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Analysis of Technical Report in Computer Science

[step 1]

On my search in the internet to find an ideal text-written form in the genre of computer science I stumbled upon this document, Tag Clouds in Software Visualization by Chris Deaker, Neville Churcher, and Warwick Irwin, published by the department of Computer Science in University of Canterbury. I found this document on the web page of the University of Canterbury and I found it to be most helpful in giving a clear understanding of a report in my field of study.

[step 2]

The document I found and chose to do my genre analysis on is a technical report. These types of reports are written to give detailed information on a project or product.

[step 3]

I have numbered the above document from 1 – 8 with red numbers. Each number is placed next to a crucial element in the technical report.

[step 4]

The following is a detailed description of each numbered element on the Tag Clouds in Software Visualization technical report shown above.

1. Contains the title of the technical report that gives a general idea of what the report will be about. It also contains the name of the contributors, what organization they belong to, and their contact information.
2. This is the abstract summary of the main points to be covered by the report to help the reader get a main idea of what he or she is about to read.
3. Is the introduction part of the report that informs the reader on the reasoning and purpose behind the report. In this case it covers the purpose of why the specified software component was created or added.
4. This is the body of the report and here is where the main points and are stated in detail. In this case the report focuses on the software visuals explaining them in detail.
5. Here is where the report brings up any issues or challenges encountered during the creation or implementation of the project. In this case it talks about challenges encountered by software engineers by the software visuals.
6. Flow chart to give the reader a clearer understanding on how the project is working behind the scenes using visual components.
7. Images of the result of the project, in this case software visuals, that help the reader see what was created and why.
8. This is the conclusion summing up the main points of the report and giving any insight on any future work that may come from this project.

9. States any and all references used to make the project and technical report.

[step 5]

I have written a technical report in the past; however, it was far less formal and technical than the one shown above. If I were to write another technical report of this nature, I would make sure to include an appropriate title that sums up the subject of the report. The title would then be followed by an abstract summary of the report but in less technical terms so that the general public can form an idea of what will be discussed. The introduction would be worded simply as well so that most can follow along and relate to the problem or issue.

This report by Chris Deaker, Neville Churcher, and Warwick Irwin does a good job of using visual queues such as graphs, window layout, and examples which are helpful to understand the report. However, I would add a brief description next to each image to help the reader get a faster or easier understand of what is going on. I would also add more spacing between paragraphs, images, and charts to give the report a more pleasant appearance and better readability.

Theory of Technical Report in Computer Science

Computer science along with other engineering fields use technical reports to give detailed information on a given project or product. Usually these reports are used to demonstrate the success or failure of a project or product to convince an interested outside party. However, due to the terminology and jargon used in that specified field technical reports can be hard to understand by others outside that genre. This is why technical reports have to be written in as much details and visual aids to allow others outside the field to follow along as well. With the help of visual aids complex results can become much easier to understand both to people inside and outside the genre.

Technical reports are suited for computer science because they go in depth into the target project, giving detailed information on its purpose and those of any internal or external components. In computer science technical reports will most likely contain flow charts on how a project works, charts with results and statistics, and will reference algorithms used to show efficiency. Technical components such as the programing language used, algorithm used, and the specific set up of components can be explained efficiently in a technical report and give the reader a clear understanding of what's going on. People who have in interest in a product for example Windows 10, a common operating system used in computers, they can read a technical report on how efficient the product is and how it is either better or worse than other similar products.

Technical reports will most likely be different for other fields, such as in a criminal justice or education genre, these fields will probably not reference algorithms or have flow charts on functionality. Aside from algorithms and flow charts, technical reports are similar in other fields, such as they all contain an abstract summary, an introduction, a conclusion, references, and any charts needed to show results. For example, law enforcement can have a technical report on the outcome of having officers wear a camera on their person, obviously there will be no mention of algorithms and programming languages, but there can be charts and a brief summary on the decrease of police brutality on law breaking citizens. Regardless of how their contents may vary, technical reports are important documents used to convey information to a large audience in almost all genres.