chem-bla-ics

Critical mass for Open Notebook Science wikis by prepopulation with RDF data

Egon Willighagen

Published June 26, 2010

Citation

Willighagen, E. (n.d.). In *chem-bla-ics*. chem-bla-ics. https://doi.org/10.59350/bbxyy-j5334

Keywords

Openscience, Opendata, Sparql, Wiki, Gsoc

Copyright

Copyright © Egon Willighagen 2010. Distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

One of the problems with Open Data, - Source, and Standards (ODOSOS) is to get critical mass: for the project to move forward, you need both a good user community and an active developers community. The first is the crucial reward for the latter: people using your work is the incentive. Sometimes, a project does not succeed in doing that; Rich was questioning if his ChemPedia project built up enough mass.

This also applies to wikis. WikiPedia clearly has enough critical mass, but is struggling with scaling, which is another problem you can encounter. Building a dedicated, domain specific wiki allows you to do things the way you like. For example, the can be used to build up the knowledge base around a specific problem. For example, HIV drugs (see HIVdb as an example knowledge base). The wiki could contain information you need for your data analysis. The developers team will likely be small, but the data will be highly curated. You are basically both the developer and the user community. Hopefully, in good Open Notebook Science manner, things will grow, and others will join in on building the knowledge base.

Semantic MediaWiki bridges the human readable wiki content, with machine readable RDF content. This wiki does require some additional annotation, but at the same time makes important facts machine readable. The Bioclipse Wiki is using it, though we are not yet taking advantage of the RDF exposure.

Now, returning to the critical mass aspect we started with. Samuel, who did a project with me on reasoning with Prolog in Bioclipse, is now doing a Google Summer of Code project (is there any significance in the fact that three Bioclipse developers are student or have been mentor in the GSoC? :) within the Semantic MediaWiki project. In particular, one of the things he was just working on, is the import of RDF into a wiki.

Oh goodies! That is pretty cool, don't you think? Just pull together RDF from your field of interest, drop it on the wiki, and you have your initial wiki the experts can continue to curate, add facts, etc. He already told me about his plans to add a SPARQL end point for the Semantic MediaWiki software.