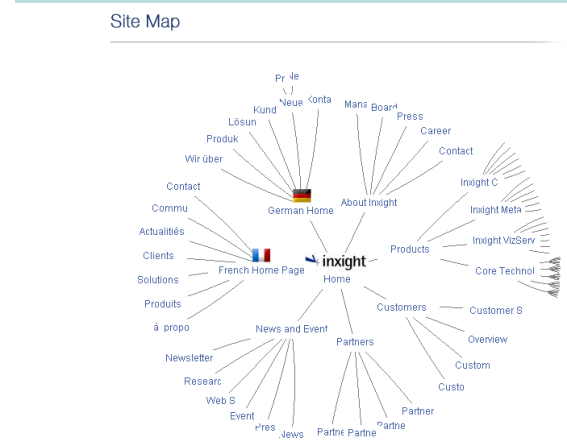
http://solar.physics.montana.edu/YPOP/Navigation/Images/sitemap.gif.

http://www.nsae.com/images/sitemap.gif



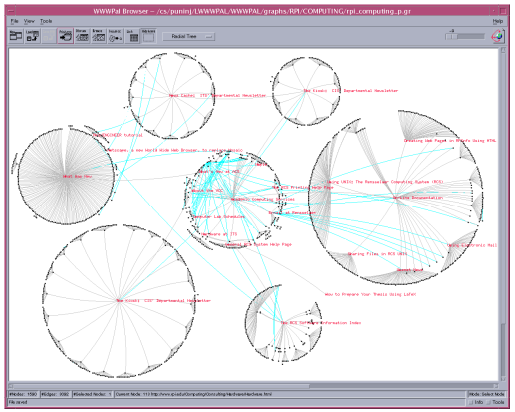
http://www.ijrr.org/images/sitemap.gif.

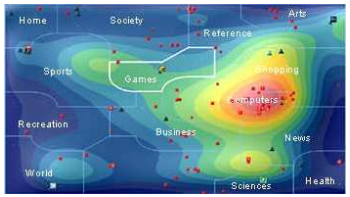
Map from www.inxight.com



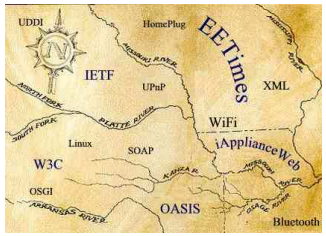
Other example

http://www.cs.rpi.edu/~puninj/RGML/EXTREME/TALK/rgml/all.html





http://www.netcentriccommunity.com/iAppliance/WebMap.jpg



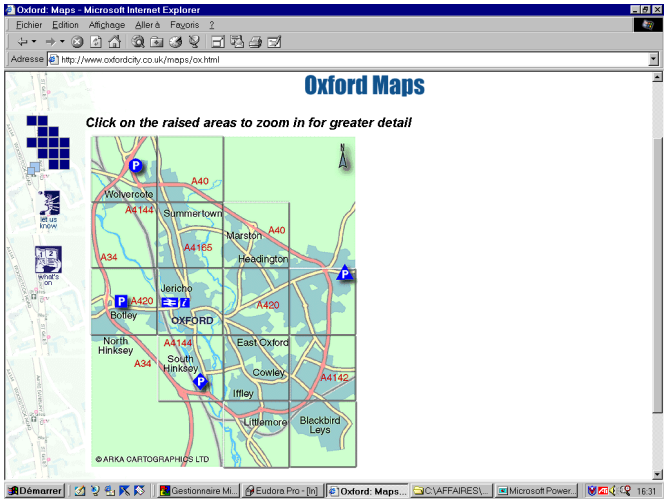
http://www.webmap.com

http://www.silkroaddance.com/

Hypermaps

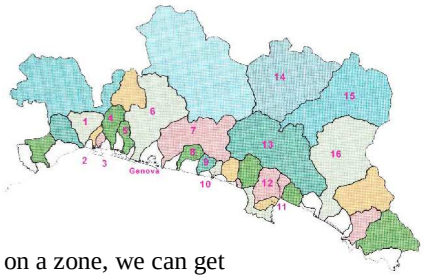
- Links from maps
- Other names
  - Clickable maps
  - Active maps
  - Mapped images
- Active zones: point, line, aerea

http://www.oxfordcity.co.uk/maps/ox.html



Risk hypermaps in Genoa, Italy

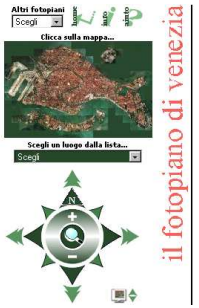
http://www.provincia.genova.it/pdb/pdb03.htm



