

SDH Paper Abstract

Findings and Outcomes of the musicSpace Project

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The effective use of the ever-increasing number of online music and musicology resources is held back by the segregation of data into a plethora of discrete and disparate databases, and the use of legacy, ad hoc or otherwise unsuitable metadata specifications, such that many real-world research questions are rendered effectively intractable. To counter this barrier to research, the "musicSpace" project (based at the University of Southampton, UK) utilized Semantic Web and Web2.0 technologies such as RDF and AJAX to experimentally integrate access to many of musicology's leading data providers, by: (1) designing back-end services to integrate (and where necessary surface) available (meta)data for exploratory search from musicology's key online data providers; and (2) providing a front-end interface, based on the "mSpace" faceted browser, to support rich exploratory search interaction. The project concluded with a longitudinal evaluation of the efficacy of the musicSpace interface in supporting researchers, and in this paper we present our finding. Our work offers an effective generalizable framework for data integration and exploration that is well suited to arts and humanities data, and we conclude by outlining how we are taking various aspects of this work forward.