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The NPRIE Website – A Glance behind the Scenes

Steve Burgess (Library Information Manager, West Yorkshire Probation Board, Website Manager, NPRIE)

An account of a purpose-built content management system for the National Probation Research and Information Exchange (NPRIE).

Introduction

NPRIE is the National Probation Research and Information Exchange. It provides a supportive network to library, information and research staff in the 42 probation areas in England and Wales. It also advises the National Probation Directorate and NOMS on information and research issues. Although the network is focused around information and research, all probation staff may join. Members of other criminal justice agencies, and those contracted to work with them, may join the network as associate members.

The main work of NPRIE is organised into these areas.

- Information and Library Management
- Research
- Data Standards
- Communications and Public Relations

Members of the committee also sit on a number of national committees, groups and boards. These including various user groups for information management systems (e.g. CRAMS, c-NOMIS, eOASys, IAPS etc – see the Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations on the NPRIE website to find out what these mean!), the Information Advisory Board, and the national Data Standards and Reporting Group.

Although NPRIE is "staffed" entirely by volunteers, and neither has nor attempts to raise any funds, it is a very active group that produces a wide range of outputs. Most of the information products NPRIE produces can be accessed now on the website. The exchange also organises conferences. The next of these will be in York in October (more info on the website).

Outputs include:

- The Probation Thesaurus – produced by the Information and Library Management Group (ILMG)

- The Probation Gateway (ILMG)

- The Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations (ILMG)

- The National Research Collection Catalogue (ILMG)

- The Stakeholder Survey Guide – produced by the Research Officers' Group (ROG)

As you can see, in spite of its size, the Information and Library Management Group is very active.

As with many organisations, especially ones with a relatively sparse population widely distributed around the country, communication is one of the biggest challenges. NPRIE used to produce a regular newsletter but changes in staff, changes in the organisational structure of probation and its priorities meant that this appeared less and less frequently. What was needed was a mechanism to allow:

1. members of NPRIE to keep in contact with one another easily

2. the special interest groups to coordinate their work

3. the committee to keep members informed about developments

4. for general information and NPRIE information products to be stored and disseminated

In 2002 I was co-opted onto the committee to take on the redevelopment of the website – which previously had functioned as a signpost to NPRIE services rather than a means of delivering them.

My main objective in the redevelopment was to create something that would allow the editors to update the content of the website without using me as an intermediary. Like most other people in NPRIE, I have a full time job (Library Information Manager at West Yorkshire Probation Board) and although my employer allowed me to do the website development work in work time, I did see it as being a time bound project which would have an end point. Effectively, then, what was required was a content management system. As we had no funds – I decided to write my own.

My first task was to take the content from the existing static pages and put them into a database and then create a template which would pull the relevant data from the database to create the full HTML pages. Of course, most web pages are made up of more than just text – and even though the editable part of the page would be limited, I did not want the editors to be restricted to only being able to represent information in paragraph form. They would need to be able to use bullet lists, tables, images etc. How would I allow editors to create this sort of formatting – without giving them a free hand in the use of fonts, colour and design.

Figure 1

My solution was to regard each different type of content as a separate element on a page. So, a paragraph would have one entry in a database, a bullet list another, a table another etc. A relational link (one-to-many) between the PAGES table and the PAGE_ELEMENTS table would make this all work. Figure 1 is a screen shot of the website.
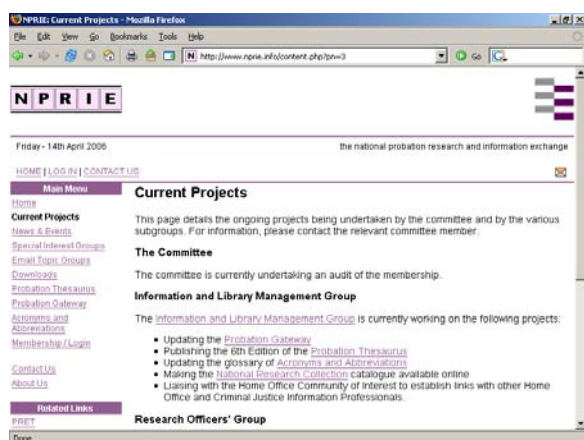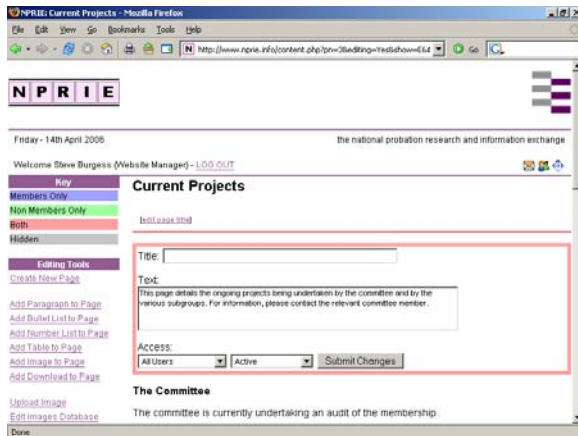
Figure 2

Figure 2 is a screen shot of the same page in editing mode.

As you can see, the user edits each element on the page separately – so one page is built up from many different elements of different types. Each element may have a title and each element can be switched on and switched off at will. Equally, it is possible, on the same page, to have items that are visible to general users only, to logged in members only or to all users. This approach ensures that:

- editors cannot apply their own individual style or "creative panache" to pages

- bullets, tables, paragraph titles etc look the same throughout the site

- the same page can be used to hide some information from non members

To edit the more complex page elements (such as bullets or tables) the editor simply needs to define how many sub elements there are (i.e. how many bullets; how many columns and rows) and define any special features (i.e. is the bullet list an ordered or unordered list; are the first rows and columns in the table headings?).

Figure 3 demonstrates this when editing a table.

This table is 80% of the available width, has 2 columns, 12 rows and is aligned to the left. The first column contains headings. Each of the cells in the table is now part of a form that the user can edit.

Figure 3

All of this information is stored in a MySQL database table on the server. The following "element types" are permitted:
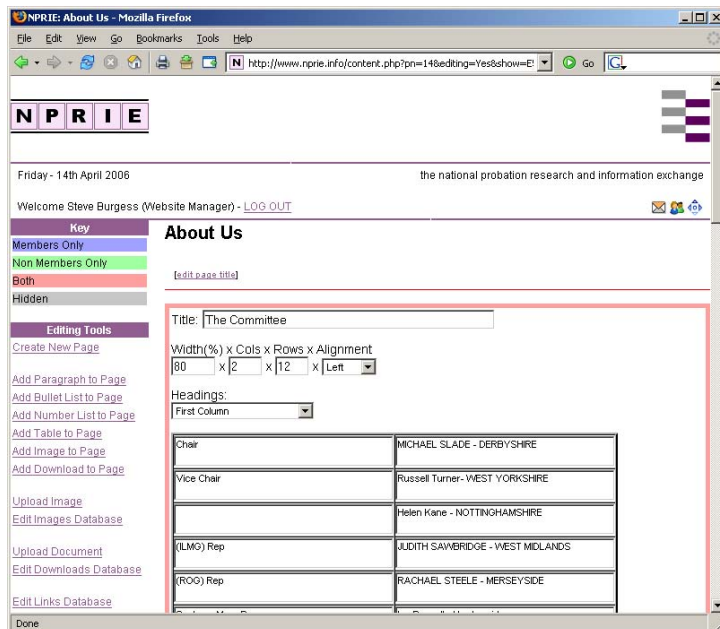
- Paragraph
- Bullet List
- Numbered List
- Table
- Newsline (not used)
- Downloads (there is a database of downloadable files – more on this later)
- Image (there is a database of images)
- Form[1]
- Server Side Includes[*] (some pages use server side includes to allow more complex interaction with the database – an example of this is the Probation Gateway page)

The editor can change the order of elements on the page and hide them (but not delete them). A different script allows editors to actually add new pages and to tinker around with the menu system (the coding of which became so complex I'm not altogether sure I can remember how it works!).

Links

Of course, web pages are NOT solitary pieces of information and the great thing about websites is ones ability to link to other web pages either within the site or on other websites. Although editors could edit and add new content to the existing pages – they couldn't, at this stage, make links to other pages or to other websites.

