

BibPad as a Library Service or Crowdsourcing a Library Search Engine

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1. Extended Abstract

Annotating is an important part when working with literature, especially in science. Up to now, a person's annotations are private or only shared with a small group of other persons who are granted access to the notes or the annotated media. A proof of concept prototype called BibPad has been realized that allows users to create, share, and collaborate on annotations. These annotations contain information about the annotated media that go far beyond usual meta data and can be used to build a library search engine through crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing a library search engine is in fact the reason why BibPad has been conceived and developed.

To reach this goal, this paper examines different classes of physical annotations and proposes appropriate digital representations. This takes into account that most of a library's media is not available digitally. For this reason, BibPad is built in a way that supports both the annotation of digital and the annotation of physical media. Moreover, the annotations are not bound to a specific media, e.g., if at some point a digital version is available, the annotations of the physical version can be reused.

BibPad is mainly intended for the use in libraries. Users can easily add media via a barcode scan to their personal library and start creating annotations. Now that the annotations are digitally available, new possibilities for social interaction are opened up: users can create groups to share media and associated annotations with or even create public annotations. A shared annotation can be flagged as editable; in this case, every group member can edit and contribute to the annotation.

This paper results from an ongoing joint research project with the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek and the University of Munich. The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek possesses a large inventory of WWI media. Goal of this research project is to develop a semantic search engine for these media.