Social classification
Panacea or Pandora?

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ASIS&T :: November 4, 2006

What’s in a name?
distributed collaborative inclusive
social mob wikified community
dynamic cooperative user-generated
reader-assigned audience-derived
public-created visitor-produced

recordkeeping documentation ordering
description representation
taxonomy organization
tagging indexing ranking
annotation cataloging
categorization

Everybody’s taggin’ ...

• tags are index terms are labels for classes
• never has interest in classification been so widespread
• opportunity knocks for SIG/CR

The old way

author   document   indexer
  term    term

The new way

author   document   indexer
  term    term
  term    term
  term    term

The Seven Wonders of SC

• it’s collaborative
• it’s distributed
• it’s dynamic
• it’s instructive
• it’s democratic
• it’s empowering
• it’s cheap
The problem to be solved ... today!

- What will successful SC systems be like?
  - success = popularity?
  - success = high performance?

- complication: SC systems are multifunctional
  - personal, public
  - indexing, searching
  - access, engagement

The problem to be solved, cont’d

- How do SC systems help users ...
  - get things done?
  - pass the time?
  - easily? [usability]
  - cheaply? [cost-effectiveness]
  - quickly? [efficiency]
  - well? [effectiveness]

Beyond the interface ...

- infrastructures
  - socio-economic
  - motivations, incentives
  - linguistic

Classification research

- key to effective IR = indexer--searcher consistency
  - thus ...
  - vocabulary control
  - policies on specificity, exhaustivity
  - hierarchical arrangement
  - categorization by facet
  - browsable displays: recognition rather than recall

The problem restated

- Can we expect taggers to think like searchers?
  - Should they?
  - How can they be encouraged to do so?
  - SC may be cheap, empowering, etc. ...
  - but can it ever be effective?