What I didn't want to do was to have to teach them how to create <A HREF… tags within the paragraphs/tables/bullet lists they were creating. This wasn't out of a desire to prevent them from acquiring the knowledge – but rather was more about ensuring a consistent approach to the creation of the tags (as the site is HTML 4 compliant). Also, each of the pages within the site are actually the same page (content.php) and the content you actually see is defined by a variable passed in the URL called pn (unsurprisingly this means "page number"). I wanted to eliminate the possibility that editors might get the URL wrong when creating links. The solution was to create a table in this ever-growing database containing information about ALL links that could be used on the site. Editors are not able to create a link unless they first add the information to this table.

The table has these fields:

LinkName
LinkAddress
Internal
IntPageNum (for internal links)

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[1] indicates elements that, at present, only I can use as they both require interaction with PHP scripts and I felt disinclined to let editors loose on the server in this way.

[*]

All the links for all the pages on the site were added to this table – and, indeed, when the user adds a new page to the site the link information is automatically added.

So now when a user wants to create a link to a page on the site, they simply have to write the name of the link (LinkName) in their paragraph or bullet list or table in uppercase. A text processing script scans the text before displaying it on the page and replaces the capitalised text with a link and then naturalises the text. So, for example, on the home page the introductory text would have been entered as:

> "NPRIE advises and supports members, agencies and other organisations in the development, use and provision of research and information in the pursuit of NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE objectives and towards…"

The text processing script would have output:

> "NPRIE advises and supports members, agencies and other organisations in the development, use and provision of research and information in the pursuit of National Probation Service objectives and towards…"

so when that paragraph is displayed on the home page, the capitalisation has gone and the link to the National Probation Service website is in place.

I did consider not requiring the user to explicitly define the link by putting it in upper case – but I personally find websites where every mention of, for example, the National Probation Service would end up being a link a little bit annoying. It interrupts the reading flow of the page.

Uploads

One of the main functions of the website is a repository of NPRIE publications – editors needed to be able to upload files to the webserver. So the next development was to:

- allow editors to upload files and images to the server using a form (see Figure 4)

- allow editors to make links to these files in a consistent way

Figure 4

It was also necessary to ensure that those documents that were only available to members could not be accessed by entering the full URL of the document in the browser – but in a way that fitted in with the existing authentication scripts.

The decision was to put ALL documents into a in the root of the (virtual) webserver. This meant that documents could not be accessed directly by the browser. Documents could only be accessed by a script.

When an editor wishes to make a document available on the website they add a "download" page element to the page and edit it using the form in Figure 5.
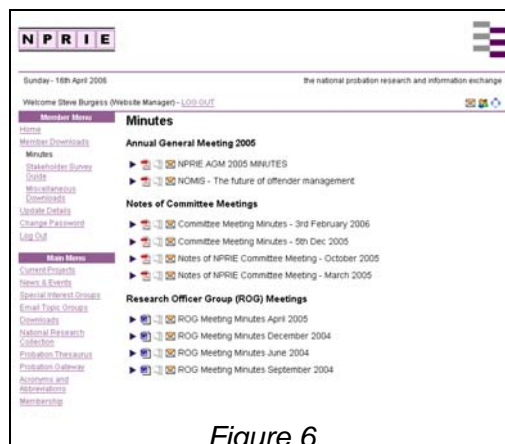

Figure 5

Figure 6

The editor can specify a section title for the download if required and then simply chooses the download using the drop down list. This list is fed from a database of all documents that have been uploaded to the site. The images are created automatically on the basis of the file type, whether a zip version of the file is available and whether the file is of a size that it would be appropriate to e-mail. The little triangle is a toggle button which reveals the bibliographic information about that particular file.

The page shown in Figure 6 shows how downloads can be grouped using Titles for the first download in the group and not for subsequent ones.

Uploading Images works in very much the same way – see Figure 7 – but this time the editor can specify whether an image is left, right or centre aligned; and whether it is an inline a newline image. For example, specifying an inline, right aligned image will mean any subsequent text will wrap to the left.

Editors cannot change the representational size of an image and must specify alternative text for standards compliance.

Figure 7

Server Side Includes

The result of all of the above work enabled the editors to keep pages up to date. The website now fulfils their needs to keep the membership informed about developments, new events and new products. They can publish sensitive information to the membership without making it available to general users. Prospective members can apply to join NPRIE and the entire membership process is automated through the website. That said, however, the website still isn't a dynamic site as such. The creation of pages, while easier than before, is still a relatively labour intensive process. I had a need to put dynamic content on the site (such as the National Research Collection and the Probation Gateway) in such a way that fitted in with the page/page element model. I realised that I

could create a page element called Server Side Includes which would just contain a reference to a scripting file on the server.

This allowed me to add the following dynamic features to the site

- The news feed (powered by My-RSS.co.uk) on the home page

- The National Research Collection searchable database (only available to members)

- The Probation Gateway

- The Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

This means that a change to any of the databases above is reflected immediately on the website. The ability to add server side includes means that the website can be developed in relatively sophisticated ways – while retaining the editing system and page description model as originally implemented.

I have moved on from this project now and am working on other projects (i.e. the redesign of the West Yorkshire Probation website – to be launched in the summer – and some private projects of my own). I think the NPRIE web site could do with a design overhaul and the menu system could do with being improved – but one could tinker around forever and the site, as it stands, is functional and serviceable by non-technical users which was the objective I set myself at the very beginning.

Online

By Johanna Westwood, University of Wales, Aberystwyth (Aberystwyth Online User Group). Please send your submissions for the next edition to jrc@aber.ac.uk

Dialog
http://www.dialog.com
Dialog has launched two new, time-saving tools for use with DataStarWeb:

AlertsManager, which provides information managers with the ability to publish, track and manage access to alerts. Once an alert has been created, end users can then be invited to subscribe to available alerts.

ReportAid, which is a post-processing tool that reduces the time it takes to refine search results and create publishable information dossiers for distribution to decision makers.

EBSCO: EBSCO*host*® Electronic Journals Service (EJS)
http://ejournals.ebsco.com
EBSCO*host* Electronic Journals Service Enhanced handles electronic journal access and management needs and includes extensive features to help with e-journal management tasks such as tracking the registration status of e-journals, authentication assistance to facilitate both on-campus and remote access to e-journal content, automatic management of e-journal URLs and much more. EJS Enhanced serves as a consolidated gateway that allows users to search and link to (OpenURL supported) more than 13,000 journals and 7.3 million articles. EBSCO provides durable URLs for every journal, table of contents and article in EJS Enhanced. No URL maintenance by the library is required.

EnrichUK: future development of EnrichUK has been guaranteed
http://www.enrichuk.net/
The Big Lottery Fund has signed an agreement with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to ensure the future development of the website that marked a revolution in making the riches held by the UK's cultural, heritage and community organisations easily available to everyone on the Internet. EnrichUK is the gateway to a lottery-funded collection of 150 sites supported by the New Opportunities Fund, the collection ranges across culture, history, social and economic development, science and art as well as offering regional and national 'sense of place' websites from England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Jorum: new demonstration videos and mailing list
http://www.jorum.ac.uk
Jorum is a free online repository service for teaching and support staff in UK Further and Higher Education Institutions, helping to build a community for the sharing, reuse and repurposing of learning and teaching materials. There are several Jorum demonstration videos now available, as well as a mailing list which will keep subscribers up to date with news, announcements, events and new resources.

Land, Life & Leisure: new news feature

http://edina.ac.uk/landlifeleisure/

Land, Life & Leisure, the weekly digest of press releases, reports and articles in agriculture, tourism and rural affairs, has a new feature. A leading story will be featured on the main search page from the 300-400 new items added to the index each week. As well as a direct link to the full reference from the database, each item has a preconfigured search strategy to easily retrieve "similar items". In addition an archive will be kept of past week's items. When revisited this also pulls up all new matching items.

NetLibrary: Springer Science+Business Media journal titles now available

http://www.oclc.org/netlibrary

NetLibrary, a division of OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., has signed a distribution agreement that will make all Springer Science+Business Media journal titles available through the Electronic Collections Online service. The Springer Journal collection will include more than 1,200 peer-reviewed journals, with topics spanning biomedicine, life science, clinical medicine, physics, engineering, mathematics, computer science, humanities, business and economics.

