CREATION OF DIGITAL ARCHIVES AND VIRTUAL MUSEUMS

Description
A set of special utilities and an information system implemented as a Web-application allow the creation of digital archives and virtual museums and support the following technological processes:

- input of factual information (images of documents, photographs of exhibits, textual descriptions, sound files, etc.) into a database, i.e., the creation of a virtual museum collection;
- description of museum exhibits, archive documents, persons, and organizations and making of a “registration card”;
- structuring of objects of virtual museums, linking different objects and exhibits, making catalogs, presentation of various subject groups, etc.;
- creation of various virtual exhibitions and expositions, both on the Internet and on various carriers, including CD and DVD;
- information support of exhibitions and special expositions, advertising and other events in a museum or an archive: distribution of information letters, news, and invitations, publication of analytical materials, etc.).

The software has been developed by the XTECH (Russia) (http://www.xtech.ru). The system is constructed in the three-tier client-server architecture using Microsoft technologies (http://www.microsoft.com) and the optical character recognition software developed by the Atapy Software (Russia) (http://www.atapy.com). All operations with the designed archives or museums (administration, database maintenance, document publication, etc.) are implemented via a Web interface.

The software proved a convenient and reliable tool for designing and maintaining digital archives, libraries, and museums.

Technical appraisal and economic benefits:
The main advantages of the proposed technology over conventional ones are as follows:
- fast creation, description, and structuring of an information resource or a virtual museum collection due to automation of the basic technological processes and application of a Web-oriented information system;
- fast creation of special exhibitions and subject collections based on existing virtual collections;
- possibility of fast publication of documents on various data media (prints, CD, DVD) timed to specific dates or events (for example, exhibition opening);
- possibility of efficient information support for events held by museums and archives;
- cost reduction in creating digital archives and virtual museums.

Application areas
The technology is intended to design digital archives and virtual museums for holders of documents and exhibits of historical and scientific value, such as museums, including memorial ones, historical and personal archives, libraries, collections, historical and cultural reserves, as well as for collectors of all types of flat objects (numismatic and philatelic collections, herbaria, audiocollections, etc.)

Development stage
The digital archive of academician A.P. Ershov is an example of implementation of a virtual memorial museum (http://ershov.iis.nsk.su). This is a project of the Institute of Informatics.
Patent situation
No patents.

Commercial offers
To a wide range of collection holders and to all organizations and private persons, the Institute of Informatics Systems proposes the following:
- software tools and technology for designing digital archives and virtual museum collections;
- service on designing digital archives and virtual museum collections, starting from implementation of digital photo-, video- and audio-collections and document scanning to Internet-publishing, i.e., making a Web-site or portal;
- placing digital archives and virtual museum collections on the Institutes’ servers.

Estimated cost
Price is to be negotiated.

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