

ABCD-SITE GRAPHIC DESIGN GUIDE

Version 4.0.2

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ABCD-SITE GRAPHIC DESIGN GUIDE

Introduction

ABCD-Site acts as a module in ABCD which combines the 'portal'-idea of linking users

- with relevant information resources in networked partners' systems,
- the own OPAC for retrieval of information within the own system, but also other similar databases, and
- with the information providers (the library) through 'communication' (e.g announcements, newsletters)

This chapter is divided into three sections, two of them dedicated to the concepts and standards used and one concerning the customizations possible at the basic level. The Annex I contains advanced topics in customization and setup.

The information is written as a generic guide to help users in the process of changing layout and styles to meet the ABCD requirements. It is not intended as a step-by-step chapter and it is assumed the user has previous knowledge of XHTML and CSS basics as well as advanced skills in web design and layout.

The information was designed to guide the graphic design process of ABCD sites using the VHL-Site v4.0 application of BIREME. The adoption of the graphic model is recommended considering the following aspects:

- The interface and navigation model proposed is based on the "Ergonomic Criteria for the Evaluation of Human-Computer Interfaces"^a and have been implemented so as to facilitate and increase the efficiency of the operation.
- A standardized interface improves the execution of typical information localization tasks, particularly in a networked environment of information sources

Architecture of the ABCD-Site

ABCD-Site is a customized and simplified version of VHL-Site v.4.0 of BIREME. You can access the full version in

<http://bvsmodelo.bvsalud.org/php/level.php?lang=en&component=27&item=10>

The information and data processing architecture is structured in three independent and interoperating layers. In the first layer are the data files corresponding to the different types of information sources of a Virtual Library. Above this layer are the access indexes generated by other services such as ISIS, Google, OAI, Yahoo, etc. The last layer includes information access interfaces.

Each layer is operated within the ABCD-Site so as to compose the **Information sources Network**, the **Index Network** and the **Interface Network**.

^a Bastien JMC; Scapin D. Ergonomic Criteria for the Evaluation of Human-Computer Interfaces. Institut National de Recherche en Informatique et en Automatique, France, 1993.

The separation in layers enables the virtually infinite possibility of producing interfaces for access to content and the availability of contents in formats which are appropriate to different languages, services, media and access devices such as computer screens, printers, audio devices, PDAs, cell phones, etc.

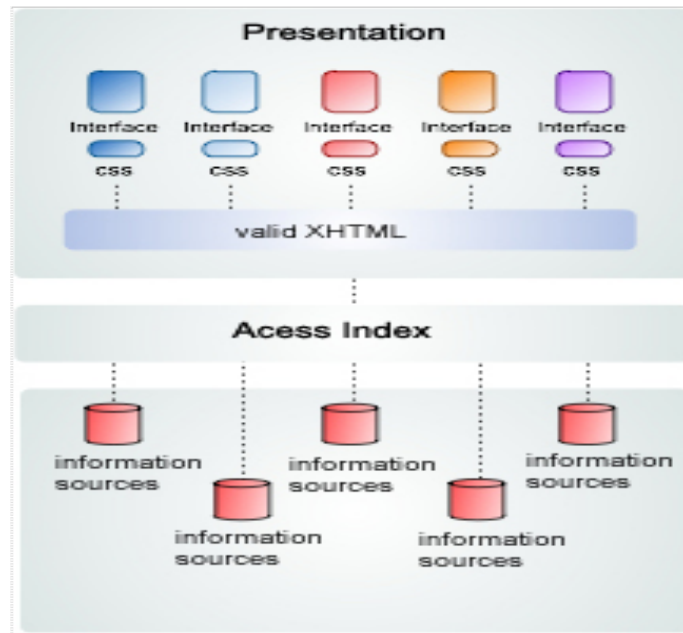


Figure 1 – ABCD-Site processing architecture

With the operation of the Interface Network, we expect to foster the creation of a collaboration network based on the free software model. This network is expected to explore and share new interfaces for access to ABCD-Site contents. Therefore, the use of information sources in a number of services will be made easier.

Web standards

ABCD-Site operates using Web Standards^b and XHTML^c code, with a tableless structure (i.e. without tables as a layout feature). This is a key factor that enables the separation of the content, index and presentation layers.

These standards, established by the World Wide Web Consortium - W3C and other regulatory bodies, are a set of rules and standards designed to create and interpret Web content.

The use of these standards gives rise to sites which are more accessible to a larger number of people and a greater diversity of access devices since the XHTML code is based on content markup, which enables the association of semantics to the code.

Additionally, its use facilitates the creation and integration of Web Services, which compose a set of open standards and protocols used to exchange data and information between applications, systems and services.

^b Web Standards Project – <http://www.wasp.org>

^c Extensible Hypertext Markup Language

Interface Accessibility

Accessibility over the Web means that people with physical, sensorial or cognitive disabilities are able to perceive, understand, navigate and interact with the Web and make their contribution.

The implementations of the ABCD-Site interface are AA-Compliant (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, WAI - Web Accessibility Initiative, W3C)^d. This means that all the key requirements and others that should be met are effectively being fulfilled.

Navigation within the ABCD-Site is based on three general types of Web pages:

The model of navigation of the ABCD-Site interface is based on three general types of Web pages:

Type I or ABCD-Site Portal

Web page that operates access to two or more types of collections of information sources.