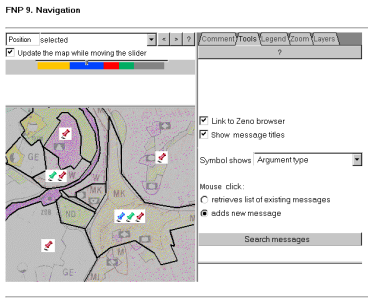
By clicking on a zone, we can get description of present risks

Portal based on aerial photos (Venice)

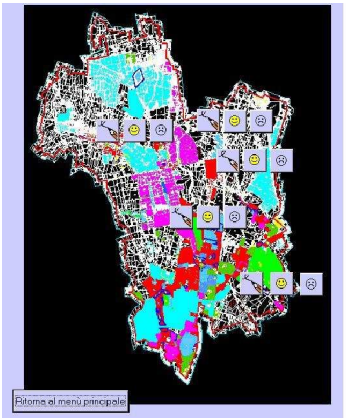
http://www.comune.venezia.it/urbanistica/fotopiano/Ved5.htm



Argumaps with spins

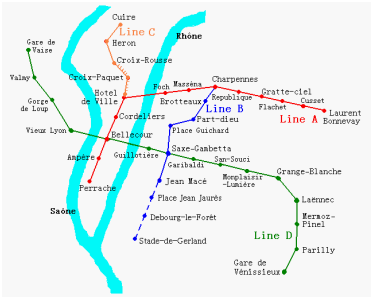


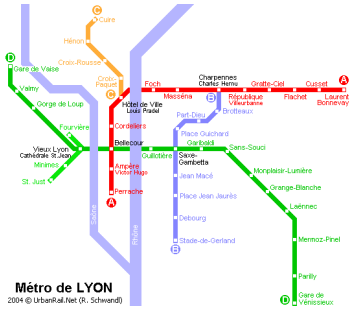
Argumaps with flags



Argumaps with smileys by L.Zanini and C. Zanatti

Metroline map metaphor

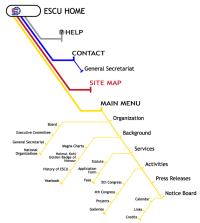




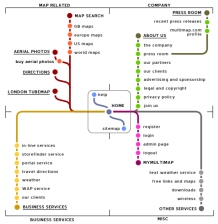
Metroline map metaphor

- Simplification of the real world
- Familiar
- Characteristics
  - Easy to find a path
  - Privileged horizontal and vertical directions
- Organization of traveling path on documentation or on information

London Guide

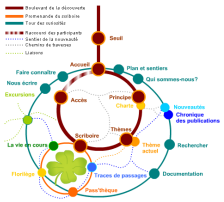


http://www.eu-seniorunion.info/it/sitemap.htm



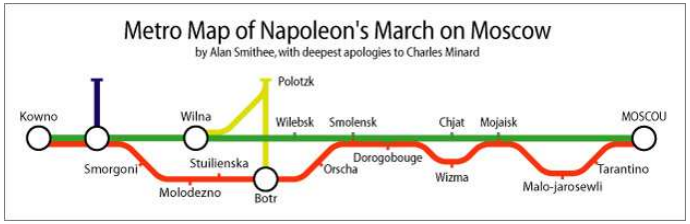
http://www.multimap.com/images/ps/misc/sitemap.gif,

