

« Environment, Knowledge and Democracy »
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**Internet and environment:
A field study in Rouen, France.**

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RESEARCH PROGRAM

« The place of the NICT in the emergence, the appropriation
and the debate about an environmental subject:
The case of pollution ».

➤ **Scientific direction:**

Yves JEANNERET, Suzanne de CHEVEIGNÉ, Nicole d'ALMEIDA

➤ **Financing:** MEDD / ADEME

➤ **Two parts:**

⇒ The presence of the topic « environment » on the Internet

⇒ Specific field study: the urban area of Rouen, France

➤ Purpose

Highlight how the actors in the field of the environment adapt themselves to the Internet and NICT...

⇒ ...by analyzing their discourses

⇒ ...by observing their practices

➤ Four parts

Field study

Discourses
about practices

Observation
of practices

Conclusions

Field study

Discourses
about practices

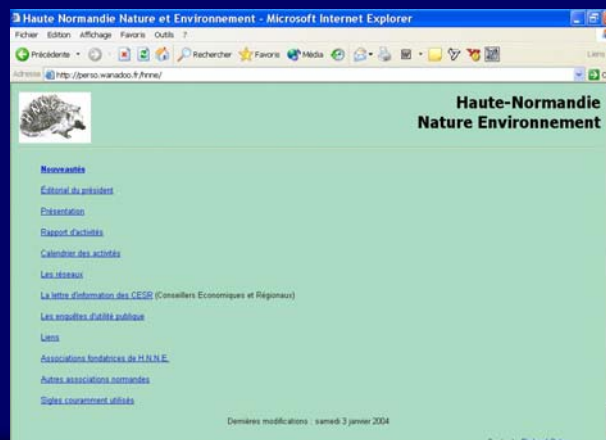
Observation
of practices

Conclusions

This work was centered on 4 websites

➤ Haute-Normandie Nature Environment (HNNE)

⇒ Federation of organizations fighting for the environment



Field study

Discourses
about practices

Observation
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Conclusions

This work was centered on 4 websites

➤ **Regional Agency for the Environment in H-N (AREHN)**

⇒ Institution in charge of environmental education & communicat°



Field study

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➤ **Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) of Rouen**

⇒ Offers services dedicated to companies



This work was centered on 4 websites

➤ Teaching Hospital (CHU) of Rouen

⇒ Scientific reference in the field of public health



Methodology

➤ 26 semi-directed interviews

- ⇒ Persons engaged in the conception of the websites chosen
- ⇒ Understand how they represent their activities with the NICT in the field of environment

➤ 1 week of « ethnographic » observation

- ⇒ Follow the practices of persons in charge of conceiving and loading documents on the Internet
- ⇒ AREHN's multimedia room: multimedia manager (MM), webmaster (WM) and exhibition manager (EM)

Field study	Discourses about practices	Observation of practices	Conclusions
<h2>NICT are widely appreciated</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Access to information <i>On the Internet [...] there's a lot of data (Q.R.)</i> ➤ Easy and rapid means of communication <i>Easy consultation [...] from home, whatever the time (MM)</i> ➤ Free and updated data <i>Informations are free on the websites (G.R.)</i> <i>Internet is an incredible media [...] no newspaper is able to update in real time (O.Y.)</i> ➤ Place of visibility <i>It's an extraordinary showcase [...] it makes us visible (D.D.)</i> 			

Field study	Discourses about practices	Observation of practices	Conclusions
<h2>The limits of NICT</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need of appropriate material <i>A lot of persons do not have any computer on their own, at home (R.D.)</i> ➤ Need to feel comfortable with new technologies <i>I think that Internet is something for the youngsters, not really for older people (M.C.)</i> ➤ Need to possess some skills <i>People are using computers without knowing how to use them (G.R.)</i> ➤ Fear about the contents <i>On the web, how could you know that this web site is good but this other one isn't? (H.B.)</i> 			