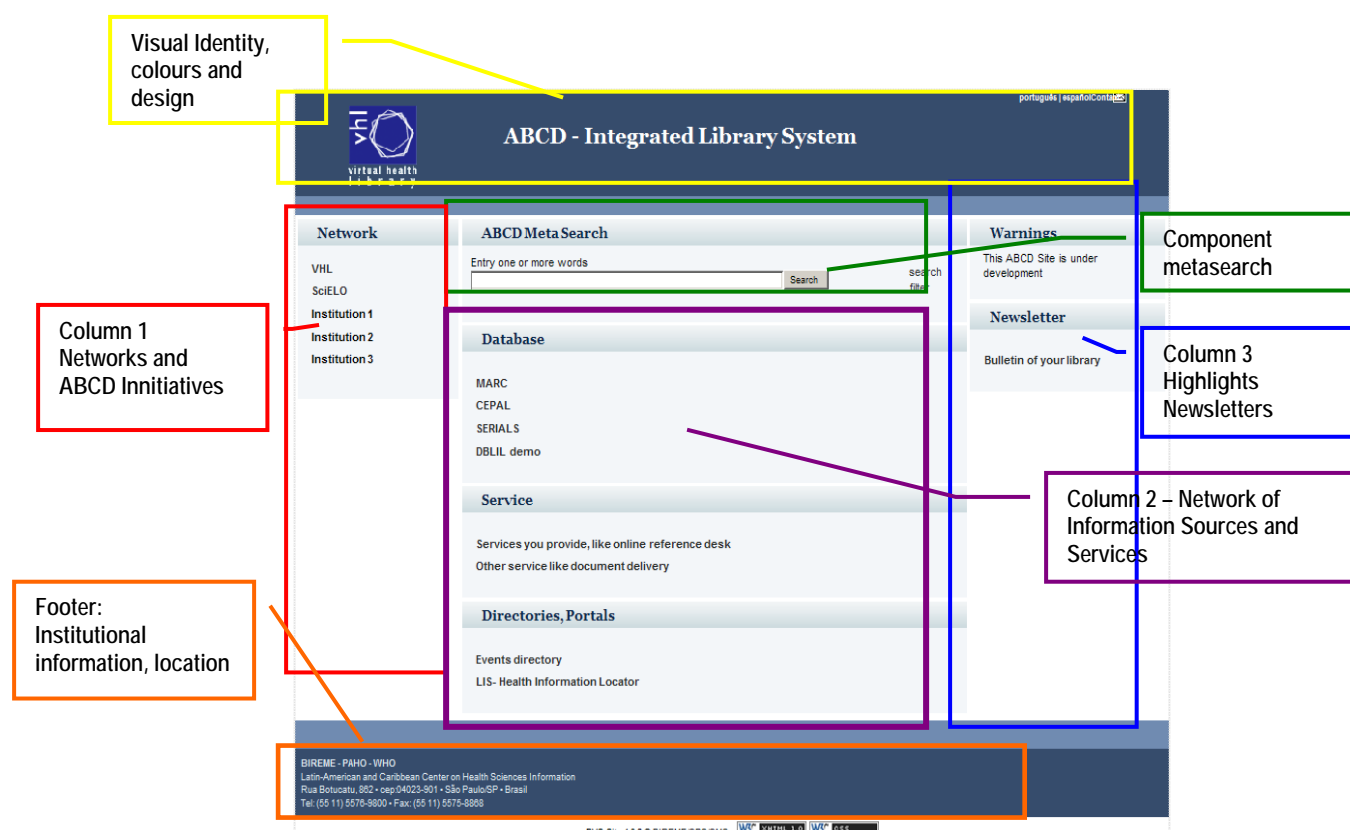


Figure 2 – Home page of the ABCD-Site Portal

ABCD-Site-Site, page Type I is made up of a collection of information components dynamically generated according to the organization of the content or through Web Services.

In Type I pages, the components are distributed in the interface's columns as follows:

- **Column 1 – Networks:** access to the ABCD-Site, other libraries, or branches of the same institution.
- **Column 2 – Information sources:** this column organizes access to different types of information sources.

^d WAI

- **Column 3 – Highlights and News:** column designed to enable the communication of highlights and news.

Type II or Portal of Collection or Gallery

This page operates a single source of information or a collection of information sources of the same type, such as bibliographic databases, events directory, etc.

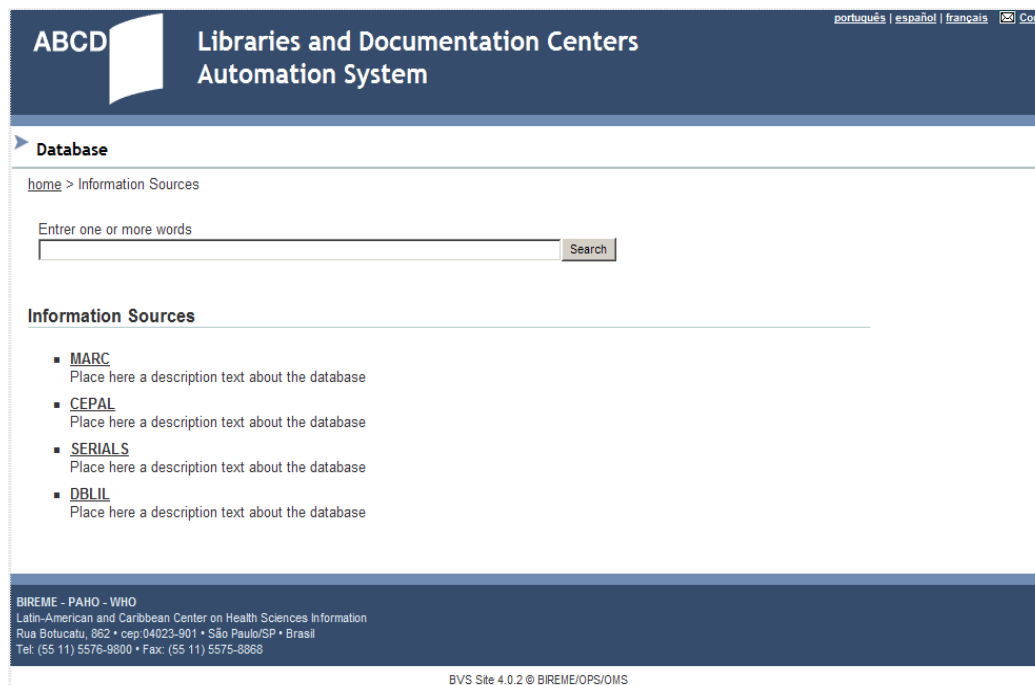


Figura 3 - Portal of collection

Type III or Results Page

This page enables the presentation of and navigation through the results of operations on one or more information sources.

Following is a description of the procedures for customizing a site using the ABCD-Site system.

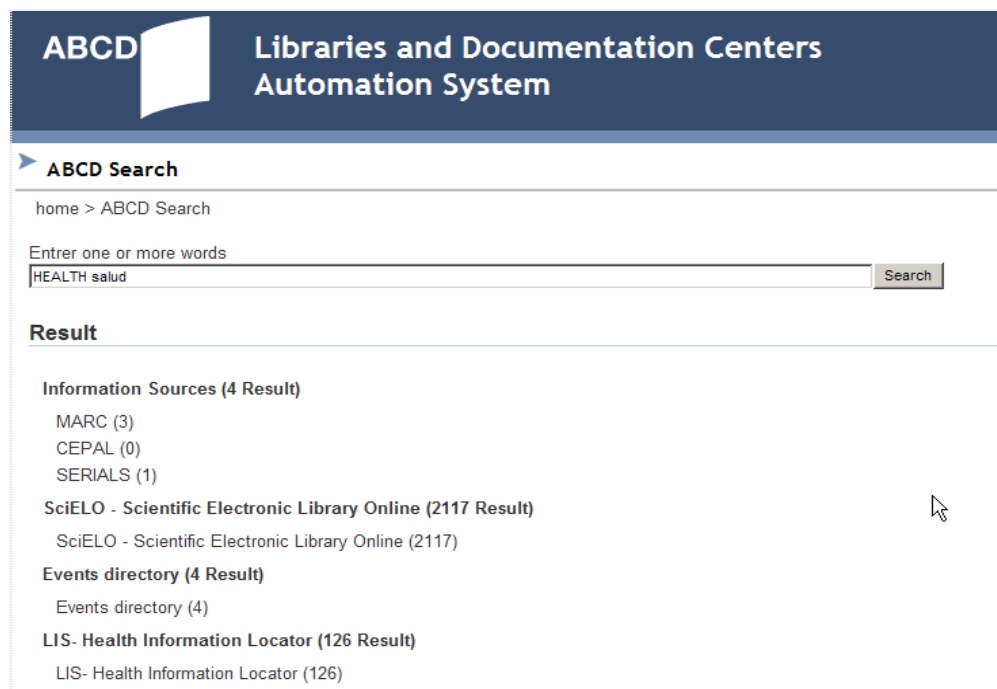


Figure 4 - Results page

Instructions for Customization (basic)

The ABCD-Site interface was developed to enable fast and easy customization. It requires basic knowledge of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets), the style language used by the interface of the ABCD-Site. It is also advisable to use

1. an image edition and treatment software,
2. HTML & CSS editor and
3. FTP client, to upload images and files to the server^e.