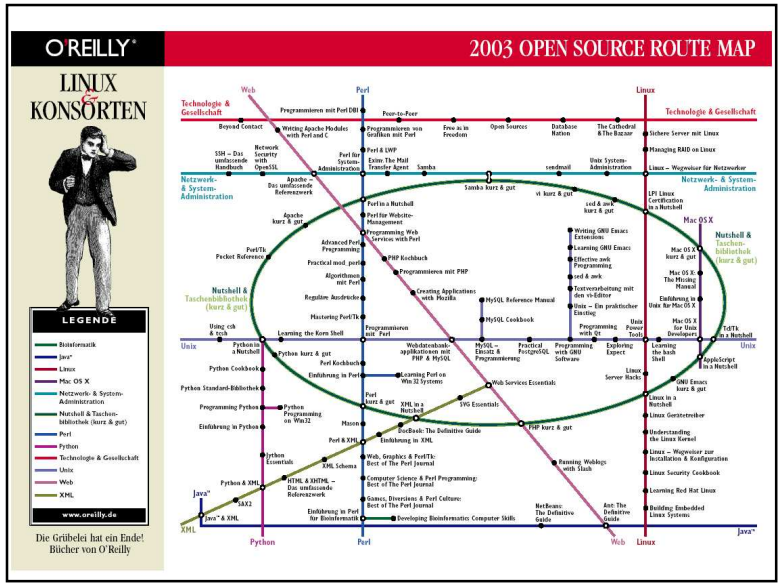
http://www.germinus.com/mapa.htm

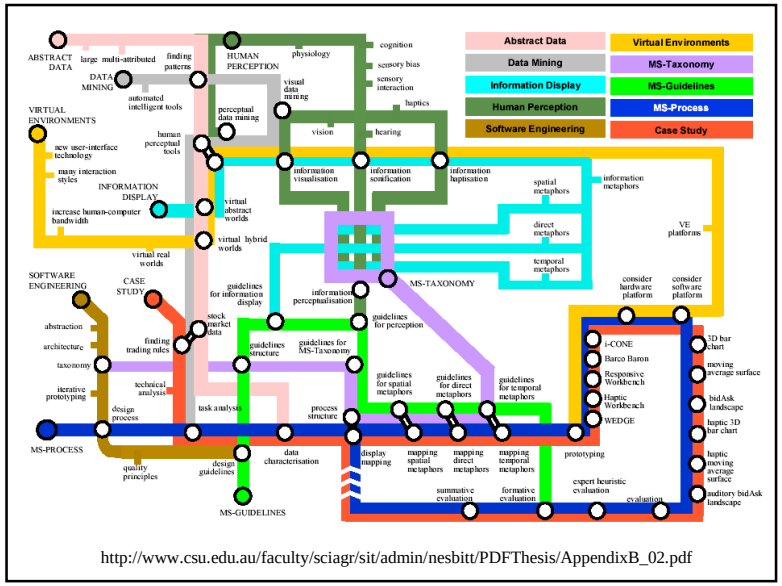


http://www.passado.be/

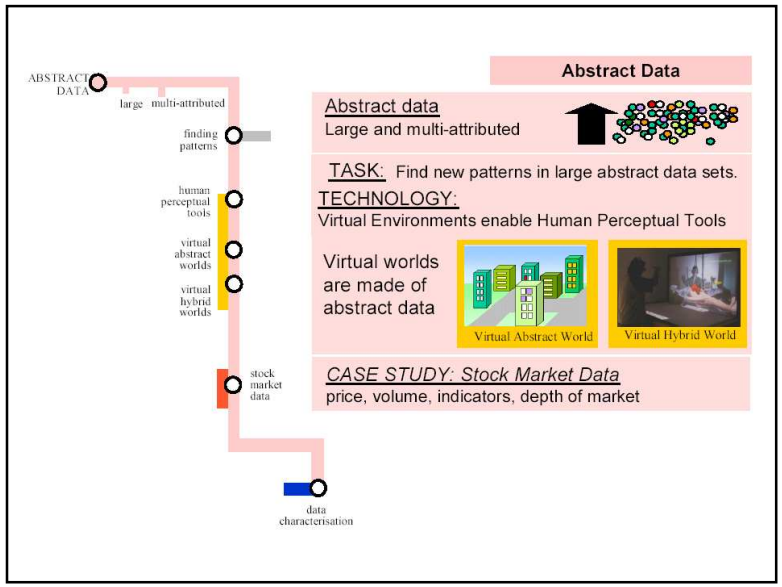
Application of this metaphor

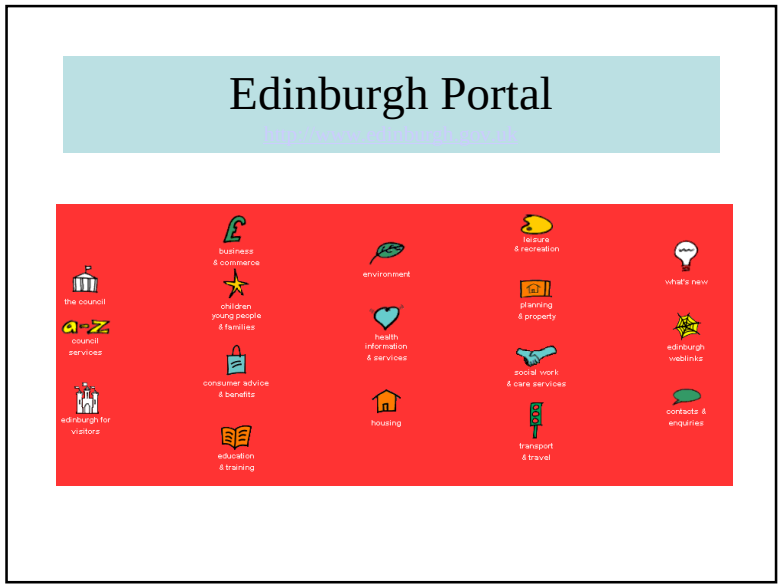






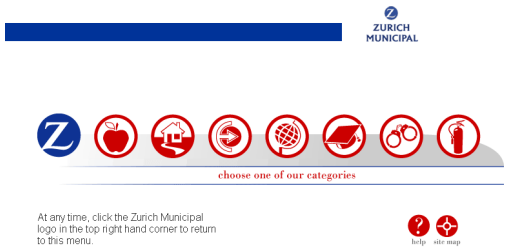
http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/sciagr/sit/admin/nesbitt/PDFThesis/AppendixB_02.pdf





Zurich Municipal Portal

http://www.zurichmunicipal.com/



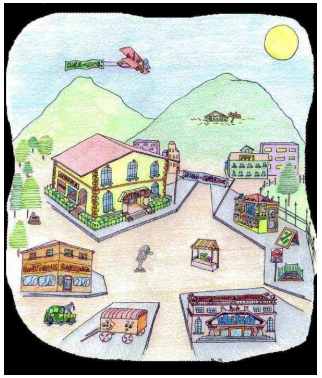
http://www.nettuno.it/bologna/MappaWelcome.html

