Resonances on the Web

On the internet, the same information is sometimes found in different sites. Hence, it is important to know how a particular topic is presented on a given site. For NMR spectroscopy, there are numerous sites worldwide. In the ".de" part of the web, there are essentially two important sites: the server of the German Chemical Society discussion group on magnetic resonance (FGMR, Figure 1) and www.nmr.de (Figure 2), which aims to be the "most complete NMR resource site available on the internet". This site is in English only, the Chemical Society page is in both English and German.

Let us compare the sites by asking them two typical questions. First, assume we are a small enterprise in the Cologne region, that has an NMR problem, and we are looking for someone to solve this problem for us. On the Chemical Society site, I choose "NMR/ESR Links", click on "Germany" on the country menu and get a "not found" error message. Slightly frustrated, I click "Workgroups" on the left side of the home page to get a list sorted by cities. Unfortunately, there is no entry for Cologne.

On the nmr.de site, I choose "all links" on the left hand side. Via "institutes", "Europe", and "Germany" I get a list of 65 unsorted entries. Having in vain checked all of them, I try the site's search function, which doesn't help either.

Although there is a large university and major companies in Cologne, both portals fail. Using a general search site such as metager.de, you will find numerous potentially helpful entries under "NMR and Cologne".

Our second test is a bit more thorough: a student who wants to learn more about the angular dependence of spin–spin coupling. On the Chemical Society page, I eventually pick "Education" and find a number of links, but none that refers directly to the problem. Only the recently added package of "NMR resources" yields the desired information in seven "slides", but without any explanations. In nmr.de, I choose "downloads" without success. The internal search function yields nothing when asked for "Karplus". This is strange, because you can browse to a program that calculates the angular dependence of the coupling constants. Searching again under "cool links" yields the "NMR resources" mentioned above. A comparison to text books is clearly in favor of the latter.

Figure 1. Home page of the discussion group on magnetic resonance of the German Chemical Society

Both NMR sites are desinged according to current standards, load quickly and offer common features such as job offers, conferences, news, hints, and a flea market. The more or less identical information seems to be a bit more structured on the Chemical Society page, whereas nmr.de is apparently updated more frequently. Just why there have to be two sites remains an open question, especially because there is a link from nmr.de to the Chemical Society page but not back again.

Stefan Berger
Universität Leipzig

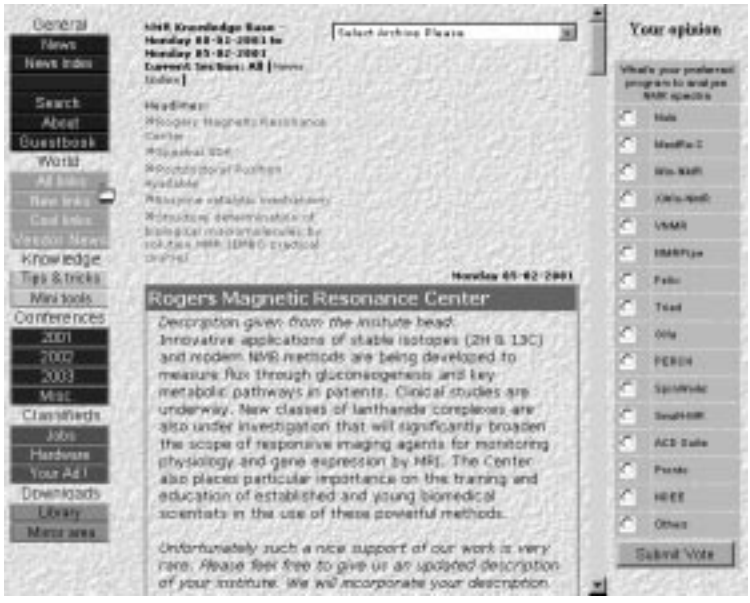

Figure 2. Home page www.nmr.de

For further information visit
http://fgmr.chemie.uni-hamburg.de
and
http://www.nmr.de