Structure of files and folders in the server

The ABCD-Site System uses a file structure to allocate the files it uses. Knowledge of this structure is required prior to customizing the interface.

^e As examples of freeware software, we recommend

- Irfanview for image edition
- WS_FTP

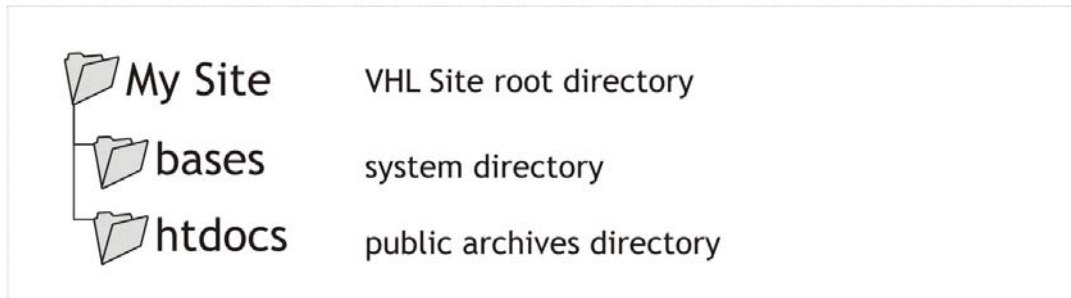


Figure 5 – Structure of Directories of the ABCD-Site Site

The “*base*” directory will not be addressed in this chapter, as this directory is specific to the system and is not used in the customization of the Interface. This chapter will deal with the “*htdocs*” directory, which includes two directories that are specific to customization: “*CSS*” and “*image*”.

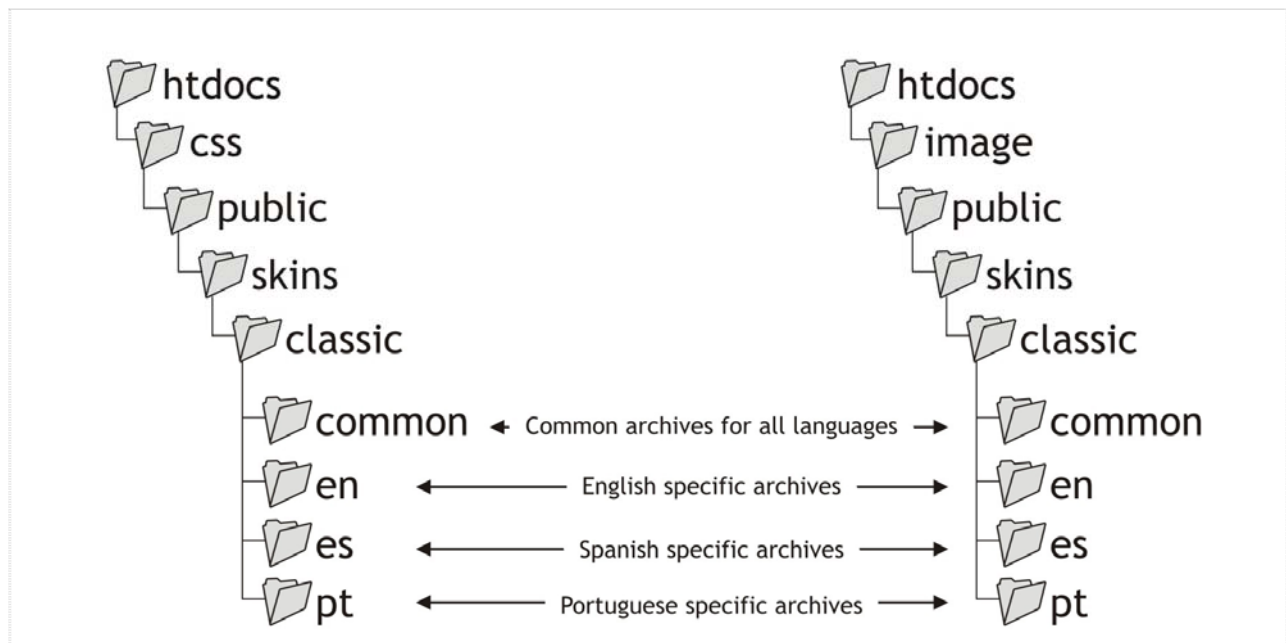


Figure 6 – Directories to be dealt with

The “*css*” directory contains the ABCD-Site style sheets. To customize the interface, the style sheets of the *common* directory should be changed. This directory hosts four CSS files that will be detailed in the next section.

The *image* directory contains all the ABCD-Site images, the images of the *public/skins/classic* directory are the ones shown in ABCD-Site, called public images, and which are divided into 4 subdirectories:

- **common**: contains images common to all languages in the ABCD-Site Site, i.e. images that are not identifiable in a single language. Example: banner and backgrounds;
- **en**: contains files specific to the English language. Example: ABCD-Site logo, site headings (when produced as images), etc;
- **es**: contains files specific to the Spanish language. Example: Idem
- **fr**: contains files specific to the Spanish language. Example: Idem
- **pt**: contains files specific to the Portuguese language. Example: Idem

Style sheet structure

ABCD-Site style sheets are divided into 4 different files in the *htdocs/css/public/skins/classic/common* directory:

- **general.css** – this *CSS* has the general site attributes, such as color and standard font type used in the site.
- **layout.css** – in layout we have definitions of sizes, element positions, margins, etc.
- **styles.css** – in this *CSS* there are definitions of ABCD-Site style, element colors, banner images, typographic styles, borders, etc.
- **components.css** - it has definitions of ABCD-Site components. In this file one can make changes to specific elements in the Interface. Example: change the color of a single component, such as the “*search box*”. [the differences here are not clear from a didactic point of view]

The style sheets are loaded by the system, in the previously mentioned order. Thus, any alteration to the last *CSS*, i.e. *components*, will overwrite the element defined in previous *CSS*’s. This is why *components* is the *CSS* that holds definitions of specific elements.

Logo substitution

When the ABCD-Site interface is installed, it already has ABCD-Site logos built-in in its respective directories; however, depending on the layout, it may be necessary to place the logos again. It is recommended to use as logo a .GIF format that supports transparency. Note that the logo must be available in all the different languages of your Site.

Image Uploading

The logo images must be sent, via file transfer if not on a local computer, to the specific directory of each language.