Virtual City of Santa Clarita

http://www.santa-clarita.com/

Rigatoni Portal: Riga-City

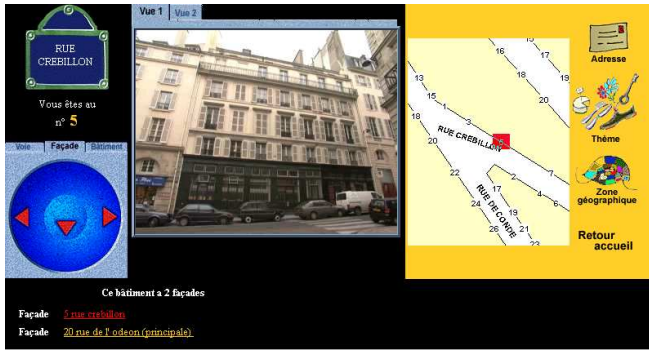
http://www.rigatoni.ch/start.html

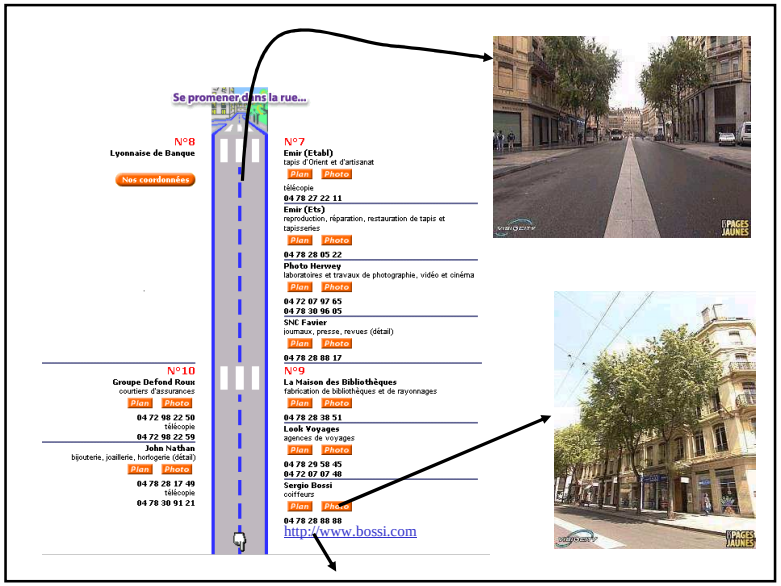


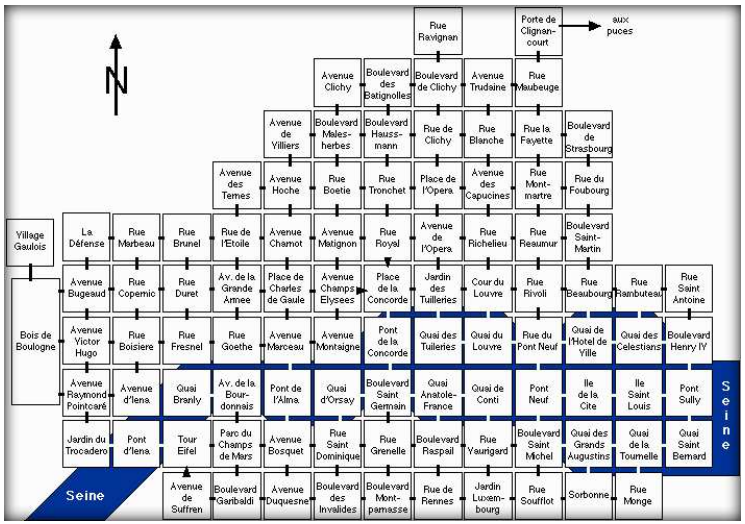
Virtual Town

Façades

http://www.cnv.fr





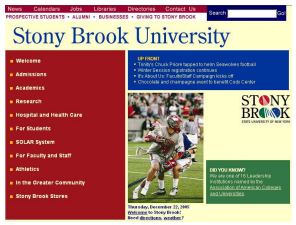


http://www.umsl.edu/~moosproj/carte.html.

Disney

http://www.ci.lynchburg.va.us

http://www.ci.baltimore.md.us/



http://www.sunysb.edu/

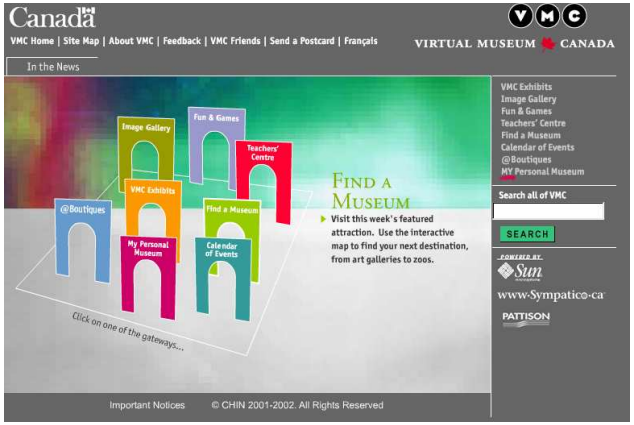
http://www.unh.edu/.

