

1. Publishable summary



PuppyIR (IST FP7 231507) has developed technology that will enable children to search the Internet safely and successfully. The PuppyIR open-source framework aids in the construction of child-friendly information services, which will be able to summarise content and moderate information for children, help children safely build social networks, and intelligently aggregate the information for presentation to children. PuppyIR aims to facilitate the creation of child-centred information access, based on the understanding of the behaviour and needs of children. PuppyIR offers a package for software designers to construct IR systems for children in combination with various of prototypes and resources for user-centered evaluation. Also courseware for training developers in the use of the Framework is provided.

Children should be helped to maximize their full potential. Developing a child's abilities to find and understand information is key to their development as young adults. The internet offers children exciting new ways to meet people, learn about different cultures and develop their creative potential. However, children's ability to use the internet has long been severely hampered by the lack of appropriate search tools.

Most Information Retrieval (IR) systems are designed for use by adults: they return information that is unsuitable for children, present information in lists that children find difficult to manage and make it difficult for children to ask for information. Worse, many internet search engines confront children with inappropriate material. PuppyIR helps children search the Internet safely and successfully by the design of an open source framework of child-friendly information services.

PuppyIR provides a suite of components that can be used by system designers to tailor IR systems for children's specific needs. PuppyIR has developed new interaction paradigms that allow children to express their information needs simply and have results presented in an intuitive way. It offers Information Services that can summarise content for children, moderate information and intelligently aggregate it for presentation to children. For a multitude of services prototypes have been delivered that demonstrate the potential of the Framework, and PuppyIR also has developed child-centred evaluation methods.

PuppyIR offers a multi-layered architecture: system designers can choose from several interaction paradigms and information services to construct their own system. As the PuppyIR framework is open-source, it will be extensible for new information sources, new information services and new languages.