

XML Retrieval for Digital Archives

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Studies in XML Information Retrieval (XML IR) have showed that structural cues in XML can be used to provide focused access to information by not retrieving the full document, but only the requested part of it. Nowadays, archival access is facilitated by deploying archival finding aids in the metadata standard Encoded Archival Description (EAD) in XML. This PhD project aims in general at understanding how (online) information access to archival materials works and empirically evaluating the effectiveness of this access, and in particular the value of focused access. The paper gives an outline of a discussion of relevant archival and XML IR literature, in which the scope of the research is delineated. This culminates eventually into fine-grained research questions and hypotheses. The project is halfway, so preliminary results are presented, and it concludes with an outlook on the remaining half.