The Internet and the Genome Project

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Extended Abstract

The past four years have witnessed dramatic changes in the ways that information is provided on the internet. The internet has gone from an environment where access to information was difficult, and oriented toward those with a high level of technical expertise to one where the average computer user can sit at their desk-top PC/Mac and literally point and click there way around the world. Perhaps not coincidently the internet has entered into an explosive growth phase. Much of the changes have come about due to the development of a three network protocols and a few pieces of software which implement them. WAIS, Gopher, and World Wide Web (WWW) are network based information dissemination protocols which operate on the client-server model. These three protocols have dramatically changed the face of the internet. At the forefront of this disciplines taking advantage of this wave of changes are, surprisingly, the biologists.

Computational biologists have long been involved in the internet but now "Joe and Josaphine Biologist" are starting to use the network resources available to them. Of central importance to the Genome Project, molecular biology, and biochemistry is access to databases which contain information about molecular sequences and there function, 3D structures of proteins, genetic mapping information, and the associated literature citations. Here, we discuss work done with network information servers based on the World Wide Web protocol which gives starts to give an integrated view for these various database needs.