
Montague Institute website

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The Montague Institute website provides extensive information on knowledge-based publishing for members. Some articles and parts of articles are free for non-members. These give an idea of the content of the site, and trends within the information community. Content in the Montague Institute Review includes original articles, abstracts of external articles, and summaries of discussions on mailing lists, especially BusLib-L. These are accessible in a number of ways, including a single-level A-Z index based on a thesaurus. The Institute website also provides information about educational programs and the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers.

The Montague Institute was founded by Jean Graef in 1992 after she saw a demonstration of the internet and realised its potential as a global networking standard. It is a research-based organisation with educational programs, and it sponsors a membership organisation – the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers.

This article provides information on the Montague Institute and its publications, and comments on its website as an example of knowledge-based publishing.

MONTAGUE INSTITUTE

The Montague Institute conducts research “on topics related to the integration of print, Web, and database publishing as well as trends in information services and new business models”.¹ Research results are published in the *Montague Institute Review*. The research covers all information disciplines, and has practical applications. It also provides educational programs and sponsors the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers.

A “knowledge base” is a system for managing business information through relational databases.² The knowledge base contains metadata about the information, and each record is linked to the original document, which can be stored anywhere – on the user’s computer, on a network drive, in a database, or in an external service. Knowledge Base Publishing systems use the best features of print, web and database formats, adapted for use with web content and supported by the quality control processes of print publishing, such as editing and peer review.

The site provides a brief tutorial on “How to get the most from this Web site”,³ which is worth using. In addition, from the homepage you can browse “Topics we cover”:

- Business intelligence
- Case studies
- Collaboration
- Intellectual capital
- Knowledge base publishing
- Reviews & surveys
- Search & navigation

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¹ Montague Institute, *About Us* (2009), <http://www.montague.com/inst1.html> viewed 5 November 2009.

² Montague Institute, *What is Knowledge Base Publishing?* (2009), <http://www.montague.com/Catalog/page5.htm> viewed 5 November 2009.

³ Montague Institute, *How to Get the Most from this Web Site*, <http://www.montague.com/content/Tutorial/page1.htm> viewed 5 November 2009.

- SharePoint
- Trends

Most of these categories have subdivisions, thus giving a good overview of the site's content, eg:

- Search & navigation
 - Metadata
 - Ontologies
 - Search engines
 - Tagging
 - Taxonomies
 - Thesauri

SOCIETY OF KNOWLEDGE BASE PUBLISHERS

The Montague Institute sponsors the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers (<http://www.montague.com/society.html>), an organisation for information professionals engaged in managing intellectual assets in a business context. Members include people from librarianship, organisation development, corporate learning, and related areas.

Member benefits include full text of the *Montague Institute Review*, discounts on seminars and roundtables, and participation in Member Q&A (a personalised information and referral service). Membership is included in non-member fees for some courses.

MONTAGUE INSTITUTE REVIEW

The *Montague Institute Review* (<http://www.montague.com/review/review.html>) is a monthly web journal, which includes a digest of articles from other publications, a compilation of internet discussion group postings, book and software reviews, and original articles. The full text of all articles in the Review is available to members of the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers. The full text of selected articles and introductory content from others is available to non-members.

Content in the Review is accessible through a full-text search engine, an A-Z index (<http://www.montague.com/Public/indexes.htm>) and extensive linking between related articles. The index and linking are generated using metadata from the knowledge base.

The software supports three versions of the index:

1. Public index where document links point to abstracts
2. Members index where document links point to full text articles
3. Lab indexes containing data for each course participant. The data retrieved is determined by the password entered.⁴

The index includes subjects, organisations, and people. The subject terms are controlled using a thesaurus, which also contains scope notes and cross-referencing to guide people through the index. For example, the first entry in the index (presented at the left-hand side of the screen) is:

A – Z indexes, *see* indexes

Clicking on indexes opens the “indexes” page, which includes scope note and term linkages, followed by the documents that have been indexed using that metadata term:

indexes

Indexes are structured methods of finding information in a book, document, or database. In print publishing, an index is an alphabetical list, such as one printed at the back of a book. In electronic publishing, items in the index point to documents or, sometimes, parts of documents. In a database, indexes are lists (usually invisible) of codes or keys that make it possible to search database fields.

indexes

Used for:

A – Z indexes

See also:

⁴ <http://www.montague.com>.

Related term

bibliographic databases
linguistic tools
search engines
vocabularies

Broader term

organizing information

Narrower term

parametric indexes
union indexes

Documents for this term:

[MOSS 2007: More tips from the trenches](#)

Using SharePoint lists to index documents and merge similar data from two different departments, using wikis to streamline the publication process, and other useful ideas in this case study of American Nuclear Insurers. *Montague Institute Review* July 2009

followed by 16 other articles.

The index shows the Montague Institute's philosophy of using the best from the print and online worlds. In many ways the index is created and functions like the traditional print equivalent, but the use of metadata in the knowledge base means that it can be updated constantly.

The thesaurus led me to terms I was unaware of, eg from "innovation" related terms include "creative abrasion" and "finger-pointing".

