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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: UFO Database interest

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From: Steven Kaeser <steve@konsulting.com>
Date: Thu, 04 Dec 1997 14:01:17 -0500
Fwd Date: Thu, 04 Dec 1997 17:58:44 -0500
Subject: Re: UFO Database interest

>Date: Thu, 04 Dec 1997 08:45:55 -0600
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>From: joel henry <jhenry@wavefront.com>
>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: UFO Database interest

>>From: galevy@pipeline.com [Gary Alevy]
>>Date: Wed, 03 Dec 1997 23:10:39 -0500
>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>>Subject: Re: UFO Database interest NOT!
>
<snip>

>>After you have the Ultimate UFO Report Database what will you do
>>with it?

>It will be open for use by anyone over the internet. What they
>choose to do with it is up to the investigator.

[. . .]

>It will have the most sightings of any database including many
>not available for database use. It will be of historical interest
>too.

>>What is the objective of this effort that has not been
>>accomplished previously?

>Previous efforts have been limited by :
>1- # of reports
>2- little access to many people who need it
>3- reports not in database form
>4- wide range of database searching capabilities to find
>info not previously even hinted at.
>5- monetary cost for use.

>>Will it take 5,000 10,000 100,000 sighting reports to achieve
>>what ever these goals are?

>The exact # of reports is not important. What is, is that there
>are many, if not all of the reports, in any form, all available
>in one place for immediate database sorting and use (including
>military, FOIA generated, and anything new added as it comes in.)

>I have gotten many positive responses from people out there who
>believe this effort is long overdue. Past database derived data
>has been limited in accuracy by the limited data available and
>have taken great effort to generate results. We hope to alleviate
>those problems.

>Joel Henry
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Re: UFO Database interest

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Joel-

I agree with your goal, but I don't think it is attainable.

You're making the assumption that all those who gather
information are interested in sharing it freely with others,
which I have found it not always the case.  Many researchers, who
make their living as a part of this genre, must sell their
material to make ends meet.  They are not likely to give it up
freely to a public database on the Internet, but for the sake of
your proposal, let's assume this isn't a problem.

As far as I've been able to determine, every researcher I've met
has had their own methodology in filing their material.  This
would have to be coordinated by those who put this database
together, so it would likely result in the complete review of
each piece of evidence and the establishment of a filing system
that will meet the needs that are identified.  A simple database
in Access is one thing, but a database designed to index several
hundred thousand records (items) and allow for multiple access
across the Internet is something a bit more complicated. The
Microsoft "dog and pony show" makes this type of database look
simple, but in reality there are numerous pitfalls that one can
get trapped in. This is, of course, assuming that an agreement
can be reached on how the database should be organized and
indexed.  But for the sake of this exercise, we'll assume that
the database has been designed and set up, and that all of the
freely submitted data has been converted.

There is still the problem of who will maintain (i.e. pay for and
service) the WEB server and the Internet bandwidth usage.  If
there is any interest in this at all, the usage could be very
high and the amount of material involved may require that a
seperate Web server be assigned to this task. In addition, the
database may require a seperate server to provide that
information as requested.  Bandwidth usage, meanwhile, may cost
hundreds of dollars a month, which is an expense that would have
to be met somewhere along the line.

We still haven't defined how much material is to be included in
this database.  Will it concentrate on one facet of the genre, or
will it include information on related subjects (i.e. cattle
mutilation, crop circles, remote viewing, etc.)?  Will everything
be reviewed before it is posted, or will it be up to the reader
to determine the veracity of the information.  If it's to be
reviewed, who will those reviewers be and how will they be
appointed?  If not, then what is to prevent a creative
11-year-old from writing up a good article as a prank and
submitting it for inclusion to the site.  If there is no check of
the material, it would likely be posted.  I will add that
accuracy of the data will not neccesarily increase with the
volumn of information included.  Accuracy is (in part) impacted
by the broad range of researchers and variations in their
investigative techniques.  What one researcher may regard as
highly accurate, the next may regard as sloppy.  This is, of
course, a personality based genre.

The goal of compiling information in one location for all to see
is admirable, and to a limited degree that has been underway for
a number of years.  There are several major efforts now underway
to gather information, but most of it is not destined for free
Internet access.  As I said, I admire your proposed goal.  But
let's not make this sound like a simple project, as (IMHO) it is
far more complicated than it may appear and will require
decisions that this genre has not previously been willing to
make.
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UFO UpDates - Toronto - updates@globalserve.net

Re: UFO Database interest

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