Example:

Supposing there is one general ABCD-Site logo (language independent), logoABCD.gif, then you should load it in: `/site/image/common/logoABCD.gif`

But, if the logo is language dependent (has text inscriptions) then you should prepare one for each language: logoABCD_es.gif, logoABCD_pt.gif, etc., and load in their respective directories.

File	Directory
logoABCD_en.gif	<i>htdocs/images/public/skins/classic/en/</i>
logoABCD_es.gif	<i>htdocs/images/public/skins/classic/es/</i>
logoABCD_pt.gif	<i>htdocs/images/public/skins/classic/pt/</i>
logoABCD_fr.gif	<i>htdocs/images/public/skins/classic/fr/</i>

Table 1 – Logo Uploading.

Replacing the image in ADMIN

After uploading the logo images, the next step will be to replace the logo in the interface. This is done through the Site Administration System, available through the ABCD-Site base address, plus /admin. Thus, if the interface has the address `http://ABCD_Site.org` the Administration System will be located in “`http://ABCD_Site.org/admin`”.

The System will prompt for a user name and a password.

In order to replace the logo, access “ABCD-Site logo” in the framework area of ABCD-Site Administration system and, next, click on and change the item which will be enabled in the ABCD-Site site.

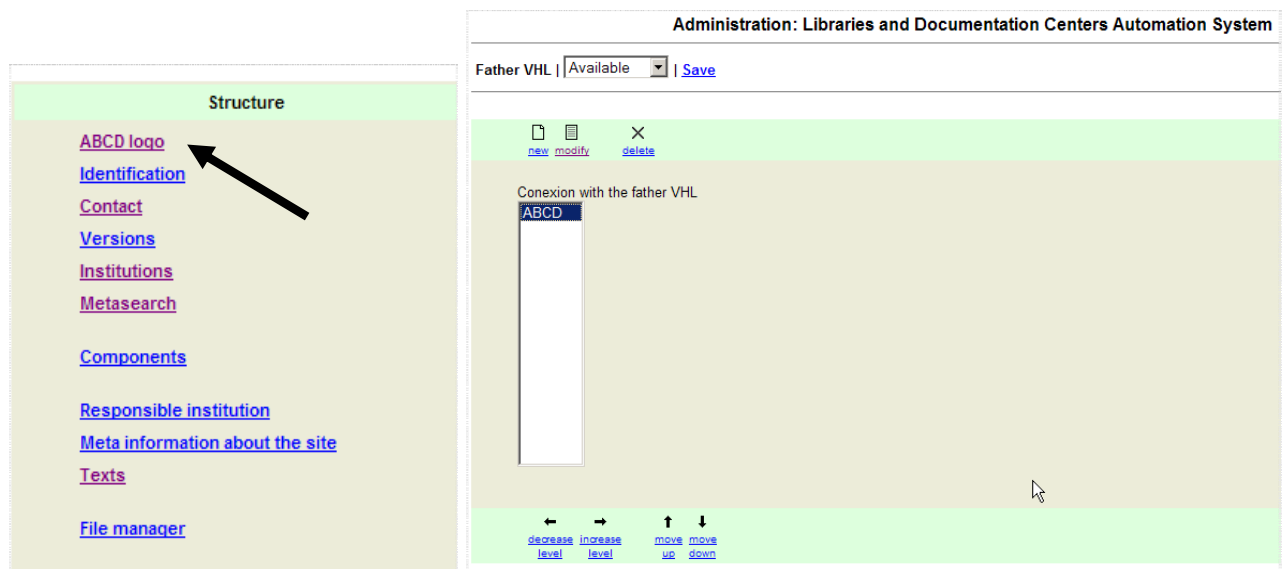


Figure 7 – Steps for changing the Logo

The logo is replaced on the next window:

Figure 8 – Logo replacement

- Label: identifies the logo.
- Image: Image to be loaded as logo
- Link: link to the logo.

After the configuration adjustments to implement the changes, it is necessary to confirm them by clicking on Modify, recording all previous steps.



Logo must be changed for all ABCD-Site enabled languages. The %SKIN_IMAGE_DIR% syntax must precede the logo file name, and this syntax ensures that the logo used will be loaded by the created skin.

Banner Substitution

The banner is one of the most important elements in the ABCD-Site Site. It is responsible for the artistic representation of the interface content and by the correlation of elements, ensuring design and content consistency. The banner should contain only images as it will be inserted in a common area and serve as a graphic element to all languages. The banner size is 760 pixels wide and 110 pixels high.

Image Uploading

The banner image must be sent, via file transfer, to the *common* images directory, if not working on a local computer.

Configuration in CSS

The banner is identified in the XHTML code in `<div class="top">`

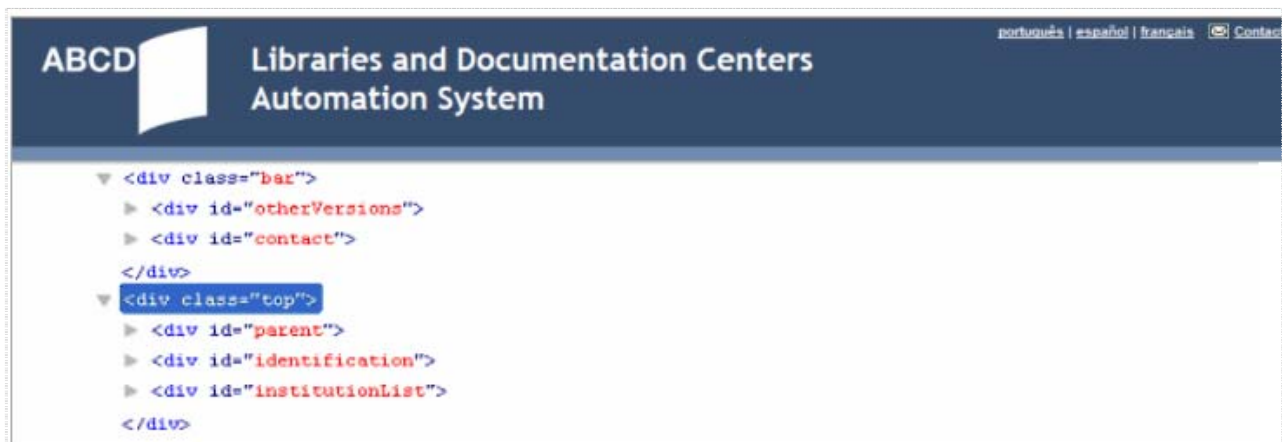


Figure 9 – Banner location in the XHTML code.

Banner properties and configurations are described in the *styles.css* file and are as follows:

```
/*
   This file describes general styles all over the site,
   like "top banner", "footer", and general styles about the component boxes.
*/

/* Page Body Styles */
.top {
    background: #7A98A9 url(../../../../../image/public/skins/classic/common/banner.jpg) top right no-repeat;
}
```

Figure 10 – Banner substitution in CSS

In order to substitute the banner edit the *background* property in the selector (*.top*) placing the image desired and making any color adjustments that may be required.

