DVD Forum 4.0 now online

A brand new version of Steve's DVD Forum, a web application to help catalog your DVDs and borrow movies that you'd like to watch, is now online. It also lets you see, at a glance, to whom you have lent DVDs and from whom you've borrowed them as well.

Version 1.0: Perl CGI with a text file back end
Version 2.0: PHP with text file back end
Version 3.0: PHP with badly designed database backend
Version 4.0: PHP with a much better designed DB backend

Lots of stuff new in this version, including a completely redesigned database, the ability to post comments on DVDs, and a valiant attempt to reduce redundant DVD entries. All of the information was ported over to the new database, so nobody has to add any information over again (except for Alan DeCastro...there was no WAY I was adding all his DVDs in by hand again :).

Hopefully, this go-round, nobody will get redirected to blank pages, or get silly database errors. There's a forum where you can go to report bugs or make feature requests as well as check on their status.

Listings now include a thumbnail image to help identify titles. It's much easier to find out who has copies of any given DVD, and whether it's available for borrowing. There's a page where you can keep up on the DVDs that have been added to the system recently (Does anyone miss the email that used to go out weekly?).

Even though DVD data is shared by everyone who has a certain DVD in their collection, *anyone* can suggest updates to that DVD's information. Any propsed changes to a DVD's listing are queued for an admin's approval before getting committed.

The Advanced Search page lives up to its name a little more than it did before. You can search by just about any one of the fields in a DVD's entry. You can even search for all of my Anamorphic DVDs that are comedies and have a DTS soundtrack.

When browsing others' DVDs, of course you'll not see anyone who hasn't entered any DVDs into the system. Since there's some people who are registered, but don't really use the site anymore, but can't be deleted for referential integrity reasons, the default listing contains only those users who have used the site in the last two months. It's still easy to get a listing of everybody though.

Once a few more transactions take place, I'll whip up a page for statistics like the top 5 DVDs (based on number of times borrowed), top lenders, top borrowers, etc.

Don't hesitate to post any suggestions or comments under this article, but please limit your posting on the forum thread mentioned above to bugs and feature-requests.

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