PerX Project: Pilot subject-based cross-repository search tool now available

http://www.engineering.ac.uk/

A Pilot service providing subject resource discovery across a variety of digital repositories of interest to the engineering learning and research communities has been released by the PerX Project. Twenty-eight repositories are currently cross-searched by the Pilot. More repositories will be added to the Pilot as they are identified and configured.

ProQuest
KnowUK
http://www.knowuk.co.uk
NewsUK
http://www.newsuk.co.uk

Working in association with the MLA, ProQuest is now able to offer preferential pricing to the nine pre-defined MLA regions on its two top-selling public library products; KnowUK the online UK reference library, and NewsUK the online newspaper database.

Naxos Music Library

http://www.naxosmusiclibrary.com/

Chadwyck-Healey International Index to Music Periodicals (IIMP)
http://iimp.chadwyck.com/

ProQuest Information and Learning have formed a partnership with Naxos, premier provider of music sound recordings on the web, to offer the first integration of music sound files within a music reference database. Users will be able to access critical periodical content from IIMP and go directly into Naxos Music Library to listen to the music, composer, or artist referenced or reviewed in the IIMP abstracts and articles. Users of both Naxos and IIMP can access more than 130,000 tracks (from 8,800 CDs), the entire Naxos and Marco Polo catalogues, plus other licensed independent labels. Entire CDs and individual tracks are available.

Internet
Library 2.0 – more questions than answers
Susan Miles (s.miles@kingston.ac.uk)

Library 2.0 : various views of what it is, and how it can be used.

Library 2.0 – is it just a new buzzword or is there a new paradigm being created? The Library 2.0 discussion has arisen from Web 2.0 ideas. Perhaps you've read Phil Bradley's article about Web 2.0 over in Cilip Update[2]

Library 2.0 is an amorphous concept, seeming to embrace both the technological aspects of the integration of different digital resources, and the cultural/semantic aspects of its definition. In the light of an ever shifting landscape and a looming deadline, here are some resources you can use to follow and contribute to the debate.

There are a range of definitions of Library 2.0, Wikipedia[3] includes this in its definition "With Library 2.0 library services are constantly updated and re-evaluated to best serve library users. Library 2.0 also attempts to harness the library user in the design and implementation of library services by encouraging feedback and participation." Stephen Abram (SirsiDynix vice president of Innovation) suggests that "The beauty of Web 2.0 and Library 2.0 is the level of integration and interoperability that is designed into the interface through your portal or intranet.

That's where the real power to enhance the user experience is. In order to take advantage of the concepts inherent in Library 2.0 is the imperative to not shy away from adding advanced functionality and features directly into the content."[4] Paul Miller (technology evangelist at Talis) is another Library 2.0 proponent, he has suggested that "Library 2.0 is about encouraging and enabling a library's community of users to participate, contributing their own views on resources they have used and new ones to which they might wish access."[5]

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[2]   Bradley, P. (2006) 'Web 2.0 – a new generation of services. Part1'. *CILIP Update.* 5(5): 32-33. Available from: http://www.cilip.org.uk/publications/updatemagazine/archive/archive2006/may/web2bradleymay06.htm [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[3]   'Library 2.0' *Wikipedia* [Online]. Available from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_2.0 [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[4]   Abram, S. (2006) 'Web 2.0, Library 2.0, and Librarian 2.0: preparing for the 2.0 world'. *SirsiDynix OneSource* [Online] 2(1). Available from: http://www.imakenews.com/sirsi/e_article000505688.cfm [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[5]   Miller, P. (February 2006) *Library 2.0. The challenge of disruptive innovation.* [Online] Birmingham : Talis. Available from: http://www.talis.com/resources/documents/447_Library_2_prf1.pdf [Accessed 25 April 2006]

He has also described Library 2.0 as a disruptive technology. In a Talis White Paper[6] late 2005 he and Ken Chad (executive director, Talis), outlined four principles of Library 2.0:

- The library is everywhere
- The library has no barriers
- The library invites participation
- The library uses flexible, best-of-breed systems

Michael Stephens (Tame the Web blogger), is interested in the ways Library 2.0 themes could influence the creation of new vision library services. At a workshop for Metropolitan Library System, he explained that "The principles of Library 2.0 seek to break down barriers: barriers librarians have placed on services, barriers of place and time and barriers inherent in what we do. In this user-centered paradigm, libraries can get information/entertainment/knowledge into the hands of our users wherever they are by whatever means work best."[7] This approach is a development of a challenge he made to librarians earlier in 2005 when he asked, "How will you change or improve services to match this new model?[8]". Then he added three additional principles to those of Chad and Miller:

- The library encourages the heart
- The library is human
- The library recognizes that its users are human too

Michael Stephens is a course leader of the ALA/MPS Library Futures online course which is running this spring. The aim of the course is that "participants will utilize RSS feeds, podcasts, web based data, and weblogs to collaborate on creating content, planning projects and exploring material developed by experts. The main goal of the Library Futures course is to develop a plan for a Libraries 2.0 project. Participants will work in teams to define a project idea, develop a plan for implementing the project, and deliver that plan as a podcast and slide set."[9] One of the support materials for this course is a Library 2.0 reading list, which is presented via Squidoo[10]. It's worth taking a look at this just to see what Squidoo is. This includes sections such as, Web 2.0 – overviews;

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[6] Chad, K and Miller, P. (November 2005) *Do libraries matter? The rise of Library 2.0* [Online] Birmingham : Talis. Available from: http://www.talis.com/downloads/white_papers/DoLibrariesMatter.pdf [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[7] Stephens, M (2006) 'On barriers in libraries (An L2 workshop)'. *Tame the Web* [Online]. Available from: http://tametheweb.com/2006/04/on_barriers_in_libraries_an_l2.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[8] Stephens, M (2005) 'Do Libraries Matter: On Library & Librarian 2.0'. *ALA TechSource* [Online]. Available from: http://www.techsource.ala.org/blog/2005/11/do-libraries-matter-on-library-librarian-20.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

[9] Woods, J. 'Library Futures – Online Course Slated for Spring 2006'. *Library 2.0* [Online] Available from: http://www.library2.0.ottergroup.com/blog/_archives/2006/1/17/1681851.html [Accessed 25 April 2006]

definitions of L2; foundations of L2; discussions of the 2.0 meme and discussion of Library 2.0. It is a useful collection of resources on this topic.

If you're curious to see or follow what the course participants are doing, then visit http://library2.0.alablog.org/. Naturally, much of the information is password access only, but what is openly available is intriguing and well worth a look. For a glimpse of the wide range of sources informing their discussions, take a look at their del.icio.us tagset at http://del.icio.us/tag/ALAL2.

I wonder which library, or even which type of library will emerge as the trailblazer for Library 2.0? My own hunch, based on what I've seen whilst researching this column and attending the Internet Librarian International conference last year, is that it could be a well-funded public library service in the US, or could it be your library service?

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[10]   Levine, J and Stephens, M. (2006) 'Library 2.0 reading list'. [Online] Available from: http://www.squidoo.com/library20/ [Accessed 25 April 2006]

Intranets

Martin White, Intranet Focus Ltd (martin.white@intranetfocus.com)

An account of the 2006 Search Engine Meeting, held this year in Boston, USA, in April 2006.

2006 Search Engine Meeting

Until the recent arrival of the Enterprise Search Summit the Infonortics (http://www.infonortics.com) Search Engine Meeting was the conference to attend if you wanted to track what was happening in the technology and business of search. The Search Engine Meeting started a decade ago with the mission of "bringing together commercial search engine developers, academics and corporate professionals to learn from each other". Over the last few years the emphasis on web search has been tempered by more attention to enterprise search. This year's Meeting was held in Boston on 24/25 April. It attracted around 150 delegates, mostly from the USA.

The conference was opened by Dave Girouard, General Manager, Google Enterprise, who made the point at the outset of his presentation that although the market for web search is probably worth $10bn the enterprise market is worth no more than $1bn. He felt that one of the reasons for the low adoption of enterprise search was that to date it had failed to deliver value to the end user. In his view even a single keyword search in an enterprise application should deliver good results if enough care is taken over the search environment. He felt that in general there was much in common with enterprise users and web users, and that much of the development work was taking place in the public search arena and then being adopted by enterprise search, such as faceted navigation (a major theme of the conference), clustering and visualization. Overall he felt that it was important than in an enterprise implementation the search box was in the centre of the page, not hidden at the top RH end of the search bar.

