

Web Weaving

Like all parts of ACM, SIGCHI is changing into an electronic organization. One of the major ways we can reach and serve our members is through our web pages. Currently, we have an extensive amount of information on how to reach people and how SIGCHI runs, but we are going through a redesign process where member input is more than welcome.

Here are some of the plans we are making for future SIGCHI resources.

One of the first things we need to tackle with our web pages is our "look and feel" Currently, our web pages have no unifying design, no common structure. In short, it is embarrassing for a society that promotes the good design of user interfaces to have a web interface that has never undergone a usability study, has no consistent graphics layout and is missing a user overview of its contents. We plan to have web designers create a style that will emphasize the whimsical, creative, dashing, human and technical sides of SIGCHI.

A second problem with the web site is the one that led to it moving from an original clean design to one made ad hoc by many hands. In a volunteer society, updating information about an organization as dynamic as SIGCHI is extremely time-consuming. We need to make that update process simpler and to put it in the hands of the people most interested in making the changes. What we would like to do is create a library of web forms for updating much of our basic information, e.g., who are the current officers in SIGCHI, what local chapters exist and how can I contact them, how can I be a volunteer, what volunteer jobs are

currently available and how can I find another member? These forms would be available to various users; for example, the volunteer form could be filled in by any member.

We also want to explicitly support the process of using these forms. For example, if a member volunteers for a specific task that we need help on, the person coordinating that task will receive email that a volunteer is available. In addition, we want to make a larger amount of SIGCHI's information resources readily available to members electronically. For example, we envision a web page of the month wherein a recognized expert summarizes and discusses key papers on a particular topic. The page will have pointers to these same papers in ACM's Digital Library. We are also looking to extending our Workshops and Birds of a Feather Groups at the CHI conferences to web resources for the attendees so that they can share their decisions and understandings with other SIGCHI members and maintain an electronic community in their interest area.

We are asking for help for this redesign from our members. It would be incredibly useful if members teaching in the design community asked their classes to help us generate new kinds of web pages or better ways of accessing the information we already have in place. It would be great if academics teaching HCI set their classes to the task of either performing a user needs assessment or running usability studies on our web pages. It would be especially helpful if we received feedback on this from a variety of cultures. Once the new web space is in place, we expect it to be our dynamic elec-

tronic community. That means that we want your help in using the web pages and adding to the information resources. We look forward to meeting you online.

Marilyn and Wendy