Analyses of some examples

- Various types of portals
- Used metaphors
- User readability

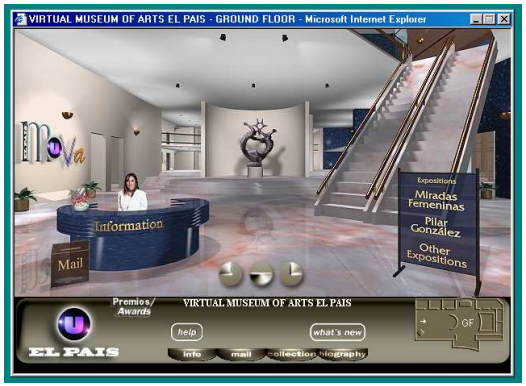
Louvres Museum Portal

Canadian Museums Portal

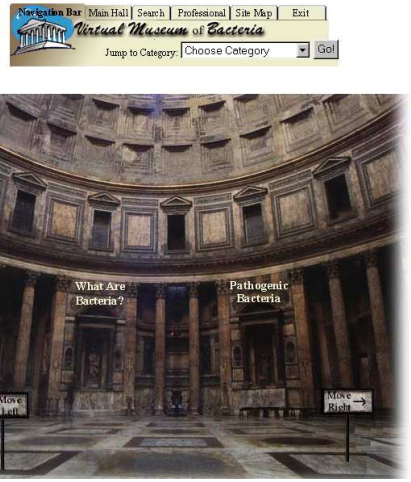


MUVA Portal

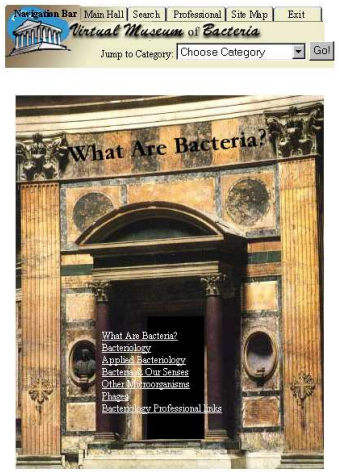
http://www3.diarioelpais.com/muva2/#



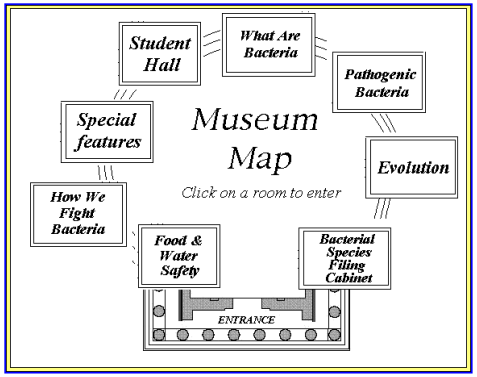
Bacteria Museum

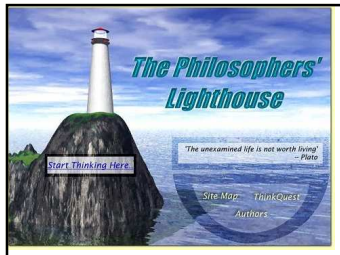


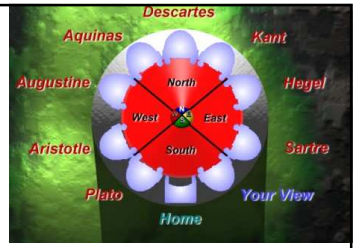
Entry gate



Bacteria Museum Sitemap

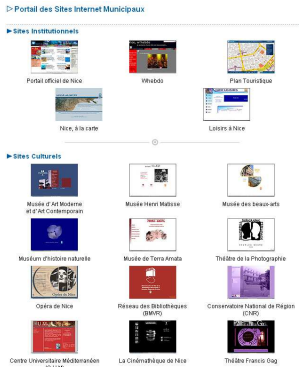






http://library.thinkquest.org/18775/index.htm