Many of the papers at the conference were concerned with how to effectively search 'the long tail' (see http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.10/tail.html), a major issue in enterprise search because a searcher has to be confident that they have found all relevant documents, not just a sample – which leads me neatly into an excellent paper by Steve Arnold on the way in which search engines are 'managing' relevance. An essay based on his presentation can be found at http://www.arnoldit.com/speeches.html and is an essential read. Steve may have slightly overstated the case, but not by much. The main sessions at the conference were on Searchers and Search Behaviour, Faceted and Federated Search, Text Mining, the World of the Web and finally Web Tools and Intelligent Tools. Virtually all the papers (but not the Google paper) can be downloaded from http://www.infonortics.com/searchengines/sh06/06pro.html but many are quite substantial files. My favourites were the papers by Tony Gentile, Joseph Tragert, Tom Reamy and Boerge Svingen. Too many of the speakers failed to appreciate that they only had 25 minutes for their presentations, and really failed to pace themselves, rushing through far too many slides. A few presenters from the vendor community were rather too much in PR mode but yet had not paid up for a tabletop at the exhibition.

Overall I think I will give this year's Search Engine Meeting 7 out of 10. To me it is struggling to find a balance between the public web and enterprise search, which is not at

all easy because of the technology overlaps referred to above. However despite the technology overlaps there are quite a number of major differences and these did not really get an airing. For example there was no speaker who had actually implemented an enterprise search application. One final observation was the way in which the term 'metadata' was used only for describing content. Any given item of content has many other metadata elements (http://dublincore.org/) and this was invariably overlooked by the presenters.

I'll also be at the Enterprise Search Summit that takes place in New York at the end of May http://www.enterprisesearchsummit.com/ and will report back in the next issue of eLucidate.

Public Sector News

Jane Inman, Technical Librarian, Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy, Warwickshire County Council (janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk)

E-Government

E-Government has moved into a new phase with work to encourage the take up of local government electronic services which local authorities were required to have in place by the end of last year. The campaign, run by the Cabinet Office, targeted the regional press at the end of March and then, after the local elections in May, the national press, radio, online and outdoor media will be used.

The campaign will encourage use of the Directgov site (http://www.direct.gov.uk) to direct visitors via a post code search to local services. The underlying work was done by the Local Directgov programme and you can find details of the take-up campaign at http://www.localegov.gov.uk/takeupcampaign

Currently the Directgov site itself, launched in April 2004, receives 2million hits a month but it has not until now been promoted in any vigorous way. Indeed the Financial Times described it as the 'secret site'. (*Financial Times 6th March 2006 Nicholas Timmins 'Secret' site to get £1.8m airing).* Advertising for Directgov has now begun and the Directgov service is also available on digital television through Sky, Telewest and NTL and via an i-mode pilot on O2.

Directgov has had a change of home as from April 2006 it moved from the Cabinet Office to the Central Office of Information.

Some time ago the Government announced a digital challenge with a prize fund of £7m to encourage local authorities to create wired-up communities and in turn to tackle social exclusion. Proposals for the scheme had to be in my April 28th and implementation of the schemes would begin in April 2007. http://www.digitalchallenge.gov.uk

Local authority web sites

SOCITM published its 8th survey of local government web sites in March and found that 60 of the 468 sites were now classed as transactional which is the highest category in the survey. They expressed concern in the report that accessibility issues still needed to be addressed and that some of the other targets known as 'priority service outcomes' had not been delivered. These include things such as e-planning, road works information and school admissions. *Better connected 2006* SOCITM http://www.socitm.gov.uk
Another challenge for local authorities is that by the end of 2006 all local authority web sites should being using the Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary in the subject field of metadata. Version 2.00 was issued in April and includes a set of terms for use when indexing internal or administrative documents. More information at http://www.esd.org.uk/standards/ipsv

One of the benefits of writing a column like this has to be that you can record your own organisation's success! In Warwickshire we were thrilled to be selected as best environmental web site at the British Environment and Media Awards this year. It was pleasing to win a competition not limited to local authority work and to show that local

authority web sites can compete with other organisations in the field. To see what an award winning site looks like go to http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/environment or visit the WWF site who sponsored the awards http://www.wwf.org.uk/news/n_0000002430.asp for details of the award.
We are not alone though as Lichfield District Council has been selected as an Official Honoree in the international Webby awards. See http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ for details of their success.

Europe

I don't usually cover European issues but there seems to be quite a bit that is relevant at the moment. Firstly there are plans for a network of 25 'information relays' across the UK which will be set up by the European Commission and known as Europe Direct. The centres will provide information on 'single market rights such as travelling, working and studying across the EU.' They will be in place by May 2006 and will build on what is already in place in the way of European Information Centres. The European Commission's UK Representation has announced where the centres will be hosted. http://europa.eu.int/unitedkingdom/press/press_releases/2006/pr0616_en.htm
The European Digital Library is a European Commission project to give digital access to more than six million books, documents and other cultural works via the web by 2010. In March 2006 the Commission published the results of a consultation on the project, which shows general support for the idea but differences of opinion over the copyright issues related to the scheme. This project is part of the wider i2010 strategy designed to improve the digital economy in Europe.

You can view the portal of the European Library at http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/index.htm or for more information on the consultation go to http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/doc/communication/results_of_online_con

Europe is also backing a research project to look at the return on investment of public sector IT projects. The project called PICTURE (Process Identification and Clustering for Transparency in Reorganising Public Administration!) will develop a method for calculating the potential benefits of investments in IT systems. http://europa.eu.int/idabc/en/chapter/194

In February the European Commission called on member states to improve the transfer of electronic information between local and national government across Europe and announced its intention to develop an EU Action Plan on e-government. The plan would tackle technical interoperability, and language or semantic interoperability but would also try to make information available for citizen events and business events in a seamless way. http://europa.eu.int/idabc/en/home

Public Sector News is supplied by ALGIS (The Affiliation of Local Government Information Specialists) which represents information professionals providing information services to local authority staff and elected members. Jane Inman is currently Chair of ALGIS. For more information go to http://www.algis.org.uk

Letters

This letter originally appeared in LIS-UKEIG@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

I see the article in eLucidate
(http://www.ukeig.org.uk/members/access/elucidate/index.html) cites the Forbes and
Gibbons (2005) description of an IR as "an electronic system that captures, preserves,
and provides access to the digital work products of a community" ... which is pretty much
how I would have described one.

Thus, I was intrigued by the following correspondence (today) on the JISC-
REPOSITORIES list which suggested that one of these uses is not valid. The email
response to the initial question is from Steven Harnad:

I should be grateful if anyone can provide me some evidence to back the following
statement:

"Concern of longevity has contributed to the lack of active engagement from many
researchers [with institutional repositories]. Guarantee of long-term preservation helps
enhance a repository's trustworthiness by giving authors confidence in the future
accessibility and more incentives to deposit content"

I guess longevity here also applies to the financial sustainability of the repository itself as
a business operation, in addition to its content.

The statement is (1) not based on evidence at all, but pure speculation and (2)
speculation not on the part of the content-providers (i.e., the authors who are presently
only spontaneously self-archiving their published articles at about the 15% level) but on
the part of others, whose a priori concept of an institutional repository is that it is for long-
term preservation (rather than for immediate access-provision and impact maximisation)
[…]
But it would be absolutely absurd of their employers and funders to mandate self-
archiving for the sake of long-term preservation!

Preservation of what, and why? Articles are published by journals. The preservation of
the published version is the responsibility of the journals that publish it, the libraries that
subscribe/license it, and the deposit libraries that archive it. None of that is the
responsibility of the author or his institution, and never has been.

So, according to Harnad, IRs are solely for immediate access provision, and anything
else would be absurd.

Can I ask whether this is the understanding which everyone else has?
I wonder how many institutions who own IRs see their role in this way – because logic
might suggest that articles should be tossed out after their normal life span (whatever that
might be), thereby saving on sustainable storage, administration and all those other
archive nightmares.

