

# Report on CIRP Information Technology: Notes from 46th CIRP General Assembly Presentation on CIRPNET

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# **Report on CIRP Information Technology**

# Notes from 46th CIRP General Assembly Presentation on CIRPNET

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**Abstract**: The first goal of this handout is to introduce you to CIRPNET, its making-of and its main aims. We also would like to introduce the Internet and the advantages the CIRP Academy could draw from it. We then describe the contents of CIRPNET and give statistics that show its impact on the scientific community. Finally, we give examples of navigations through CIRPNET in the appendices.

Keywords: Internet, World Wide Web, CIRPNET, Annals Database

### Acknowledgments

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### 1. CIRPNET Project

CIRPNET goals were both to broad CIRP activities through the Internet and to provide a structure allowing to help CIRP Members to use Internet resources.



Fig. 1 Main dates and tasks of CIRPNET Project

With this end in view, the creation of a CIRP Task Group for Information Technology has been decided at the 45th CIRP General Assembly in Enschlede (Netherlands) in September 1995. It is composed of the 16 following members,

- P. BOURDET, France
- L. CSER, Hungary
- N.A. DUFFIE, USA
- I. HAM, Korea (Chairman)

- R. HOCKEN, USA
- F. KIMURA, Japan
- T. KJELLBERG, Sweden
- F.-L. KRAUSE, Germany
- S.R.T. KUMARA, India (Secretary)
- J. MEIJER, Netherlands
- L. MONOSTORI, Hungary
- M. SANTOCHI, Italy
- R. TETI, Italy
- J.P. Van GRIETHUYSEN, Switzerland
- F.J.A. VAN HOUTEN, Netherlands
- M. VERON, France

Professor P. Bourdet proposed to host CIRPNET on his laboratory network and put us in charge of creating and maintaining CIRPNET. Figure 1 shows the main events that happened in CIRPNET short history.

### 2. WWW Concepts

The Internet proposes a client/server structure (Fig. 2) allowing a client to get remote informations. The World Wide Web is a sub-part of the Internet providing two kind of informations

- · formatted text pages
- multimedia materials (e.g. images and audio files)



Fig. 2 Client/Server structure

The WWW permits to link these informations together. One can get these informations either by knowing their exact addresses or by following the links. Using the second way is commonly called *to navigate*. CIRPNET is a navigation tool.



# 3. Introduction to CIRPNET

CIRPNET is a navigation tool hosted by the Internet allowing to answer to the previous requirements by giving,

- General Informations about the CIRP Academy
- A database of Publications
- · Links to CIRP-related Pages of the Internet

Its structure permits to use the main advantage of the internet, i.e. a multi-servers and multi-clients structure.

Figure 4 shows that CIRPNET comprises three kind of nodes,

- The CIRP Server:
  - It is maintained by CIRP Webmasters and contains,
  - · General informations about CIRP
  - Table of contents of CIRP Annals
  - Seminar announcements
  - Newsletters
- CIRP-related Servers

These servers are maintained by Members. Our work here consists in linking URLs<sup>1</sup> to the CIRP server. These URLs deal with,

- Seminar announcements
- CIRP Members Labs Homepages
- Client
  - Type: PC, Macintosh, Unix Workstation
  - Viewer: Netscape, NCSA Mosaic, Lynx...

Although flexible, navigate through the Internet can be hard to manage, specially the very first times you connect. As lots of servers do, we gathered CIRP related links in the same page (i.e. CIRPNET home page). We have adopted this structure because it only requires the client to know the CIRPNET Server URL and not all CIRP-related URLs. This help we provide does not prevent the client to bookmark the pages he is interested in, and go directly to one of these bookmarks the next connections. Thus, CIRPNET still allows to take advantage of what makes the Internet so convenient, i.e. the easiness of going from one point to an other.



Fig. 4 The CIRPNET structure and its different nodes as a sub-net of the Internet

The Starting point to CIRPNET (i.e. CIRP Server URL) is the following address,

### http://www.lurpa.ens-cachan.fr/cirp.html

Concerning the organization of the CIRP Server, we propose a hierarchical structure allowing to view sub-pages of CIRPNET though enabling to go back to the main pages at any time.

# 4. CIRPNET Contents

The CIRP Task Group for Information technology required the following items to appear in CIRPNET:

Home Page

- General Information
- · Announcements and call for papers
- CIRP Newsletter
  - Newsletter #8
  - Newsletter #7
- Table of contents of CIRP Annals
  - CIRP Annals (year by year)
  - References of Authors
  - · Search by keywords
- Course Materials
- Links to CIRP Members Labs

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The World Wide Web uses Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) to specify the location of files on other servers. A URL includes the type of resource being accessed (e.g., Web, gopher, WAIS), the address of the server, and the location of the file.

These informations are not homogenous as for their nature. Table 1 shows how we sort the different type of pages.