Changes in heading

The ABCD-Site heading is changed via the Site Administration System, available through the ABCD-Site base address, plus */admin*. Thus, if the interface has the address *"http://ABCD_Site.org"* the Administration System will be located in *"http://ABCD_Site.org/admin"*.

The System will prompt for a user name and a password.

In order to replace the interface heading, click on the option "Identification" present in the framework area of the system. The next step is to select the heading and click on [modify] in the window that will open next.

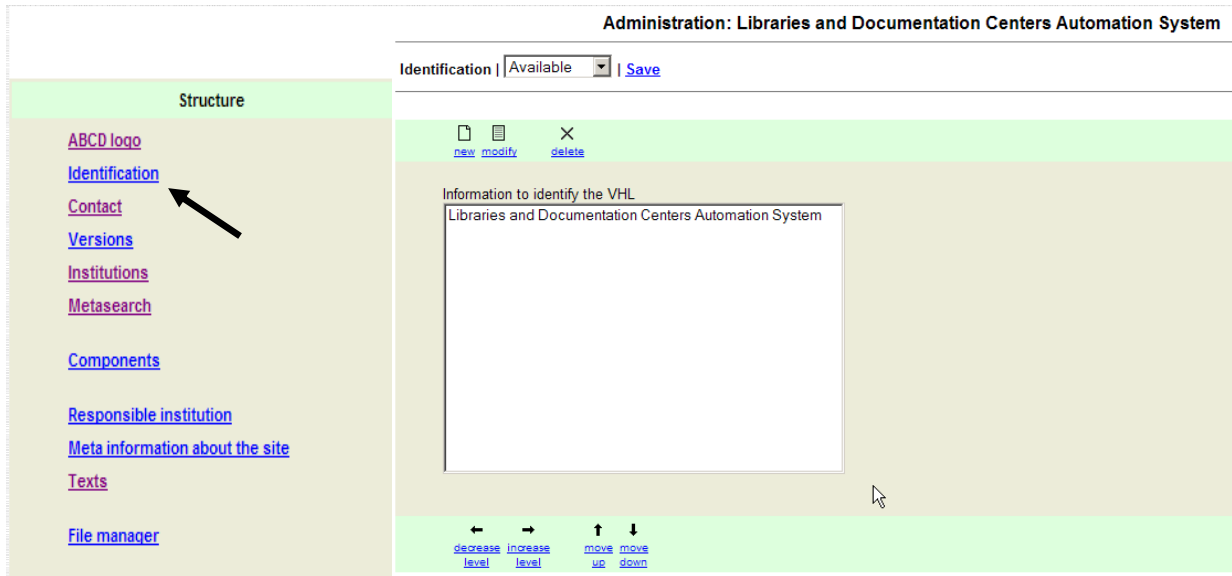


Figure 11 – Steps to follow to change the interface heading

After clicking on [modify], the system will open a window where the ABCD-Site Heading or a corresponding image must be entered.

Figure 12 – Entering a ABCD-Site heading

- Label: ABCD-Site heading
- Image: Image representing the ABCD-Site heading (special cases)

After the configuration adjustments to implement the changes, it is necessary to confirm them by clicking on [Modify], recording all previous steps.



ABCD-Site heading must be changed for all languages enabled in the system. Changing it in one language will not automatically change the other languages.

Configuring the CSS

The heading is identified in the XHTML code at `<div id="identification">`

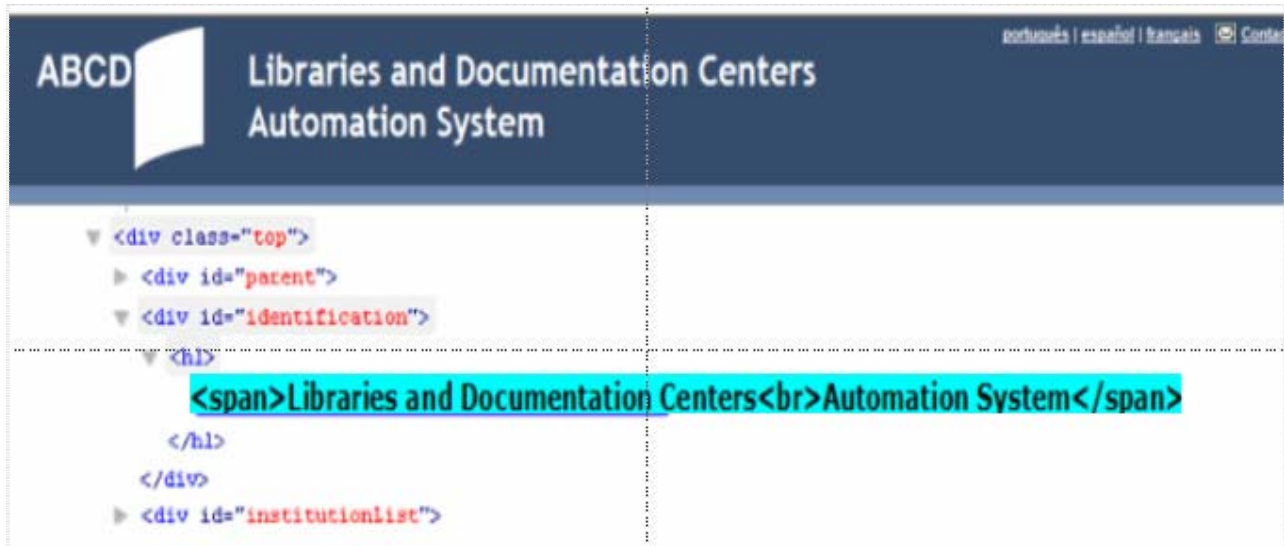


Figure 13 – Localization of the title in the XHTML code

After the heading is replaced at the ABCD-Site system management, a list will appear showing the possible alterations for the ABCD-Site heading.

In *CSS styles* it is possible to change the color and/or the size of the font in the selector `".top #identification H1"`. Use the feature *color* to change colors and use the feature *font-size* to change the size of the Heading.

```
.top #identification H1 {
  color: white;
  font-size: 180%;
}
```

Figure 14 – Changing the heading color at *CSS styles*.

In *CSS layout* it is possible to change the position and/or the size of the area designated for the heading in the selector `".top #identification"`. Use *width* to change the width of the area designated for the heading and *height* to change the height of the area designated for the heading.

In the same *CSS* it is possible to change the heading margins in the `".top #identification H1"` selector by changing the margin definitions at the feature *margin*.

```

.top #identification {
    float: left;
    width: 320px;
    height: 144px;
}

.top #identification H1 {
    margin: 0px;
    margin-top: 20px;
    margin-left: 15px;
}

```

Figure 15 – An example of margin change on the heading

Institutions

The field Institutions presents the names, logos and links (when available) of the institutions responsible for the ABCD-Site Site.

When the institution is represented by its logo, it is important to take care when preparing the image. It should be in GIF format, because this format accepts transparency. The size defined in **the standard ABCD-Site configuration is 55 pixels high**.

Changing the Institutions

In order to make changes in Institutions, it is necessary to click on the option “Institutions” located in the system structure field. The next step is to choose the Institution and click on [modify] in the window that will open.