Chris Armstrong

Meeting Report: Searching the Internet: Google and beyond
March 2006, Birmingham University Library

I work as a Content Coordinator for Altis http://www.altis.ac.uk
Altis is part of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) http://www.rdn.ac.uk
As the title suggests, the RDN is all about electronic resources. We scour the Internet, sourcing resources for our subject gateways, of which there are eight. Resources are evaluated according to their relevance, authority and accessibility. First and foremost resources must be freely available on the web. We then assess their relevance to a particular subject area within the post sixteen learning and research communities.

I am therefore constantly on the look out for new resources to support learning and research in hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism; the subjects supported by Altis. As well as sourcing resources I am keen to find out about the new search engines that are around and to learn new tips for improving my search strategies.

That is why I signed up for this workshop, and the fact that it came recommended by a colleague who had previously attended the same workshop in London. Karen Blakeman, of RBA Information Services http://www.rba.co.uk/ is highly regarded in the profession and I wasn't disappointed. Her presentation style is very clear and considering that there was a huge amount of content to cover in just one day she managed to get through it all without leaving us with a feeling of bewilderment as can often happen. Although I felt quite bombarded with information I did not feel confused or did not feel lacking in my understanding of the content. On the contrary the feeling of bombardment was very positive as I had discovered some excellent new searching tools and picked up some top tips to enable me to find some new resources for Altis.

My particular favourite is http://mindset.research.yahoo.com/ as this enables you to refine your results set according to whether you are shopping or researching. Other search engines highlighted in the workshop enable the user to compare results sets from different search engines side by side. This helped to illustrate why Google is not necessarily the best option!

Karen also talked about specific tools for finding audio visual content, advanced search techniques, different file formats and news services. Particular attention was given to wikis, blogs and RSS feeds. The session allowed plenty of time for hands-on so that we could put all of the theory into practice. Delegates were free to ask questions at any time, which helped contribute to the relaxed nature of the workshop. There was plenty of time for networking too with refreshment breaks and an hour for lunch.

In conclusion, I would highly recommend this workshop to anyone who uses the Internet as part of their daily work routine. Even more experienced users will benefit – we can never know everything, can we?

Theresa Summerfield, Altis Content Coordinator, University of Birmingham, Information Services

Meeting Report: Taming your Intranet
March 2006

The course gathered a large cross-section of the information profession, from those who oversee their Library's site pages to those who manage intranets for complex multi-sited organisations. Irrespective of this, it was soon established that everyone was tackling similar problems; including issues around staff 'buy-in', user expectations, competition from e-mail and shared network drives, ownership of content, and archiving/deletion policies.

The day focused on how some of these issues could be resolved, however it highlighted the inherent conflicts within intranets, for example:

- Organisational needs versus user needs;
- People and their interaction with technology;
- Variant user needs;
- Information store versus a communication tool;
- Up-to-date information versus an archive;
- Flat structure versus a hierarchical structure;
- Centralised content management versus decentralised.

In the process of discussing these, Luke Tredinnick, author of *Why Intranets Fail (and How to Fix Them)*[11] attempted to cover much of the content of his book, a tall order in a six-hour seminar.

Although the course was titled *Taming your Intranet*, it did begin to feel there was a *bit* too much doom and gloom; with a feeling that the problems have been around for some time and no one has really found the solutions. A session on sharing success stories, however, lifted spirits, and the day was a valuable opportunity to discuss both problems and successes with fellow professionals.

To find solutions to the challenges our intranets pose, we need opportunities to learn from each other. Also, to share experiences of using newer web technologies within our intranets; wikis, blogs, RSS feeds, folksonomies and social tagging were touched upon in the final part of the day.

A few key issues I took away from the course:
Keep the intranet's aims realistic and the intranet small;
- Exploit what is working well;
- Manage users' expectations by informing them of the intranet's core function.
- Ensure users do not have to work harder, than before the intranet existed, to find information.

And finally, one of the day's key themes was that our intranets are a reflection of our organisation's culture, processes, and practices within them. And so, in our roles as intranet managers, for success, we need to become enablers of cultural change.

Helen Davies, Information Manager, Trades Union Congress (TUC)

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[11] Tredinnick, L. (2004) Why intranets fail (and how to fix them): a practical guide for information professionals. Oxford: Chandos Publishing Limited.

Intranets Communities of Practice

Are you working in intranets and would like to network electronically with your colleagues?

http://www.dgroups.org/groups/webmasters/ is a shared web space for colleagues who are involved in intranets in government departments, other public sector bodies and charities. "This is your space to pose questions, raise issues, share experiences and discuss hot topics related to the world of intranets. The group will also be used to notify you of opportunities to meet colleagues who are probably facing exactly the same challenges as you." The group is run by the Department for International Development, requires registration

For the NHS, there is http://nww.webteam.nhs.uk/ the NHS Web Developers' Group, set up by Wirral Health Informatics Service. "This group is deliberately intended to include all staff involved in web development in the NHS - that means everyone from the person who 'does the web site in their spare time' to full time web designers and developers, web editors, content administrators and patient information specialists."

If there are there any more groups of lists you are aware of please let the editor know.

What's on your intranet home page?

**Free informal intranets forum meeting
to be held at**

TUC, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3LS
Thursday, 22nd June 2006, 16.00-17.30hrs

Come and meet your intranet colleagues!

This is the first informal meeting of the UKeiG Intranets forum. If you are working in intranets and would like to meet your colleagues, this is the meeting for you. Our first meeting is a chance to look at other intranet home pages. Janet Corcoran, Imperial College London and Helen Davies from the TUC will be showing their intranet home pages.

We will also be looking for volunteers to host future meetings, in London or elsewhere. If you would like to attend this meeting, please contact:

Helen Davies
Information Manager
Trades Union Congress
Congress House
Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3LS

Direct line: 020 7467 1207
Email: hdavies@tuc.org.uk

Location: 2 minutes walk from Tottenham Court Road tube station
Map: http://www.tuc.org.uk/the_tuc/about_contact.cfm

If you are interested in hosting a meeting in another part of the UK, please contact:

Claire Pillar
Web Liaison, UkeiG Management Committee
Direct line: 01228 814159
Email: claire@outofthebox.nu

Current Awareness

Column editor: Jane Grogan (Jane.Grogan@gchq.gsi.gov.uk)

This column contains summaries of articles (print and electronic) about information access and retrieval, electronic publishing, preservation and virtual libraries etc. including, with permission, abstracts identified with an * next to the author initials, drawn from *Current Cites*, the monthly publication distributed electronically by a team of Librarians and Library Staff and edited by Roy Tennant (http://lists.webjunction.org/currentcites/). If you are interested in providing reviews for the column, please contact Jane Grogan for further details.

Content Management

Hsu, Tien-Yu, Ke, Hao-Ren, and Yang, Wei-Pang **Unified knowledge-based content management for digital archives in museums** *Electronic Library* 24(1) 38-50
This paper presents what the authors term a unified knowledge-based content management (UKCM) model for digital archives in museums, based upon and extending Rockley's unified content strategy (UCS). The framework of the model incorporates unified knowledge content processes (collecting, digitising, editing, organising, publishing, and accessing), multi-layer reusable knowledge content structures and an integrated knowledge-based content management system. While the ideas presented are interesting, the present reviewer found this article rather abstruse and hard to read. Missable unless you have a specialist interest in this subject. – [CE]

Digital Libraries

DLF-Aquifer Services Institutional Survey Report (2006) Washington, DC: Digital Library Federation, 9 March 2006.(http://www.diglib.org/aquifer/SWGisrfinal.pdf) – This 45-page report from the Digital Library Federation (DFL) Aquifer Services Working Group consists of summarized responses from DLF members "to discover user-services assessment efforts and to assess what services are desired by end users and institutions and how the Aquifer project might potentially meet these needs. Key findings of the survey include: 1) Use of digital collections and services is often assessed at the point of introduction or update, rather than systematically over time; 2) searching is the most common way that digital collections are used; 3) metadata standardization is the most commonly reported strategy for supporting digital collections; 4) budgetary, time, and personnel constraints challenge the ability of institutions to develop needed services; and 5) institutions and users desire cross-resource discovery tools and greater ability to personalize service options. A very useful feature of this report is the list of user studies undertaken by DLF institutions, with abstracts for each. – [*RT]

