

# *intranets* *2000*



Managing Content  
Building Applications  
Designing Portals

# Function over Form: Creating Delivery Mechanisms to Meet User Needs

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# What We Do

- Major Intranet "Hub" for Ford Motor Company
- Provide desktop information services to Ford Motor Company employees
- Provide portal-like access to internal & external information

# Our Web Site...

- Built to be customizable
  - Users can tailor to fit their needs
  - Easy to use
  - Add any URL
  - Expandable
- Clean, simple design

# Our Web Site...

- Didn't match the way many of our customers used their information
- Of 25,000 users, only 340 personalized the site in 18 months.

# Why Did Personalization Fail?

- We're not really sure – several possible explanations
  - It's not easy enough
  - Core users like it; casual visitors don't need it?
  - Our organization isn't quite right
  - (Addressing these issues – revised site coming out later this year)

# So Where Did We Go Wrong?

- We didn't, exactly
- Built a robust infrastructure that allowed us to:
  - Revise output
  - Tailor info to people's needs
  - Saved our bacon

# How Did Our Thinking Change?

- Initially
  - Wanted to hide taxonomies from users
- Currently...
  - Decided that the site needs to be more transparent
- Advantages
  - Tailors the information to the way people want the data
  - Easy to add new information sources



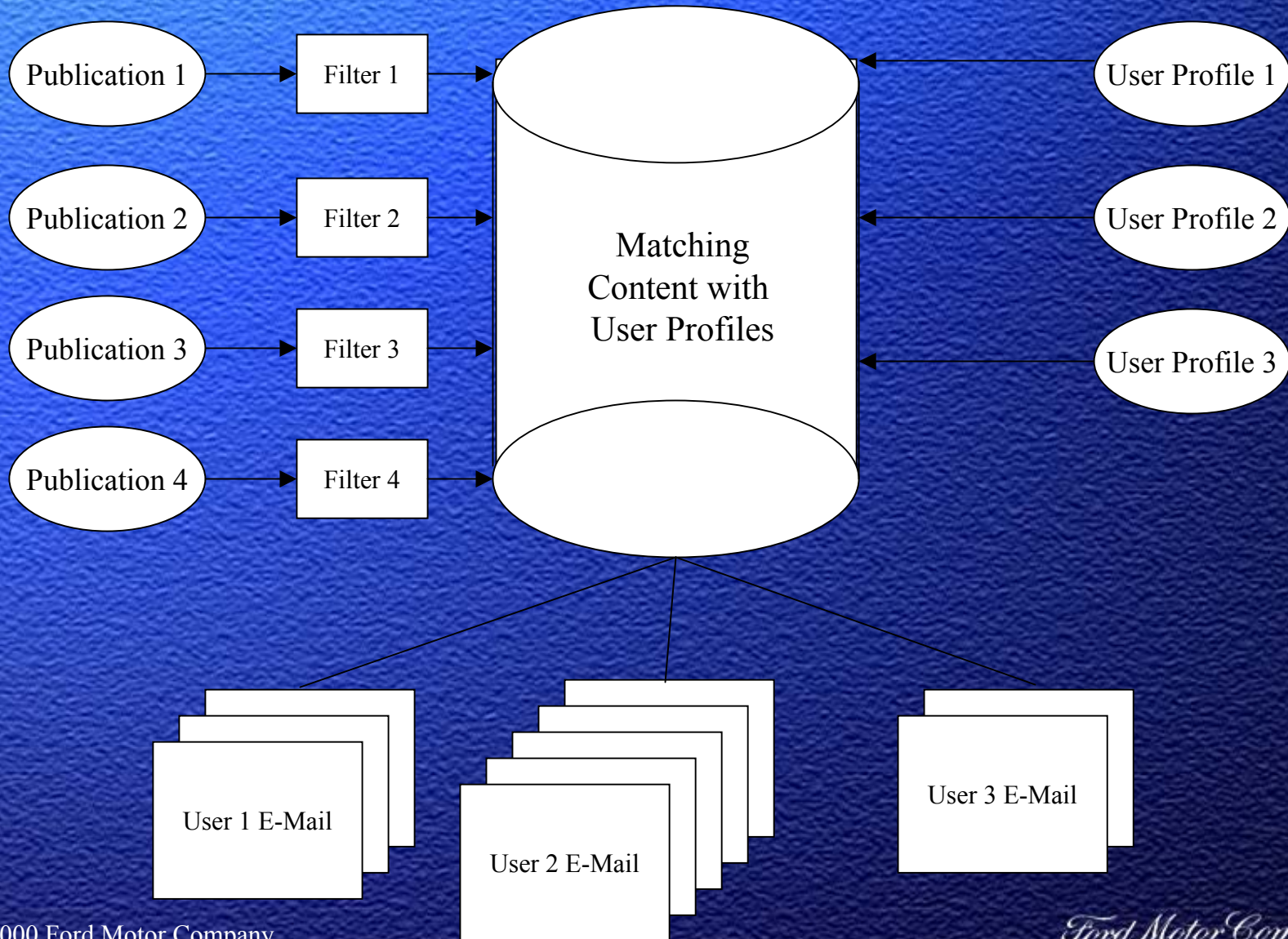
# The RLIS Mantra

- Metadata Metadata Metadata


# RLIS Select

- News/Information stream by e-mail
- Content includes highlights from our site:
- Uses our existing taxonomy
- Automated


# Overview



RLIS SELECT - Netscape  
File Edit View Go Window Help  
Back Forward Reload Home Search Netscape Print Security Close  
Bookmarks Netsite http://www.rlis.ford.com/cgi-bin/select/rlsSelect.pl What's Related  
Instant Message Internet Lookup New!Cool RealPlayer Plus



## RLIS Select for sgarchal



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Bookmarks Location: file:///V:/eslib/System-Projects/SubServices/New files/copy of toc-sub.htm

Instant Message Internet Lookup NewsCool RealPlayer Plus



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<p><b>Brief Help</b></p> <p><b>Information Sources:</b> Currently, the sources for RLIS Select by Topic are the Ford Technical Journal, Research Highlights, the FRL Technical Reports, selected tables of contents for external journals, and new materials in the Research Library collection. We are interested in expanding our sources for content, so please feel free to suggest additional sources of interest to you.