

CONCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A DATABASE SYSTEM
FOR ART AND CULTURAL PROPERTIES
KuKuG („Kunst und Kulturgut“)

KuKuG is a co-operative venture of:

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For a number of years museums, cultural heritage offices, transportation firms, gallery owners, curators, restaurateurs, universities and academies have been attempting to create a registration system for art and cultural properties, whether archaeological fragments, architectonic collections or modern art.

There are a large number of study groups, committees, organisations and individuals already concerned with updating conventional methods of registration (file-card boxes, lists, sketches, projector slides etc.) to the digital age. Their work has already yielded very fruitful and useful databases.

The problem here, however, is that, while these databases generally function very well within individual areas, they all require software and hardware that is not universally available. An additional drawback is that, although these applications can be used for research purposes, they cannot be updated or modified by the user. A substantial number can only be used by the creator due to the absence of clear instructions for other users. In most cases, the databases are non-transferable and data exchange is either not possible or requires considerable technical and organisational input.

On the other hand, it is now very easy to create high-resolution digital images, store and edit two and three dimensional objects or spaces; data can be compressed and stored for later access on existing databases and thesauri via Internet.

KuKuG therefore intends to develop a standard type for all generally accessible 'organisational' (title, dimensions, owner etc.) data to allow data to be transferred within a limited circle of persons in an internal group or via the Internet. For these purposes **KuKuG** employs software and hardware systems that are available to every computer user.

The realisation and processing of complex projects in the organisational area of the art and culture sector will become considerably easier. Procedures and processes are optimised and displayed clearly, and communication for those involved – even extending beyond continents – will be of a quality in keeping with the digital age.

The aim is to design a database management system that is not tailor-made to just one particular institution, but can instead be employed independent of platform and apparatus. A system of this kind is urgently required in a large number of museums, cultural heritage offices and other institutions.

KuKuG covers the following:

- Directory of works and artists / Inventory / Bibliographies / Location / History / Museums
- Scientific research in various European archives
- Thesaurus for materials and techniques with links external dat
- Integrated picture database with link to external databases
- Interface for catalogue text and layout
- Conservation / Restoration protocols
Detailed documentation of condition, action taken and all working procedures executed
- Administration: scheduling and exhibition planning / Loans / Packaging / Transportation / Insurance / Depot management / Transportation firms etc.
- Storage of printed documents (certifications, correspondence) / Photographic and film archive

Employment over a range of different areas depends on a modular system (for partial operation), straightforward application (user-friendly layout), a list of synonyms (for pure text documents), running text for individual documents, complete document research and research according to certain criteria, intranet and Internet capability and an online service: maintenance, updates, back-ups, information pool.

Every authorised user has access to the area assigned for him. He can enter information and make inquiries. All information is transferred electronically via the Internet. Any data entered by the user can be stored in the central **KuKuG** database and be authorised for both general and restricted use – for example through a defined project group.

In combining completely different areas of the art and culture sector, **KuKuG** will provide unprecedented levels of quality and efficiency.

The **KuKuG** project has the purpose to be a practical and non-commercial tool on a very high standard for any institution or private person dealing with art and cultural properties in a professional way.

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