Fitzgerald, Brendan **VICNET and Victoria's virtual library: a decade of online achievements**. *Electronic Library* 24(1) 5-10 – This is an account of VICNET at the State Library of Victoria, Australia from its inception in 1994. VICNET undertakes activities in the following three areas: information management, i.e. technical and content management of a range of web sites, such as the VICNET web site http://www.vic.net.au and Victoria's Virtual Library http://www.libraries.vic.gov.au ("content"); library and community network infrastructure development ("access"); and information and technological literacy development ("skills"). It operates an ISP which sells a variety of services, often to community publishing partners, as well as hosting the various VICNET web sites. The Virtual Library is an ongoing web project, which envisaged as an initial

step in creating a complex and integrated online public library resource for Victoria. A readable, concise and informative paper. – [CE]

Education
McClelland, Robert J and Hawkins, Nick **Perspectives on the use and development of a broad range of e-books in higher education and their use in supporting virtual learning environments** *Electronic Library* 24(1) 68-82 – This article documents an interesting series of e-learning projects, including development of VLEs, undertaken within the Liverpool JMU business school; it is thus more general in scope than its title would suggest. The project descriptions are brief, and positive and negative aspects of each project are reported only in summary tabular form; the article would have benefited from more detailed discussions. The authors raise the issue of student learning style (Kolb) as an issue in evaluating VLE use, but this is not elaborated upon. The paper contains a large number of punctuation mistakes. Overall, despite the inherent interest of the subject matter, not a particularly satisfactory read. – [CE]

Electronic Publishing
Hahn, Karla (2006) **The State of the Large Publisher Bundle: Findings from an ARL Member Survey** ARL Bimonthly Report (245)(April 2006) (http://www.arl.org/newsltr/245/bundle.html) – Academic libraries have long been familiar which what has been termed "the big deal" (most notably by Kenneth Frazier in a 2001 D-Lib Magazine article) – large conglomerations of electronic resources sold as a bundle. This means libraries either get everything or nothing from a particular publisher. Such an inability to cancel individual titles puts additional pressure on libraries to cancel unbundled titles to compensate. Therefore, to find out more about the big deal and libraries response to it, ARL conducted a survey in 2005. There is much of interest here for anyone interested in licensing resources for academic libraries, but in a nutshell ARL believes that libraries can advocate for better license terms without unduly reducing publisher profit. – [*RT]

General
code4lib Conference 2006 Corvallis, OR: code4lib, 15-17 February 2006.(http://www.code4lib.org/2006/schedule/) – The code4lib Conference was put together by a group of tech-savvy librarians who hang out in the code4lib chat room and mailing list in literally a matter of a few months. This is the first in what they hope to be an annual event, aimed at those with a need for a more technical conference than the usual library fare. Here you can see what these folks are thinking about, what they use, and what they think is good and bad, and perhaps get an early taste of what's to come in your own library someday. Given that the conference only occurred a matter of days before this publication went to press, not all the presentations are yet available. But more will be added in the coming days, and several of the program descriptions link out to web sites that provide more information. Full disclosure: I was on the program committee. – [*RT]

Levy, Stephen, and Brad Stone (2006) **The New Wisdom of the Web** Newsweek (April 3, 2006)(http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/12015774/site/newsweek/) – The living web, web 2.0, online community – however you refer to the phenomenon of the web as a world forum, the simplicity and timeliness of publishing whatever you want is nothing short of revolutionary. This overview article is probably most valuable for those non-participants who'll read it in paper form later this week; bloggers and others are already critiquing it online, basically treating it as just another post, one opinion among many. In fact, while its content does provide a nice sampling of current web community trends and efforts to

capitalize on them, the impact of the changes described in it is really driven home when you take the article as a lesson in itself about the current state of the infosphere. It used to be that a news weekly could start a debate when it introduced to the general population a topic previously known only to a few; today, numerous forums already exist in which aspects of web community are being discussed by countless individuals (not to mention many, many more simply using the web to share comments, images, audio and video, without the theorizing). Those of us engaged in this are already learning something from 'the wisdom of crowds' about the nature of what we're doing as we do it, and don't have much use for a snapshot of the ocean when we can wade in and swim whenever we want to. – [*JR]

Lindberg, Oliver (2006) **The revolution will be televised** .Net issue 145 January 2006: 44-48 – Broadband allows the fast delivery of television programmes over the Internet. Viewers will be able to access programmes through satellite, through the mobile phone, via broadband or through a wi-fi hotspot. Viewers will have control and be able to watch what they want, where and whenever they want. Some TV companies are commissioning content just for the Internet and are running Internet TV trials. Competition is evident with phone companies and Internet providers such as AOL and search engine provider, Yahoo trying to break into the television business. Google aims to compete and make all video content available via Google Video. The capacity of the infrastructure and the issue of contents rights need to be overcome as continuing converging technologies will increase the demands. – [JW]

Information Access

Bailey, Jr., Charles W (2006) **What is Open Access?** Open Access: Key Strategic, Technical, and Economic Aspects (7 February 2006) (http://www.digital-scholarship.com/cwb/WhatIsOA.pdf) – In this preprint of a book chapter to be published by Chandos Publishing this year, Current Cites' own Charles W. Bailey, Jr. explains and summarizes the "Open Access" movement within the scholarly and research communities of higher education. Bailey begins with defining open access by reference to definitions from several key documents such as the Budapest Open Access Initiative. Following this is a definition of the subset of open access activities called "self-archiving" by its main proponent Stevan Harnad. The next section deals with open access journals. For more information, readers are directed to the author's Open Access Webliography, an essential resource in the field. Given the goals of this particular book chapter, those familiar with the open access movement will be familiar with much of what Bailey covers, but for someone new to the issue it is an excellent summary of key issues. – [*RT]

Jain, Priti **Empowering Africa's development using ICT in a knowledge management approach** *Electronic Library* 24(1) 51-67 – This is a wide-ranging review of issues relating to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for managing indigenous knowledge (IK) (also known as "traditional" or "local" knowledge) within African societies. Indigenous knowledge is of its nature specific to a location and a community, oral and rural, and not systematically documented. It can be hugely significant, not only as a cultural legacy, but as a basis for sustainable economic development, particularly where integrated with geographic information systems (GIS). The author describes the problems of Africa's ICT environment and outlines requirements for national ICT policy formulation, legal and regulatory frameworks, ICT literacy programmes and training in knowledge management approaches. A lucid and well-written paper, of interest to non-specialists. – [CE]

Marshall, Gary (2006) **By invitation only** .Net April 2006 (issue 148): 50-52, 54-55 – Members-only networks are growing. Some of these are by invitation only. These provide web users with a place to discuss shared interests and information with family, friends or colleagues. This article also includes a brief tutorial on setting up a private network using Foldershare. This is free software from http://www.foldershare.com. Private networks can also be about sharing files. Sites such as Grouper http://www.grouper.com allow you to create small private networks – no more than 50 – where music and graphics can be shared. In this case these files are streamed rather than downloaded, which avoids copyright problems. – [JW]

Marshall, Gary (2006) **Pills, thrills and bellyaches** .Net issue 146 February 2006: 40-42 – One of the side effects of the growth of the Internet is the prevalence of sites that are bad for your health. This article gives a brief overview of the dangers of relying on Internet sites for health advice and mail-order medicines. Apparently, counterfeit drugs comprise over 10% of the total world-wide drug supply. Health advice can also kill. Reputable sites do exit and generally do not have a financial interest in any of the products or services referred to. It is recommended that a second opinion is always obtained and that a healthy scepticism is maintained. – [JW]

Sohn, Gigi (2006) **Don't Blow It, Congress** CNET News.com (6 February 2006)(http://news.com.com/Dont+blow+it%2C+Congress/2010-1023_3-6035094.html?tag=fd_carsl) – "Net neutrality" isn't exactly a phrase that immediately stirs the blood. In fact, it might evoke a "so what?" mental yawn. But, a closer look suggests that the future of the Internet as a digital medium that supports vigorous innovation and free-flowing information may be at stake. Here's how EDUCAUSE defines the term in its useful Net Neutrality Web page: "'Net neutrality' is the term used to describe the concept of keeping the Internet open to all lawful content, information, applications, and equipment. There is increasing concern that the owners of the local broadband connections (usually either the cable or telephone company) may block or discriminate against certain Internet users or applications in order to give an advantage to their own services." In this article, Gigi Sohn, President of Public Knowledge, lays out the case for Congress to enact legislation that will ensure Net neutrality in a rapidly changing telecommunications landscape. Will Congress enact such legislation? Maybe not, in spite of Vint Cerf, one of the fathers of the Internet, saying that without Net neutrality: "We risk losing the Internet as a catalyst for consumer choice, for economic growth, for technological innovation and for global competitiveness" (see "Politicos Divided on Need for 'Net Neutrality' Mandate"). Noted legal scholar Lawrence Lessig has also weighed in on the issue in his Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation testimony, which is also well worth reading. – [*CB]