To insert a new institution it is necessary to click on the field “add” in the same window.

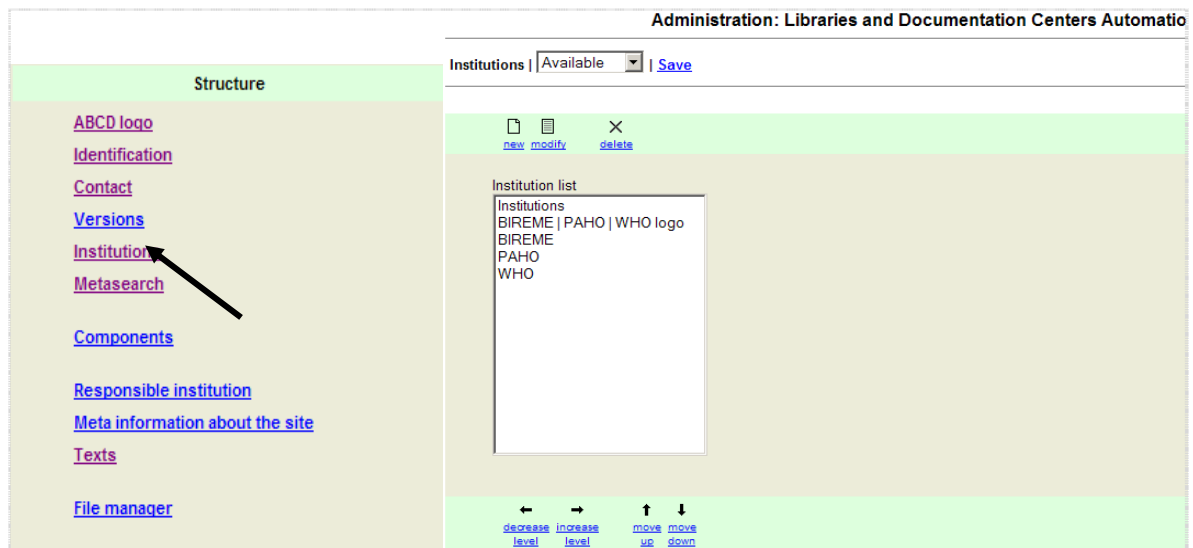


Figure 16 – Changing the Institutions

After clicking on [modify] the system will open a window in which it is necessary to insert the Institution’s title, or its logo, and its hyperlink.

Institution | Available | [Modify](#) [Exit](#)

Name

Image

Link

Figure 17 – Inclusion or alteration box of Institutions

- Name: Name of the Institution
- Image: Logo of the Institution (the use of an image suppresses the Institution name)
- Link: the Institution electronic address.

After the configuration adjustments to implement the changes, it is necessary to confirm them by clicking on [Modify], recording all previous steps .



Inserting/changing Institutions should be made in all the ABCD-Site languages. The %SKIN_IMAGE_DIR% syntax should precede the name of the logo file and this syntax ensures that the logo used will be loaded by the created *skin*.

Configuring the CSS

The field “institutions” is identified in the XHTML code at `<div id=“institutionList”>`



Figure 18 – Localization of the field Institution in the source-code.

After configuring the “Institutions” field, a few adjustments at the CSS may be needed. The definitions of the institutions are found at the “.top #institutionList” selector, which is present at the CSS’s styles and layout.

CSS *style* defines the colors and sizes as follows:

```

.top #institutionList {
    text-align: right;
}

.top #institutionList LI {
    list-style: none;
    font-size: 90%;
}

.top #institutionList LI A {
    text-decoration: none;
    color: #FFF;
}

```

Figure 19 – Example of color and font adjustments for the Institutions

- **text-align** – it defines the text alignment in the field designated for institutions;
- **list-style** – it is defined as “none”. Being a list, it is common to use bullets, but since this list is displayed in lines, these bullets were removed;
- **font-size**: it defines the size of the font;
- **text-decoration**: here it is possible to define whether the text will be underlined or not;
- **color**: it defines the font color of the institutions (it does not apply to logos).

Configuring fonts and colors:

The families of typographic fonts used in the Site interface are Trebuchet MS and Verdana, because according to general recommendations, they provide excellent legibility in the sizes normally used on the Web. They are “non-serif” fonts, and therefore, highly recommended for reading on computer screens, and are already installed in most operational systems. As an alternative, it is possible to use the Arial family, which presents the same basic features.

Through the CSS it is possible to re-define the typographic families. The general font definitions are located in the **general.css** file, as shows the figure below:

```

BODY, INPUT, TEXTAREA, SELECT {
    font-family: Verdana, Arial;
    font-size: 75%;
}

H1, H2, H3 {
    font-family: Trebuchet MS, Arial;
}

```

general.css

Figure 20 – Selectors responsible for the fonts in the CSS.

To change fonts, redefine the *font-family* property in the BODY, INPUT, TEXTAREA, SELECT and H1, H2, H3 selectors as shown in the image. The configurations for font size are located in the same file and defined in the *font-size* feature.

In the ABCD-Site-Site standard installation, the font colors are not defined in the CSS. It is necessary to create the field *color* inside the selectors. Below are examples on how to define color in the selectors.

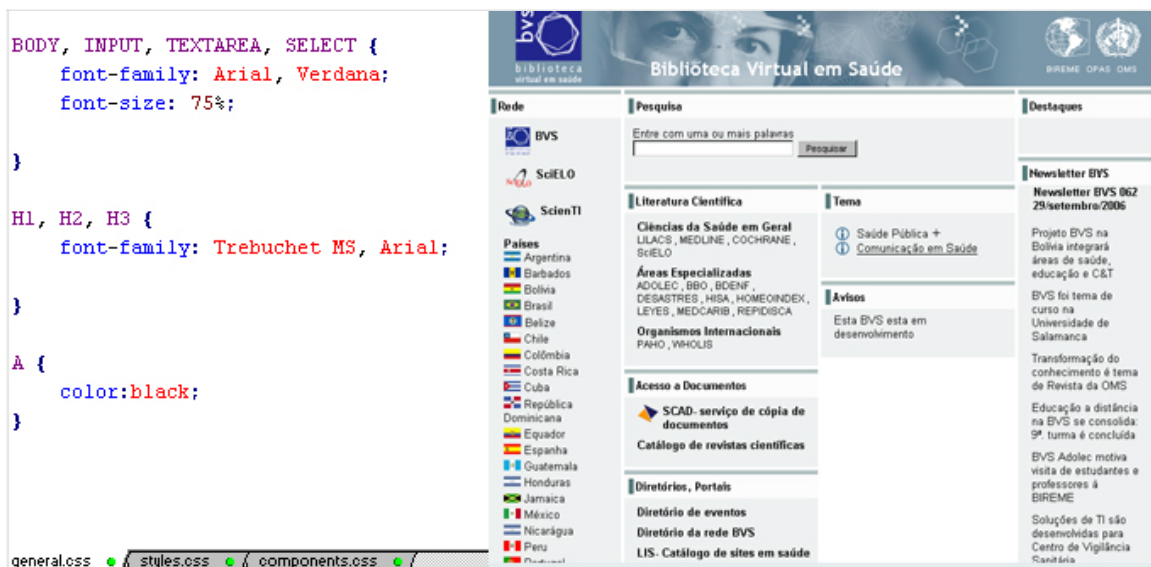


Figure 21 – Examples of color definition in the selectors

Note that in the first two selectors there is no color definition for the described elements, presuming that all typographic elements of the Site will be black.