The organization within AREHN changed a lot

➤ Website created in 1998. Enrichment since 2003

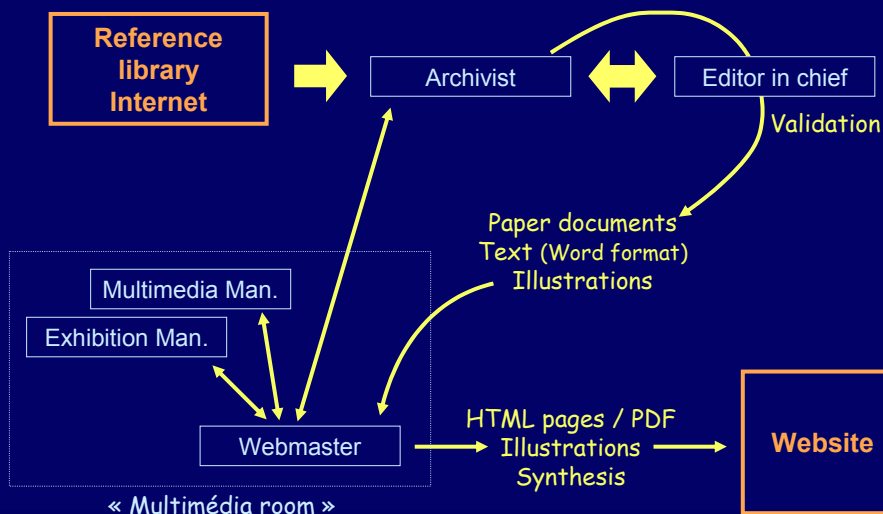
- ⇒ European funds for regional development (FEDER) received by AREHN specifically for NICT
- ⇒ Brief news items, multimedia applications, thematic folders, etc.

These funds completely transformed our usual way of working (WM)

➤ New jobs and tasks

- ⇒ Webmaster, multimedia manager, editor in chief...
- ⇒ Reference library's archivists → on-line research, writing...

The website requires collaborative work



It's not easy to move and work in the virtual world

⇒ Spatial marks in the physical world



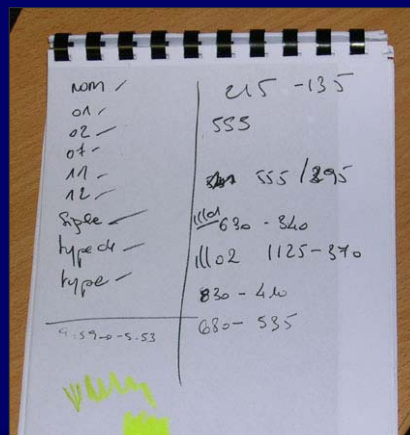
I stick a tag on each picture I find interesting. Like this, I can easily find it when I need it: there are 8 photographic boards! (MM)

It's not easy to move and work in the virtual world

⇒ Spatial marks in the physical world

⇒ Marks to find one's way around the virtual world of the website

*This is a notebook
in which I write technical things:
coordinates, names of references...
(MM)*



It's not easy to move and work in the virtual world

- ⇒ Spatial marks in the physical world
- ⇒ Marks to find one's way around the virtual world of the website
- ⇒ Marks to refresh one's memory

I noted down the parameters of the pictures we often use for exhibitions (EM)



- **Actors unanimous in thinking that NICT...**
 - ⇒ ...are important and necessary to their activity
 - ⇒ ...represent a positive input in terms of ease of communication and access to information
- **All of them admit the limits of NICT**
 - ⇒ NICT are costly in terms of money and time
 - ⇒ Worry about the (non) control of the information uploaded to or downloaded from the Internet
- **It's not easy to move and work in the virtual world**

➤ **Designing and maintaining a website...**

- ⇒ ...demands many skills
- ⇒ ...requires collaborative work

➤ **Interpersonal exchanges are very important**

Being able to discuss, to offer mutual assistance,
to give some advices



Possessing recent computers, high connexion,
high-performance softwares