With thumbnails

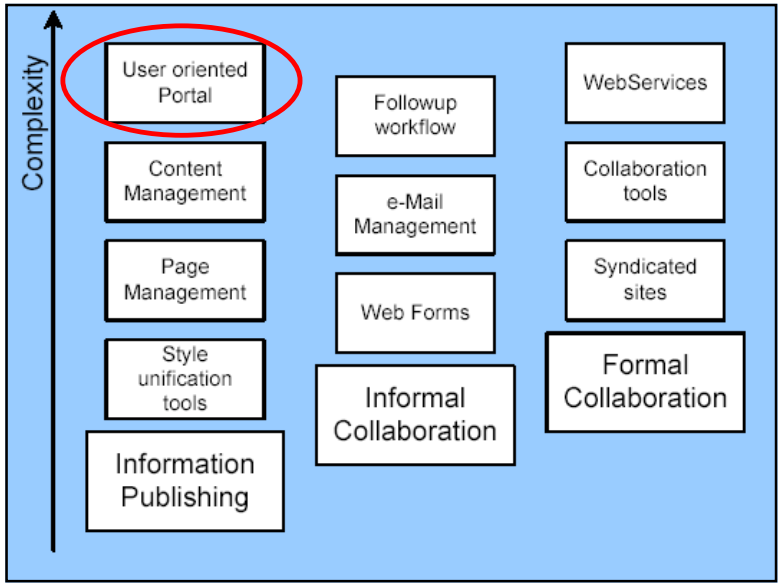


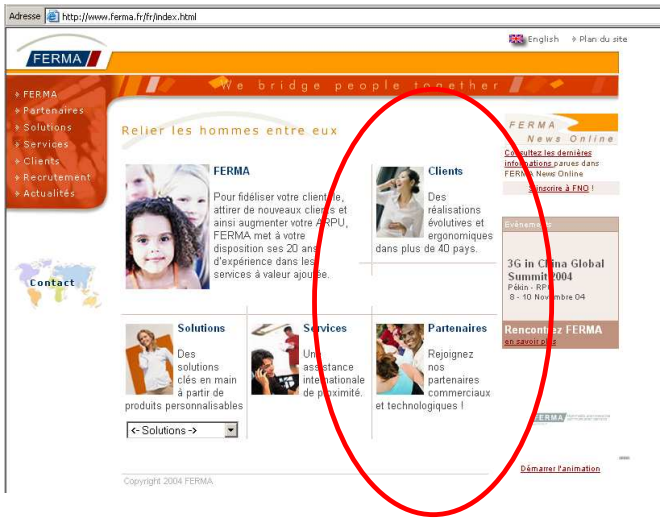
Nice

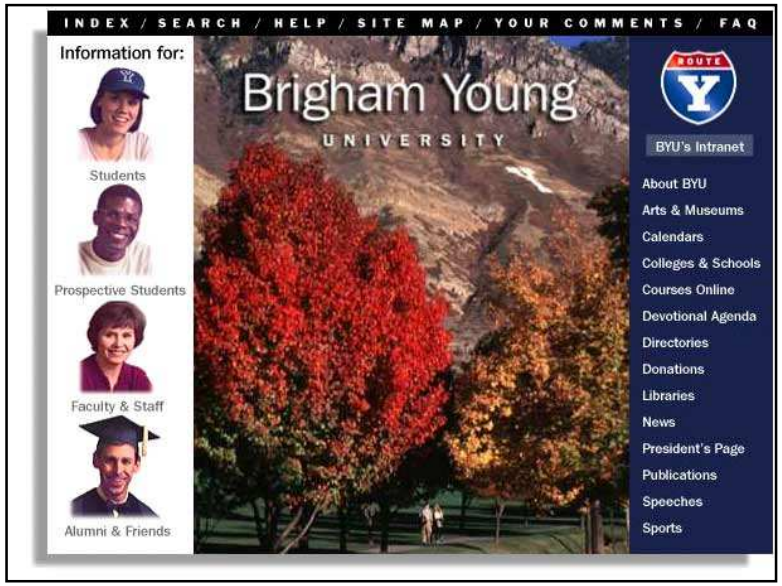
Piedmont

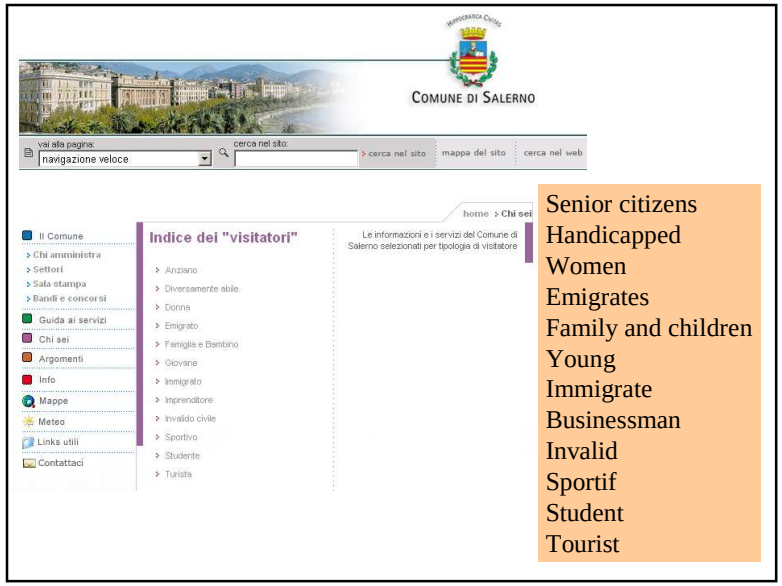
8.3 – User-oriented Portals

- Conventional portals
  - Organized list of functionnalities
    - Information
    - Services
- Modification of point of view
  - Organized by user's profiles









Senior citizens
Handicapped
Women
Emigrates
Family and children
Young
Immigrate
Businessman
Invalid
Sportif
Student
Tourist

http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/html/citizen/language.htm.