Below is an example of color definition and the result on the site.



Figure 22 – Color definition in the CSS and the result on the Site.

Footnote Configurations

In the standard installation of ABCD-Site footnotes have institutional, localization and contact information.

Configuring the CSS

The structure of the footnote is identified in the XHTML code as `<div id="footNotes">`.

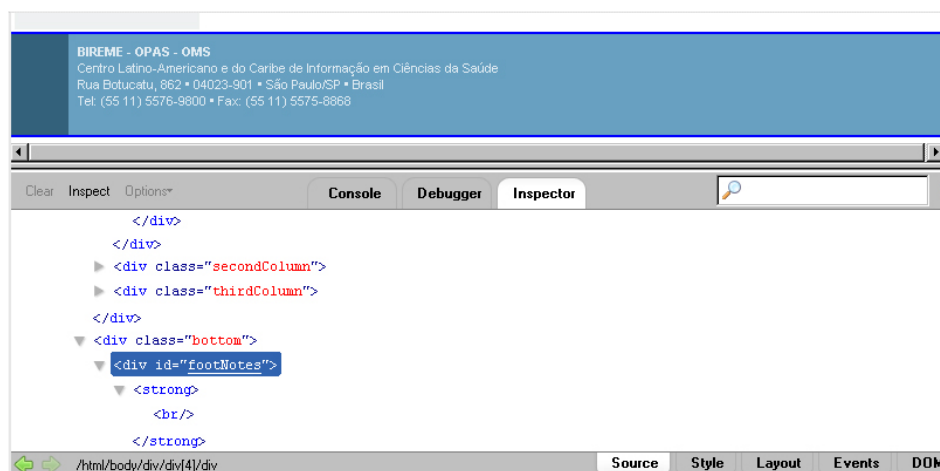


Figure 23 – Finding the footnote structure in the source-code

The configurations of background colors, color and font size are in the file *styles.css*, in the following selectors:

```
.bottom #footNotes {
    border-left: 50px solid #33617B;
    background: #67A0C1;
}

.bottom #footNotes {
    font-size: 85%;
}

.bottom #footNotes, .bottom #footNotes A {
    color: #DFEBF2;
}
```

Figure 24 – Editing footnote colors in the CSS

Annex I (advanced)

Fluid layout and closed layout

We call “fluid layout” the image that occupies one hundred percent of the work area of the website and, even with the redefinition of the window, the layout and size adapts to the new format. “Closed layout” is that which occupies a certain percentage of this area, a fixed area, regardless of the size of the window.



Figure 25 - Fluid layout an closed layout

In the installation of ABCD-Site, the standard layout is **fluid**. The CSS that defines the configurations of the page is in the file
 \ABCD\www\htdocs\site\css\public\skins\classic\common\layout.css, in the selector
.container



Figure 26 – Fluid layout model

Note that in the code above there is no specification of the width of the *container*, which therefore characterizes a fluid layout.

Below, an example of the definition of the width of the container and the resulting layout of the webpage.

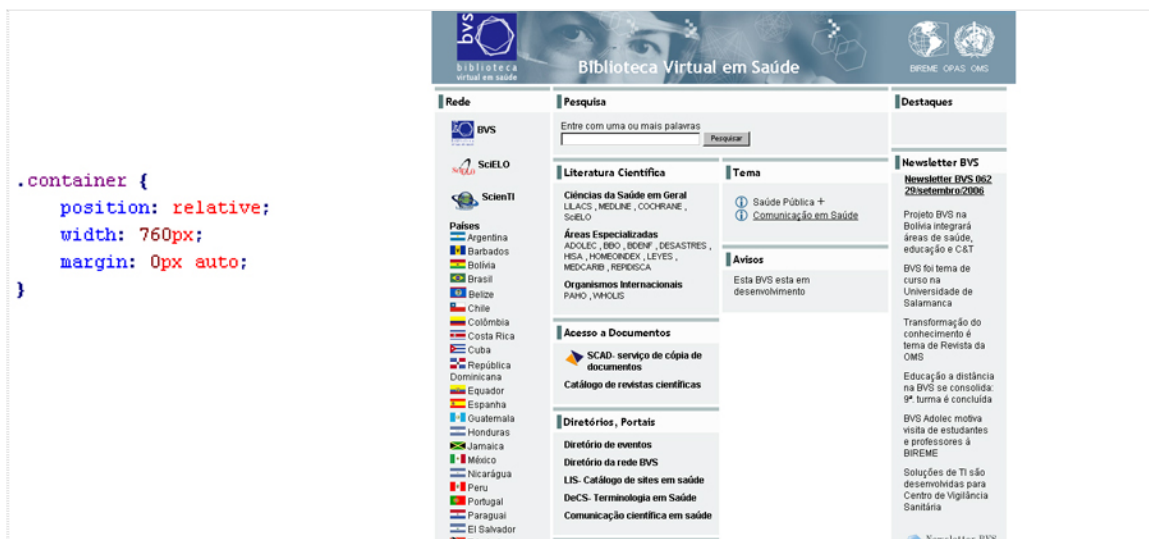


Figure 27 – Closed layout model

To define the background of the body, change in the file
 \ABCD\www\htdocs\site\css\public\skins\classic\common\general.css the selector **BODY -> background** and include the color you want.

Below is an example of the definition of the background color for the **BODY** and the resulting layout in the website.

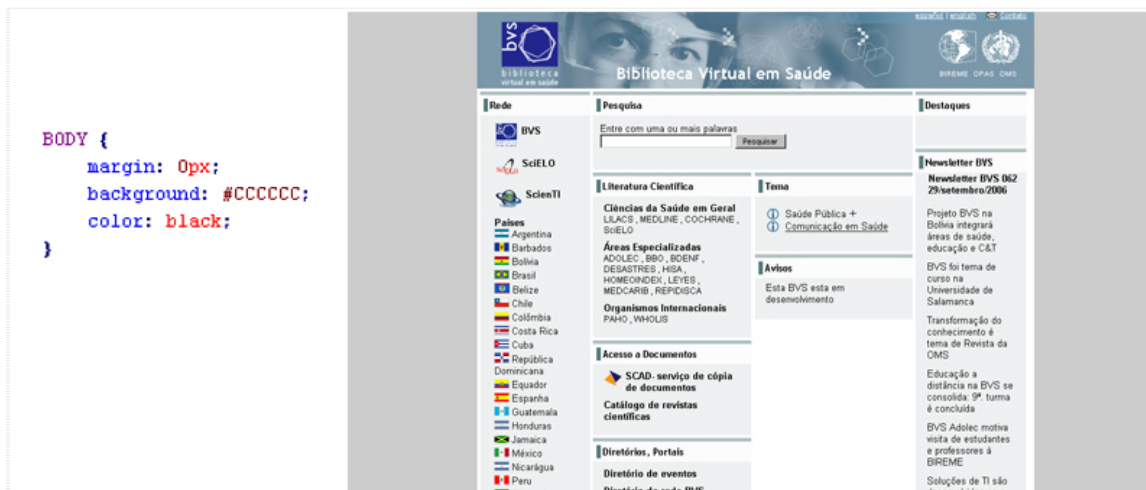


Figure 28 – Closed layout model with application of background color

Configuring Columns

The structures of the columns are identified in XHTML code as *firstColumn*, *secondColumn* and *thirdColumn*.