#### Table 1 Map of the CIRP Server contents

|   |                               | Permanent pages<br>containing static data | Pages Made temporarily<br>on particular demand | Permanent pages containing<br>reactive data |  |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| General Presentation                      |                               | 9 pages                                   |  |   |  |
| Announcements                             |                               |   |  | 1 page<br>6 links                           |  |
| Newsletter #7                             |                               | 7 pages                                   |  |   |  |
|   |                               | #8  | 7 pages  |   |  |
| Table of<br>contents<br>of CIRP<br>Annals | CIRP Annals<br>(year by year) |   | 139<br>pages                                   |   |  |
|   | References of<br>Authors      |   | 27 pages                                       | 2140<br>pages                               |  |
|   | search by<br>keywords         |   | 1 page   | infinity<br>of pages                        |  |
| Course Materials                          |                               | 1 page                                    |  |   |  |
| Links to CIRP Members Labs                |                               |   |  | 1 page<br>10 links                          |  |

# Permanent pages containing static data

The goal of these pages is to provide Internet surfers with general informations about CIRP (e.g. STCs aims and goals, Newsletter...). To do so, three steps are necessary. The first step consists in either typing paper documents on a computer or getting word processor files if they already exist (e.g. Newsletters). Then it is necessary to translate all layout commands and all paragraphs and characters properties in the HTML language. Finally we enhance the contents of the HTML pages by adding navigation possibilities with hypertext link commands.

### Pages Made temporarily on particular demand

We wanted to be able to give the client the possibility to perform either Author list of publications queries or Keywords queries. To do so, we first built an author database from the database of publications (whose format is the same as the table of contents of the CIRP Annals format). We then wrote two Perl<sup>2</sup> scripts that (depending on whether you search by Authors or by Keywords respectively) first open the database of Authors or the database of publications, then either look for the matching Authors or the matching Keywords and finally built the report in the format of the table of contents of the CIRP annals.

## Permanent pages containing reactive data

Here we aimed at allowing a client to navigate not only within the CIRP Server but also through the entire CIRP-NET. It is done by linking all informations provided by CIRP Members. Members can get in touch with CIRP Webmasters via e-mail to send them the informations they need to link either seminar pages or their lab home page. This is what makes this category of pages reactive.

Table 1 also gives the number of pages and links available in each category of the CIRP Server.

One can finally notice the frames surrounding certain cells. We wanted to point out here the fact that it is not possible to find any of the informations within these cells anywhere else than by entering the CIRP Server Home-page. For example we have built an index of Authors. On the contrary, informations such as CIRP Newsletters and the General Presentation of CIRP Academy are available on two media: CIRPNET and Paper Handouts. It shows it is useful to gather in the same location an as comprehensive as possible list of CIRP-related informations.

## 5. CIRP Server consultation statistics

Although only officially open to public access since January 1996, CIRPNET has been existing for almost 9 months. At the beginning of its life, we first prepared a preview of CIRPNET and gave its address to CIRP Task Group members. At that time we wanted to validate the formats we have chosen for the pages (fonts, style...) and also be sure we met the requirements sheet we had from the Task Group. That explains why the statistics are starting earlier than in January. At that moment (around week 9) we observed an increase in CIRPNET logs.



Fig. 5 Whole site consultations over 38 weeks

On August 20th we had a total number of 33719 consultations. This number has a general tendency to increase<sup>3</sup> (Fig. 5). If we consider that CIRPNET has really started at the end of January 1996, we have an approximate average number of consultations of 1500 a week, which is quite important.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of consultations sorted by the main topics of the entry page of the CIRP Server. One

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Practical Extraction and Report Language: Perl is an interpreted language optimized for scanning arbitrary text files, extracting information from those text files, and printing reports based on that information.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Due to changes in our organization network system, the CIRP Server was unreachable during the week of May 19th

can note that the publications database is what interests the most CIRPNET users. It is also interesting to notice that, as expected, users preferably consult the pages not available on other media.



Fig. 6 Distribution of consultations

## 6. Conclusion

One year ago, the creation of CIRPNET has been decided. Six month later, we have presented a preview of CIRPNET at the January meeting in Paris. Today it is operational. Nevertheless, to be reactive, CIRPNET has to be in constant evolution. To do so, we need the help of all CIRP Members to keep it up to date. It can be done by mailing to CIRP Webmasters the home-page addresses of both CIRP Members Labs and Seminars.

### Appendix A: CIRP Server Entry Page



Page 1: http://www.lurpa.ens-cachan.fr/cirp.html

This page is the official entrance to CIRPNET. It gives the table of contents of the CIRP Server, i.e. General Information, Announcements and call for papers, CIRP Newsletter, CIRP Annals, Course Materials and Links to CIRP Members Labs. When navigating it is always possible to come back to this page by clicking on the CIRP button (see Appendix B), except for the pages that are not located in the CIRP Server (e.g. links to CIRP Members Labs) and that we do not maintain.

The other useful informations in this page are:

- CIRP e-mail address: Official CIRP Secretary e-mail address; To be used only for CIRP-related matter
- CIRP Webmasters e-mail address: To be used only to comment the CIRP Server or to ask Webmasters to link pages to CIRPNET
- Statistics: CIRP Server usage essentially sorted by week, by domain and by page
- Task Group: List (and few Home pages addresses) the Members of the CIRP Task Group for Information Technology

#### Appendix B: CIRPNET Buttons as a navigation help

There are five types of buttons in the CIRP Server. They have two main uses:

- going back to the main pages of the server at any time
- allowing to navigate faster









# Appendix F: Reaching CIRPNET from a search engine