Linkages within the website create an interconnected mass of articles, with each new article leading to others of interest. The main challenge is to keep track of where you are, and where you may want to backtrack to (although if you do get lost, you always have the index and search engine to lead you back).

The most recent original article on the website I found was "Managing Knowledge in 'The Singularity'" – the Singularity being the centre of a black hole, where the laws of physics no longer make sense. Alongside this article there are seven related articles, with publication dates ranging from 1993 (on competitive intelligence) to 2009 (on where will semantic content come from). This then linked to "De Facto Standards for Semantic Search?", which then led to "OpenCalais Service" – this article in turn had three related articles (two from 2009).

The content is well-suited to librarians. For example, "Beginner's introduction to the Semantic Web" sets the scene with mentions of Lexis/Nexis, ProQuest, Yellow Pages, Thomas Register and MARC (Machine Readable Cataloguing). In its explanation of structured information, it starts with three Dublin Core tags and shows how they would be expressed in RDF (Resource Description Framework).

Articles of interest to me included:

- "The Economics and ABCs of Indexes" (April 2002);
- "Indexing Images" (January 2005);
- "Managing Metadata in Collaboration Systems" (May 2006);
- "Google vs Autonomy" (April 2008); and
- "SharePoint Content Storage Options: Implications for Search" (October 2009).

In addition to original articles, the *Montague Institute Review* features:

- "Best of the Lists" – selected excerpts from BUSLIB-L and other internet discussion groups;
- "Knowledge Base Editor's Digest" – articles and abstracts from the Review, and abstracts from other publications and websites;
- "Member Q&A" – articles initiated by questions from society members;
- "Top 20 articles" – a list of the most popular articles (free, but registration required);
- "Point of view" – Jean Graef's comments on articles of current interest;

- chronological list of all feature articles; and
- articles free to non-members (registration required).

I often see topics repeated on mailing lists that I follow, and think it would be more efficient to gather the responses to the more important topics in one place. Montague did more than think about it, and their “Best of the Lists” is a useful service. They have grouped the summaries under five headings:

- “Managing information” (eg content management software; electronic lab notebooks);
- “Organising information” (eg the trouble with SIC codes (Standard Industrial Codes, for company processes));
- “Reviews” (products and companies) (eg Thomas Register free website (<http://www.thomasnet.com/>));
- “Tips and techniques” (eg best practices in competitive intelligence); and
- “Where to find it” (eg how to find information about “Cities with the most headquarters”, “Cultural trends”).

Some of the topics are quite specific (eg “Cities with the most headquarters”) and it may be that the list will not scale well if it grows much bigger.

The main problem is that the information covered can easily become out of date. Some topics have been updated, but others remain fixed in time. For example, the topic “Sources for Material Safety Data Sheets” contains two excerpts from BUSLIB-L messages sent in 1998, and an update sent to SOLOLIB-L in 2004.

You can join BUSLIB-L at <http://lists.nau.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=BUSLIB-L> and you can learn about new “Best of BUSLIB-L” items by requesting monthly email alerts or an RSS news feed.

The digests provide access to external information. For example, the five links under “Publishing” led to articles in the *New York Times*, *TechNewsWorld*, *The New Yorker*, *Microsoft TechNet* and *FederalComputerWeek*.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Institute provides hands-on educational programs that focus on learning by doing. These include:

- Knowledge Base Editing series;
- roundtables; and
- Metadata, Search, and Productivity Practicum.

Knowledge Base Publishing course

The Knowledge Base Publishing course (<http://www.montague.com/inst3.html>) can be taken at any time, and the seven courses in the series are available on the web, face-to-face, and onsite, with mentoring by instructors in all cases. The courses include the creation of knowledge base deliverables such as reports, catalogues, controlled vocabularies and topics maps using a web-based lab. Participation of a team of two to 10 people from one organisation is recommended.

The series starts with the “Introduction to Knowledge Base Publishing” and then covers topics relating to taxonomies, metadata, search, SharePoint, electronic images and information modelling.

Roundtables

Roundtables (<http://www.montague.com/roundtable.html>) involve one or more three-hour teleconferences, with access to member-only articles. Topics offered in the last year include:

- “Taxonomies, search & SharePoint how-to”;
- “Demonstrating taxonomy value to senior managers”; and
- “Enterprise mashups for expertise location”.

Cost varies depending on course length. As an example, the three-hour “Migrating metadata to the Semantic Web” course to be held on 17 December 2009 costs \$650 per person for non-members (including membership of the Society of Knowledge Base Publishers).

Metadata, Search, and Productivity Practicum

The metadata practicum (<http://www.montague.com/practicum.htm>) runs three times per year. Its aim is to “demonstrate how to increase metadata ROI by making it easier to design, implement, and use metadata repositories”. Course participants work in teams including a content manager (eg corporate librarian), technology manager and knowledge base compiler (eg indexer). It is a guided process and results in a prototype metadata repository and high level information model.

This is a great site at which to look for practical ideas about managing information effectively.