Figure 29 - Columns

The configuration properties of column size are described in the file **layout.css**, as:

```

.middle .firstColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 20%;
}

.middle .secondColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 58%;
    margin-left: .3em;
    margin-right: .3em;
}

.middle .thirdColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 20%;
}

```

Figure 30 – Configuration of columns

To increase or reduce the size of the columns, edit the field **width** in each one of the selectors (.middle .firstColumn, .middle .secondColumn, .middle .thirdColumn) with the desired values. The image below shows the redefinition of values.

```

.middle .firstColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 25%;
}

.middle .secondColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 49%;
    margin-left: .3em;
    margin-right: .3em;
}

.middle .thirdColumn {
    float: left;
    width: 25%;
}

```



Figure 31 – Redefining column values

In the file *styles.css*, it is possible to change the background color of the columns, colors and width of the borders and the font size. To change the field **background**, **border-top**, **border-left** and **font-size** of selectors: *.firstColumn DIV*, *.secondColumn .centerLeftColumn DIV*, *.secondColumn .centerRightColumn DIV*, *.thirdColumn DIV*, *#search*, *#searchConcepts*, *.level2 .middle DIV*.

```

/* Cascading definitions #Start */
.firstColumn DIV, .secondColumn .centerLeftColumn DIV, .secondColumn .centerRightColumn DIV, .thirdColumn DIV, #search, #searchConcepts,
.level2 .middle DIV {
    background: #EEF1F1;
}

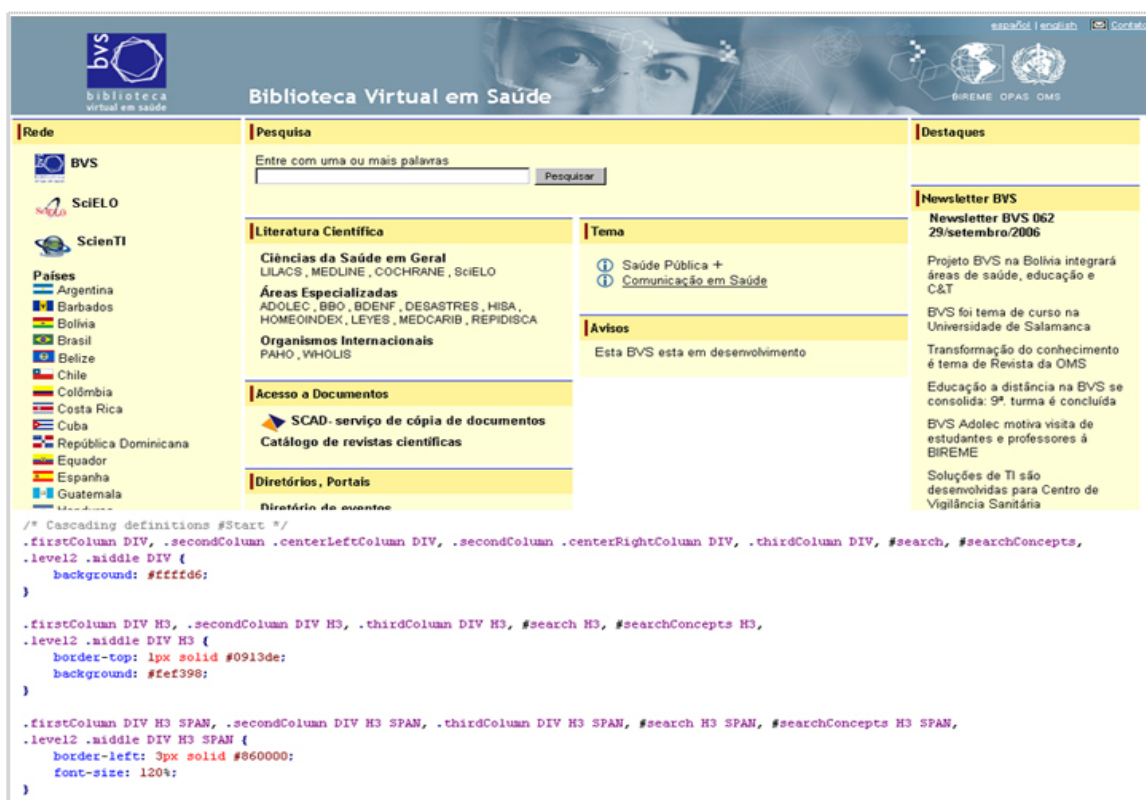
.firstColumn DIV H3, .secondColumn DIV H3, .thirdColumn DIV H3, #search H3, #searchConcepts H3,
.level2 .middle DIV H3 {
    border-top: 5px solid #B1C1C1;
    background: #FCFCFC;
}

.firstColumn DIV H3 SPAN, .secondColumn DIV H3 SPAN, .thirdColumn DIV H3 SPAN, #search H3 SPAN, #searchConcepts H3 SPAN,
.level2 .middle DIV H3 SPAN {
    border-left: 6px solid #567A7A;
    font-size: 80%;
}

```

Figure 32 – Changing the colors of the columns in the CSS

Below is an example of the redefinition of selectors mentioned above.



The screenshot shows the BVS website interface. The layout is divided into three main columns. The left column contains a sidebar with links to various BVS services and a list of countries. The middle column contains a search bar, a list of scientific literature, and a section for document access. The right column contains a newsletter section and a list of topics. The interface is in Portuguese and includes a search bar, navigation links, and a newsletter section.

```

/* Cascading definitions #Start */
.firstColumn DIV, .secondColumn .centerLeftColumn DIV, .secondColumn .centerRightColumn DIV, .thirdColumn DIV, #search, #searchConcepts,
.level2 .middle DIV {
    background: #ffffd6;
}

.firstColumn DIV H3, .secondColumn DIV H3, .thirdColumn DIV H3, #search H3, #searchConcepts H3,
.level2 .middle DIV H3 {
    border-top: 1px solid #0913de;
    background: #fef398;
}

.firstColumn DIV H3 SPAN, .secondColumn DIV H3 SPAN, .thirdColumn DIV H3 SPAN, #search H3 SPAN, #searchConcepts H3 SPAN,
.level2 .middle DIV H3 SPAN {
    border-left: 3px solid #860000;
    font-size: 120%;
}

```

Figure 33 – Demonstration of column color change