

METAMENTALDOC MULTIMEDIA



1 Introduction

In the current ecosystem of digital media, how to display information quickly becomes appreciated when we see how the traditional media and related audiovisual productions (fiction and nonfiction) with certain forms of exhibition and distribution approach and has increasingly given way to the creation of projects that hybridize the two formulas, information (content) with entertainment (fun). Incorporating interactivity means going one step further and allows the participation and involvement of the user. The formats have created new platforms for interactive display capable of collecting various types of content, in addition to achieving break the linearity of the prevailing discourse of traditional formats consume content from the classical Greek period. This new scenario has favored the development of different formats and the creation of new genres, such as the interactive documentary, which is a result of a double fusion of, on one hand, the audiovisual (documentary genre) and interaction (interactive digital media), and, on the other hand, between information (content) and entertainment (interactive interfaces).

Internet and Web 2.0 offer immense opportunities to enhance some of the classic principles of education and disclosure of knowledge in general. The genres of interactive fiction and interactive nonfiction are becoming pedagogic tools and teaching materials used by the teacher in different contexts. One of the essential assumptions of the traditional documentary is the desire to organize a story in such a way that it is informative and entertaining at the same time. In this respect, the interactive format must follow tradition and attempt to offer similar experiences that combine as efficiently, originally and attractively as possible, an entertainment with a didactic and/or educational dimension. This is possible mainly as a result of the combination of the different modes of navigation and interaction in an application, which enables a multiple exchange between the work and the user.

2 Technical details of the Metamentaldoc Multimedia Project

Summary: Audiovisual and online interactive documentary that reflects on the documentary genre

URL: www.metamentaldoc.com

Produced: 2009-2011, Vic (Spain)

Company/producer: Communication and Business College. Universitat de Vic.

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3 Concept and description

MetamentalDOC multimedia is an interactive documentary that looks at documentary film and independent documentary film. It is a project that contains a great deal of content of various types. The project came about as the result of an audiovisual documentary produced by the same team, and grew to the point where it became a larger work than its predecessor. MetamentalDOC multimedia is also a documentary based on a web and interactive medium. In this platform, the content has been expanded and the audiovisual project has become part of the multimedia, with the inclusion of some parts and at the same time, the inclusion of audiovisual content.



Homepage

The title of the audiovisual project - metamentalDOC - is based on a word game. This terminology and ideas in this project infinitely reference each other on a constant basis. Producing a documentary work on the documentary genre itself is “playing” with the concept, using its own tools. MetamentalDOC is “metadocumentary”, “meta-doc-MENTAL” and finally, meta-mental-DOC. Each part of the title is significant: “Meta”, because it is a metanarrative, “mental“ because it calls for the interpretation of the content and “DOC” because it is a documentary. MetamentalDOC multimedia is therefore the title of an interactive project based on the audiovisual documentary metamentalDOC. It has the same title, and is complemented by the multimedia specification.

From the point of view of the core concept of this work, it is an interactive application halfway between the documentary genre - as can be seen in the interviews section and the documentary piece itself - and a work of cultural dissemination with a didactic and pedagogical objective - as can be seen in the historical background and virtual classroom sections. The newness and added value of this example is based on three key points. First, the fact that there is no similar project on the subject covered, due to its complexity and originality; second, there is also no platform with the attributes that this one possesses, which make it possible to view an audiovisual documentary, and browse or interact five broad sections in a non-linear way; and finally, apart from the innovation in terms of the subject matter and languages used - Spanish and Catalan - there are no other similar experiences on the market that mix an idea for entertainment and a learning and educational idea in such an effective and attractive way. What really adds value to MetamentalDoc Project is this triple aspect:

- The cross-media strategy behind: one project with several parts for different platforms.
- A production conceived as an educational and training tool: acts as a secondary Virtual Campus for a whole Communication College.
- Open project available online that allows users to upload content: includes a 1 hour-long documentary film, 40 interviews and more than 150 downloadable documents and videos.

4 The various parts of the project

Each part *metamentalDoc Multimedia* features content that can be browsed in a specific mode and using an original metaphor. The modes used in this documentary are audiovisual, time, spatial, testimonial and preferential. There are five different ways of browsing and interacting with the various types of content. Each mode is analyzed in detail below.

4.1 *Projection room*. Audiovisual browsing mode (video and audio submode)

The section called *Production phases* uses the audiovisual browsing mode to show the contents, as its key feature is browsing and moving around using audiovisual videos. In this part, it is possible to activate and visualize the audiovisual documentary. The aim is to include additional audiovisual material from the filming of the documentary in the interactive system, and offering at the system the possibility to upload videos related by users. These can be short documentary pieces, interviews and/or personal comments.