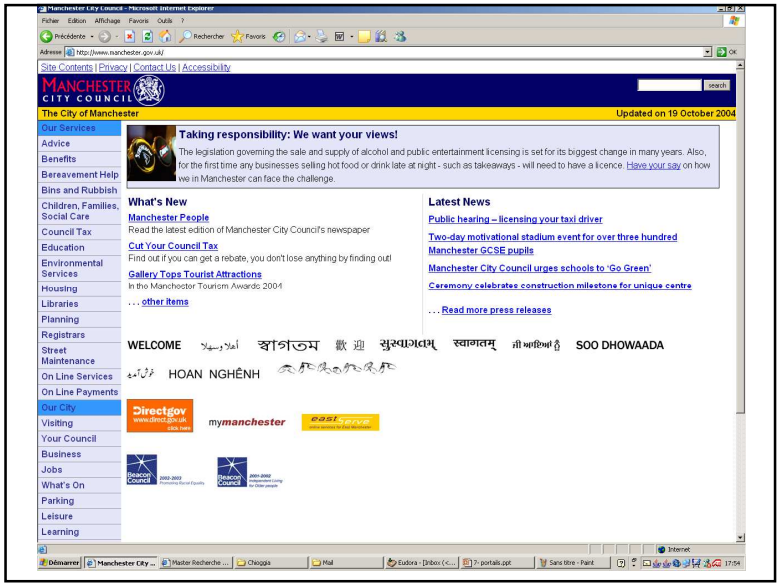
http://www.studycentre.ch

http://www.ci.boulder.co.us/

http://www.bruxelles.irisnet.be/

City of Strasburg Portal

http://www.mairie-strasbourg.fr/



Identifications of users

- Who and what are they?
  - Difficult to know at design
  - Study by similarity
- What are they looking for?
- What services do they need?

- Assignment of services according to profiles

8.4 – Portal Design

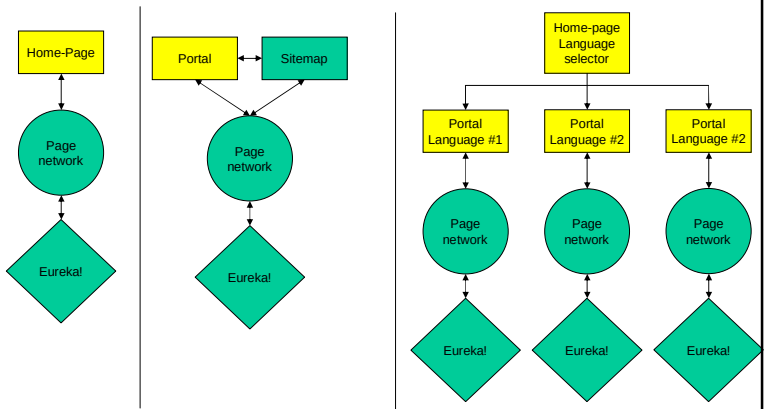
- Scopes of a portal
  - messages
  - services
- Identification by user families
- Definitions and assignment of services
- Several paths to reach a piece of information (≠ tree)

Deep or shallow hierarchies

Too deep = too many mouseclicks

Too shallow = menus too long

Several organizational models

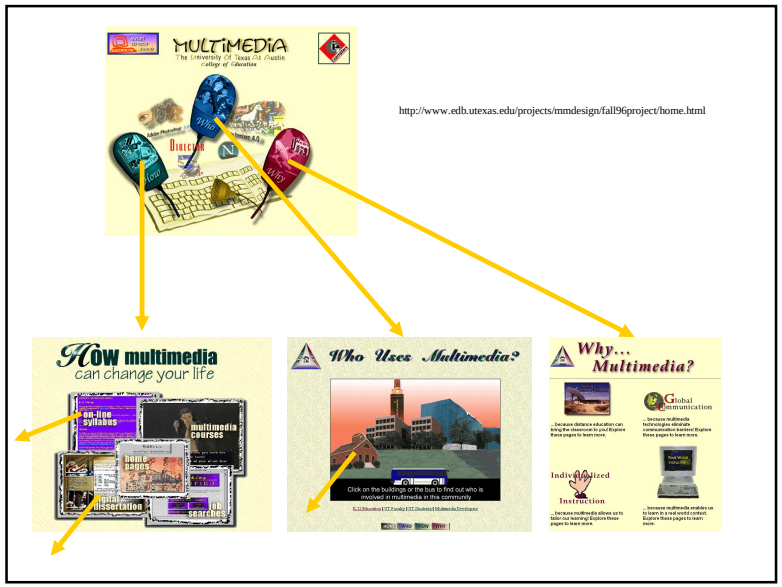


Visual level

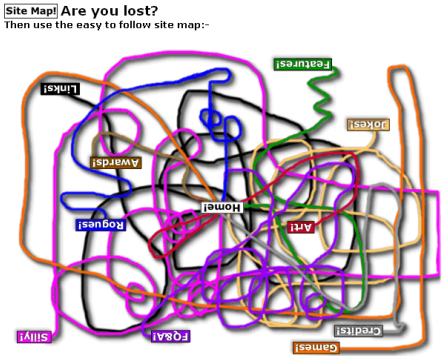
- Choice of corporate graphics
- Choice of the visual metaphor
- Aesthetic aspects

Ill-balanced portal

New version



To avoid !!



http://www.pips-web.co.uk/pip/home/sitemap/sitemap_t.html.

8.5 – Conclusions

- Importance of visual portals
- Global access to information
- Metaphors
  - Relevance
  - Readability
  - Understandability
- Orientation towards users