</p> <p><b>New Users:</b> To subscribe, select one or more topics from the list below, and click on the "Subscribe to Selected Topics" button at the bottom of this page.</p> <p><b>Existing Users:</b> To modify your subscription, choose your new set of topics and click on "Subscribe to Selected Topics". Your new subscription will replace the old one.</p> <p><b>To Unsubscribe:</b> To unsubscribe from this service, click on the "Un-Subscribe All Topics" button at the bottom of this page. Note that unsubscribing cancels the e-mail notifications for all topics you had selected.</p>	<p>Select one or more of the following topics:</p>		
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Document Done

# How it Works

- We already invested a great deal of time building metadata sets for various publications
  - Technical Reports & Publications
  - New Books
  - Web Sites
- We built a master taxonomy and mapped the individual ones to it

# Challenges

- Merging disparate items
- Getting number of subject headings right
- Branding



# Pros and Cons of Multiple Taxonomies

- Makes some things easier
  - Content management – subject domains are smaller, terms are narrower
  - Reflects organic growth of publications & products
- Other things are harder
  - Need to ensure each product stays internally consistent
  - Need to spend resources mapping specific publication taxonomies to master list
- Overall – works well at this stage

# Late-Breaking News

- We're revising RLIS Select to include documents created by ~50 'publishers' in the company
  - Quality
  - Competitive Intelligence
  - Forecasting
- Revising the "Auto Industry" section by adding ~35 new subject terms

# What We've Learned

- Up-front time developing a taxonomy is NOT wasted time.
  - Advantage of a well-constructed taxonomy is clear – it allowed us to create a brand new service without rebuilding the whole site or investing huge resources into it.
- Make the database flexible; output formats should be easy to change
  - e-mail, easy to do a personalized web page with your latest data on it (though our user base has already shown itself to be disinclined to do this)

# What We've Learned

- Information matters. Form doesn't.
  - On the Intranet, getting the information you need is FAR more important than how it's delivered.
  - Match information output to the corporate culture.
- Still Face Challenges...
  - Taking existing content, with existing brand, and merging it into the datastream without losing the hard-fought branding of the original.

# Thank You

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[www-personal.si.umich.edu/~varnum/intranets2000/](http://www-personal.si.umich.edu/~varnum/intranets2000/)

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