Projection room

4.2 *Interviews*. Testimonial browsing mode (interviewee submode)

The *Interviews section* obtains its content from the testimonial browsing mode: different points of view from an interviewee are activated, and a filter by topic is applied. There are two possible browsing sub-modes in this section: first, there is a notes section at the bottom left, which is the first option for the users when browsing. This is based on choosing the topics of the interviews to be viewed. The second mode is on the right

hand side, where there are twelve people with each of their names, whose individual interviews can be viewed, and the question that is of most interest chosen. In short, there is information can be searched for by subject, or by person.



Interviews

4.3 Historical background. Time browsing mode (stages or periods submode)

The section called *Historical background* uses the time browsing mode to present its content, as its key feature is browsing and moving around using clearly defined chronological periods. There are two complementary timelines: the horizontal line at the bottom enables us to move around the different periods and in each period there is a series of key movements or pioneers at the top, using the visual metaphor of framed paintings. The hanging paintings simulate reminders hanging in thin air of film directors who did not attain the fame of their colleagues - the directors of fiction films. The chains that hold the frames are a metaphor for these artists' "imprisonment" as independent documentary makers, or major figures who set milestones, and whose works were important in the history of documentary film. The frames are all the same; the only difference is their position in space. We have therefore attempted to find a common point between all the characters, something that links them, which the fact that they are all part of the same group (the best documentary filmmakers) but this is immediately divided into two different sections: those with an international and those with a Spanish profile.



Historical background

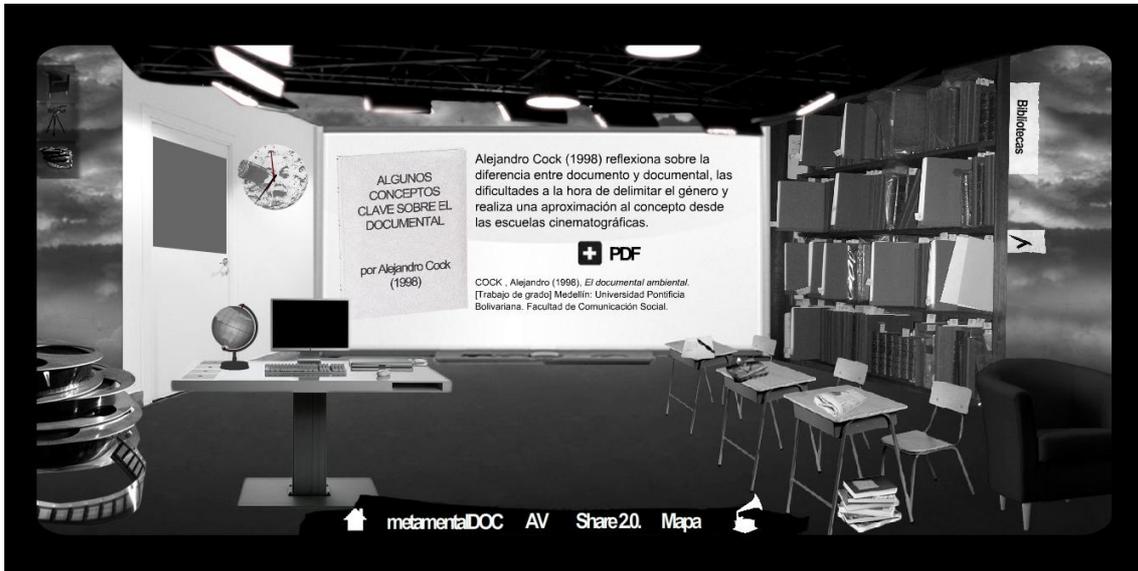
4.4 *Virtual classroom*. Spatial browsing mode (visual map submode)

The *virtual classroom* uses the spatial browsing mode to show its content. Here, we move around and access various information using an interface that simulates a type of visual map, containing various interactive features that show different types of content. This simulation of an academic space is the virtual space for the theoretical content and various resources on film and the documentary genre. The visual metaphor used is the classroom and various associated objects. The decorative features refer to film and its history, literature, geography and education. The vacant desks and teacher's table invite users to learn and to teach.

This space contains various types of materials: from three bookshelves with theoretical content (definition, history, categories, reference books, important quotes, etc. from the documentary genre in general) to an extensive bibliography available on the Internet and photographs illustrating each historical period, bibliographical references, and an extensive range of resources such as a calendar and map giving details of the location and dates of the most important festivals in this genre, producers and distributors, courses and training, etc. In short, it is a directory of resources and information ordered by categories and fully downloadable by users.

From the point of view of interaction, a form with defined fields enables users to leave their impressions, which are stored in a visitors' book. Some comments in the visitors' book are proposed as themes for an open discussion forum on the meta-documentary.