Suber, Peter (2006) **Three Gathering Storms That Could Cause Collateral Damage for Open Access** SPARC Open Access Newsletter (95)(2006) (http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-06.htm#collateral) – The Internet is a-changin', and those changes may make old timers long for the days when it was an obscure, purely non-commercial enterprise. In this paper, noted open access advocate Peter Suber previews three potential changes that you should be aware of: (1) the WIPO "Treaty on the Protection of Broadcasting Organizations," (2) threats to Net neutrality, and (3) fees for bulk e-mailers to circumvent major e-mail services' spam filters. These potential changes may not sound alarming, but they are harbingers of deeper changes in the fundamental nature of the Internet that may have significant long-term implications. Let's take one of them as an example: AOL and Yahoo want to charge bulk e-mailers to

avoid spam filters. The implications? Here's what Suber says: "The program is insidious and would lead almost everyone to pay the fees if they could – account holders at Yahoo and AOL and the bulk mailers who send to Yahoo and AOL addresses. It would also lead other e-mail providers to adopt similar policies or fear that they were leaving money on the table. This would harm everyone who sends or receives non-spam mass mailings. This newsletter is an example but only one of many. The program would harm every form of OA content delivered by e-mail, from e-mailed eprints and listserv postings to journal current-awareness messages like tables of contents and the results of stored searches. It would hurt non-profit groups and informal communities that network by e-mail, including academic and political groups. Cash-strapped operations relying on e-mail for distribution would either be forced to shut down or face higher costs that threaten their stability." – [*CB]

Sukula, Shiva Kanaujia **Developing indigenous knowledge databases in India**. *Electronic Library* 24(1) 83-93 – This is a clearly presented overview of efforts to create national databases of indigenous scientific and technical knowledge within India. The author discusses the concept of indigenous knowledge (IK) and its significance for development, and basic theoretical issues of IK database creation and use. He also traces the history of IK database creation by various national institutions within India and offers an account of current IK database activities. Anyone interested in IK issues will find this is a useful and well-constructed paper, the rather quirky English style notwithstanding. – [CE]

Information Retrieval
Cohen, Daniel J. (2006) **From Babel to Knowledge: Data Mining Large Digital Collections** D-Lib Magazine 12(3)(March 2006) (http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march06/cohen/03cohen.html) – This is a fascinating account of how you can construct a search engine optimized for specific tasks such as finding course syllabi using simple technologies, access to such resources as Google's application program interface (API), and intelligent post-processing. A few conclusions from the author's research include: 1) More emphasis needs to be placed on creating APIs for digital collections, 2) Resources that are free to use in any way, even if they are imperfect, are more valuable than those that are gated or use-restricted, even if those resources are qualitatively better, and 3) Quantity may make up for a lack of quality. For explanations and justifications of these points see the article, which anyone building search systems should definitely do. – [*RT]

Garrett, Jeffrey (2006) **KWIC and Dirty? Human Cognition and the Claims of Full-Text Searching** Journal of Electronic Publishing 9(1)(February 2006) (http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3336451.0009.106) – Diatribe against the evils of keyword searching. Complaints include not allowing for context or metaphor. Works are like "organisms" and plucking out KWICs is to deracinate them and to "carry them away from their native settings with some additional word material still clinging to them, like dirt to roots." Keyword results produce a lack of coherence "fundamentally at odds with natural patterns of knowledge acquisition." The facts are disassociated and resemble "garbage heaps" of knowledge. You may not agree with the proposition but you'll be swept off your feet by the literary allusions, and that ought to count for something. One of several articles in the newly resuscitated Journal of Electronic Publishing. The journal is now published by UMich's "Scholarly Publishing Office" and the article by Maria Bonn on their model of scholarly publishing is also worth a read. – [*LRK]

Marshall, Gary (2006) **Del.icio.us: 15 tasty tweaks** .Net March 2006 (issue 147): 40-42 – "Social bookmarking" is a means of saving and sharing web addresses. It can be useful for keeping track of projects and collaborative working. This article is all about improving what is already deemed a very useful product. On offer are 15 tips, tweaks or plug-ins for either Internet Explorer or Firefox. – [JW]

Wakimotoa, Jina Choi, David S. Walker, and Katherine S. Dabboura (2006) **The Myths and Realities of SFX in Academic Libraries** The Journal of Academic Librarianship 32(2)(March 2006): 127-136 – The report of a three-fold study ("end-user survey, librarian focus group interviews, and sample SFX statistics and tests") to answer these questions regarding the use and effectiveness of an OpenURL resolver (SFX from ExLibris) in an academic setting: "How successful is the system in actually meeting the research needs of librarians and library users? Do undergraduate students, who have increasingly high expectations of online resources, think that SFX lives up to their expectations? Do librarians feel comfortable relying on SFX for accurate and consistent linking? Do the perceptions of librarians and library end-users reflect the reality of SFX usage?" Their conclusions? "Ultimately, this study showed that end-user expectations were slightly higher than their actual experiences of obtaining full text. The majority of the librarians were positive, however, reporting that SFX worked most of the time. Both groups had complaints about SFX and saw areas for improvement, but they still rely heavily on it for their research." – [*RT]

Legal Issues

Annalee Newitz (2006) **Post and be damned** New Scientist, 14 January 2006, p20 – Two studies in the US have revealed that loopholes in copyright law are being exploited to censor websites, which many fear threatens the value of the Internet as an 'expressive platform for public discourse'. The studies looked at the hundreds of takedown notices archived at chillingeffects.org. Takedown notices are being issued by companies and individuals to websites, ISP's and Google, to remove any material the rights holders deem infringes the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA). The concern is that in the majority of cases the contested material is removed from the public eye without objection, and before legal proceedings has even been initiated. The studies further revealed that 47% of takedown notices concern material which was likely to be exempt from copyright law. The seeming lack of protest and willingness to 'cave in' in order to avoid expensive legal action suggests that 'the DMCA has become a powerful tool for anyone seeking to suppress criticism'. However, the good news for some is that not everyone caves in, as the studies also revealed that those who refuse to remove material are not sued, helping to spur on a variety of protest groups who are prepared to challenge this takedown culture. – [LF]

Preservation

Harnad, Stevan (2006) **Maximizing Research Impact through Institutional and National Open-Access Self-Archiving Mandates** (http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/12093/) – A recent study by Tom Wilson ("Institutional Open Archives: Where Are We Now?") investigates item deposit rates at most UK institutional repositories (excluding ETDs where possible). After reviewing his findings, Wilson states: "By any measure it can hardly be claimed that the concept of open archiving has taken off in British universities and I don't think that any of its protagonists would claim otherwise. The movement is at an early stage, with something in the order of 12 per cent of UK universities involved and with a minuscule proportion of the total research output covered by the IOA [Institutional Open Archives]." Little wonder then that

open access proponent Stevan Harnad has come to advocate mandatory self-archiving at the institutional and national levels as a solution to low institutional repository deposit rates. (Harnad suggests that there is "a spontaneous 15% baseline rate" for institutional repository deposits.) One might imagine that researchers would resist mandatory deposit; however, Harnad notes that a 2005 study by Alma Swan and Sheridan Brown found that only 5% of researchers would refuse to do so. He further notes that in the three institutions and one department (CERN, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Minho, and the University of Southampton's Department of Electronics and Computer Science) that have mandated deposit, the strategy appears to be working. Will publishers allow self-archiving? Harnad indicates that only 7% of publishers do not allow self-archiving. Why do it? Harnad deftly recaps the open access research impact argument. With possible national-level deposit mandates in the works, such as the American Center for CURES Act of 2005 and the Research Councils UK's Position Statement on Access to Research Outputs, mandatory deposit is a hot topic, and Harnad's heavily linked paper provides a good summary of the pro-mandate position. – [*CB]