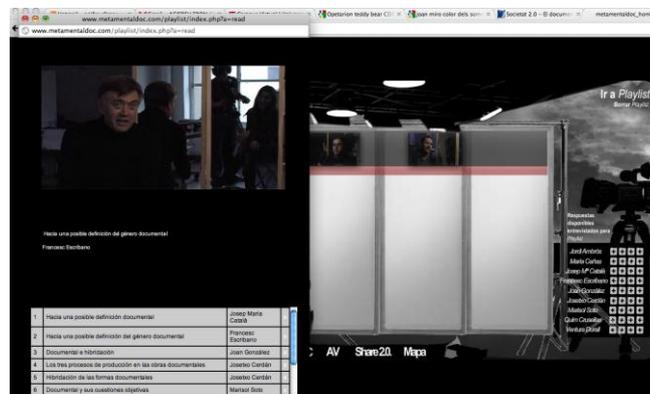
The visitors' book and blog comments will therefore be *work in progress* i.e. in this part, the main objective is to show the content and theoretical knowledge, but it is also an area for interaction with the user, who becomes a student-teacher in the virtual classroom. This will feature the option of contributing content, contributing knowledge and interacting with other users, using the tools described above.



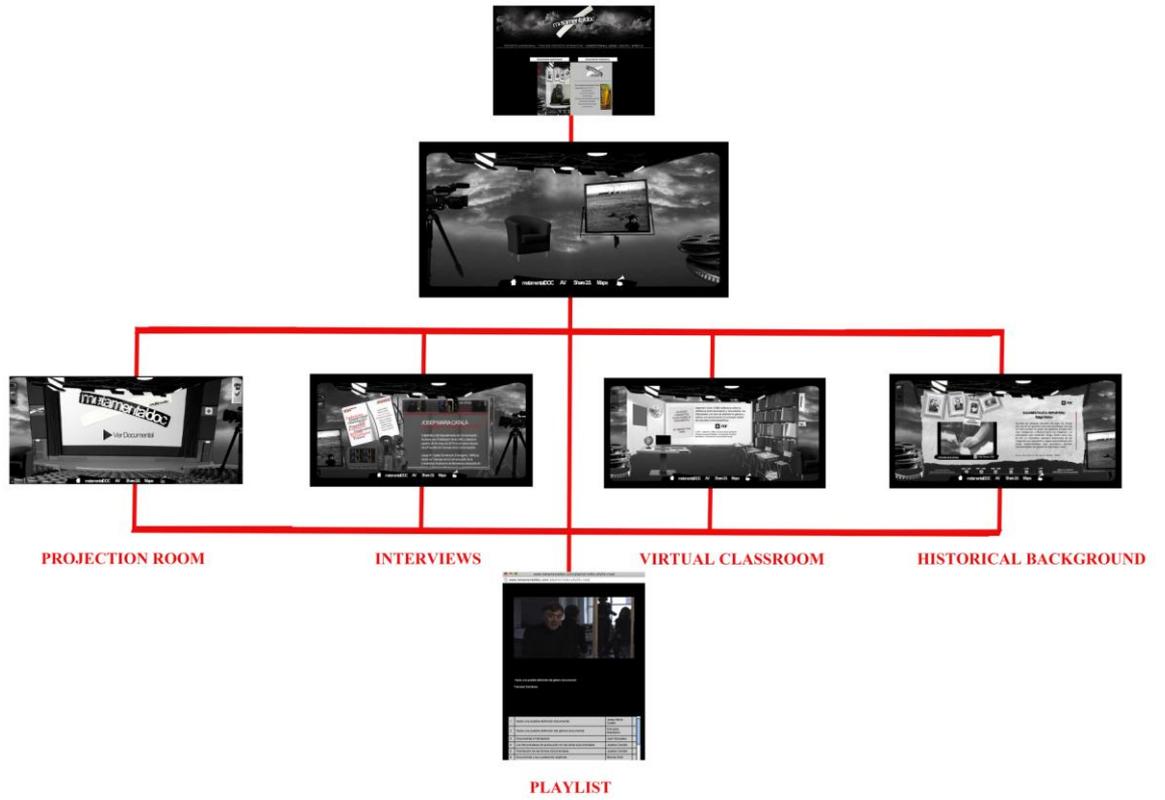
Virtual classroom

4.5 Playlist. Preferential browsing mode (addition and deletion button submode)

The grouping according to the user's preferences is a mode that enables videos to be memorized using a button on the video player section. The user can click on any button with a view and the selected item is then added to the list of preferences in order. If any of the stored videos are activated, the title appears on a new screen, with the work and the year, and an embedded video (with a *play-pause-stop facility* and volume controls).



Playlist



Complete scheme of the project