Jacobs, Neil (2006) **Digital Repositories in UK Universities and Colleges** FreePint (200)(2006)(http://www.freepint.com/issues/160206.htm#feature) – In 1993, the UK did a smart thing: it established the UK Joint Information Systems Committee (or JISC for short). Since then, JISC-funded technology projects have kept UK academic libraries on the cutting edge of innovative networked services and technologies. Little wonder then that UK libraries have been leaders in the rapidly evolving movement to develop institutional repositories and other types of digital archives. As manager of the JISC Digital Repositories development programme, Neil Jacobs knows this important work well, and, in this article, he provides a link-packed, amazingly compact bird's-eye view of it that is authoritative and highly readable. Don't just zip through the short text. Rather, take the time to explore the numerous project links. You'll be glad that you did. – [*CB]

Rusbridge, Chris (2006) **Excuse Me... Some Digital Preservation Fallacies?** Ariadne (46)(February 2006)(http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue46/rusbridge/) – In this tenth-anniversary issue, Rusbridge takes on some digital preservation assertions or assumptions that he believes underlies many of the preservation discussions happening today. They are: 1) digital preservation is very expensive, 2) file formats become obsolete very rapidly, 3) interventions must occur frequently, 4) digital preservation repositories should have very long timescale aspirations, 5) 'Internet-age' expectations are such that the preserved object must be easily and instantly accessible in the format de jour, and 6) the preserved object must be faithful to the original in all respects. After arguing with these assumptions, he restates them at the end of the piece as: 1) digital preservation is comparatively inexpensive, compared to preservation in the print world, 2) file formats become obsolete rather more slowly than we thought, 3) interventions can occur rather infrequently, ensuring that continuing costs remain containable, 4) digital preservation repositories should have timescale aspirations adjusted to their funding and business case, but should be prepared for their succession, 5) "Internet-age" expectations cannot be met by most digital repositories; and, 6) only desiccated versions of the preserved object need be easily and instantly accessible in the format de jour, although the original bit-stream and good preservation metadata or documentation should be available for those who wish to invest in extracting extra information or capability." – [*RT]

Stanger, Nigel, and Graham McGregor (2006) **Hitting the Ground Running: Building New Zealand's First Publicly Available Institutional Repository** Dunedin, NZ: University of Otago, March 2006 (http://eprints.otago.ac.nz/274/) – This paper describes the rapid implementation of an institutional repository using open source software. Although they get high marks for rapidity out of the gate, and for a promising beginning, the paper is light on such details as to how the initial success will be sustained. The reader is also left to wonder how they plan on taking this pilot project for one of the university's schools and deploying it university-wide, if indeed they intend to do so. But those concerns aside, this can be a useful article for demonstrating how little it takes technically to get a repository launched and for achieving early success in terms of paper discovery and downloading. – [*RT]

Security

Dean, John W. **Why Should Anyone Worry About Whose Communications Bush and Cheney Are Intercepting, If It Helps To Find Terrorists?** FindLaw (24 February 2006)(http://writ.news.findlaw.com/dean/20060224.html) – According to a statistic quoted in this column, "The NSA is now eavesdropping on as many as five hundred people in the United States at any given time." That is one heck of a lot of data; experts assume the NSA is indulging in data mining, which the author defines as "the use of computer algorithms to search automatically through massive amounts of data." A huge problem with data mining, of course, is the number of false positives. Which ups the potential for innocent people to get caught in the net. Maybe you're one of those folks who isn't worried about things like this because you "have nothing to hide." But the very idea of the government amassing huge amounts of personal data on its citizens is troubling. Says the author, "Many people trust the government not to abuse or misuse this information. Based on experience, I don't." He knows whence he speaks. If you're old enough to remember Watergate, you likely remember John Dean as counsel to President Nixon. – [*SK]

Robertson, Struan (2006) **Phish bait** .Net May 2006 (issue149): 40-43 – This is a short article on phishing. At least it explains how such an operation works – in general terms. This included taking identities of highly rated sellers on E-bay and using these identities to start selling high value items which were never supplied. Credit card details were gathered and used to shop online mainly for electronic items which were delivered to temporary addresses which had been rented. This operation ended in police action and a court case. – [JW]

Web Design

Hudson, Paul et al **.Net Web Buildr: the web designers bible** .Net issue 146 February 2006: 78-119 – .Net Web Buildr is a section of .Net which this month devotes several pages to a guide to designing a brief for a client's website. It also includes: a tutorial on making sites more usable and accessible; a guide to the Domain Name System (DNS) with a tutorial on hosting a website for yourself. The tutorial format – which is a step-by step illustrated guide – seems an effective way of explaining such topics. – [JW]

Jones, Lisa et al **Web Builder** .Net March 2006 (issue 147): 78-119 – Web Builder is a section of the magazine which is a combination of varied articles and tutorials on topics relevant to building web sites. The Masterclass by Karl Hodge is on creating a RSS feed. This is in a step by step tutorial format – probably one of the easiest to follow as each numbered step is a view of the computer screen. – [JW]

Jones, Lisa et al (2006) **Web Builder** .Net April 2006(issue 148): 83-126 – The Masterclass for this month by Karl Hodge is on building a blogger template. In this tutorial he uses Blogger (owned by Google) and demonstrates how to create a template rather than using the ones provided. Some of the information required is provided on the CD which comes with the magazine. – [JW]

St. Laurent, Simon (2006) **The Next Web?** XML.com (March 15, 2006)(http://www.xml.com/pub/a/2006/03/15/next-web-xhtml2-ajax.html) – "You could always go home, Dorothy," is the underlying theme of this review of popular web technologies that haven't yet lived up to their promise. Web veteran Simon St. Laurent briefly goes over the XML Web, the Semantic Web, XHTML and Web Services, explaining that each required substantial new infrastructure to implement and for that reason "never quite made it to mainstream web development". In contrast he points to the success of Ajax where the parts, namely JavaScript and HTML, have been around for ages. "After waiting for all of those promises of better tools to come," he concludes, "it seems that developers looked at the parts they had available, and chose the ones they could use today. It can be annoyingly hard work, but the results are impressive." – [*LRK]

Wentk, Richard (2006) **Attack of the Clones** .Net issue 146 February 2006: 44-46, 48-49 – The issue is that corporate web sites are becoming uniform in their design. Many blog designs would seem to be more daring. The author suggests sites which offer designs and templates to view and download for blogs. He suggests sites that might help you protect your design although you cannot protect your idea. There is an opportunity for designers to get creative! – [JW]

Contributors to Current Cites *:
Charles W. Bailey, Jr., Terry Huwe, Shirl Kennedy, Leo Robert Klein, Jim Ronningen, Roy Tennant

Contributors:
Peter Chapman, Ann Dixon, Catherine Ebenezer, Linda Fawcett, Ina Fourie, Linda Kerr, Ida Kwan, Shona McTavish, Ruth Ng, Shirley Parker-Munn, Liz Reiner, Ann Smith, Christine Urquhart, Jennifer Wilkinson.

Book Review: Electronic Resources in the Virtual Learning Environment: a Guide for Librarians
Jane Secker. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2004 ISBN: 1-84334-059-3

The author of this readable and concise book is based at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and has a great deal of experience supporting her academic community in the development and use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) and digital course-packs (sometimes called electronic reserves). The author's involvement with the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) and the HERON service further enable her to offer expert opinion and advice in this growing and sometimes complex area of information work.

The book addresses the operational aspects that need to be considered by a library and information service when supporting this demanding area. It helps to strengthen the case for allocating resources to this area and works well as a clear, practical guide for UK librarians. This is a timely publication since academic institutions are focusing more and more attention on this area of service delivery and I would warmly recommend the book to any information professional working within the field of e-resources.

The opening chapters of the book work as a really good overview of e-resources in general, setting out the broader contexts, giving information about the development of the digital library and its relationship with information literacy and e-learning up to the present.

Following the introductory chapters come the real meat and potatoes of this book, with details about the way copyright and licensing should be handled in relation to digital texts. The author gives sound advice on how to go about obtaining copyright clearance, whether your service has decided to use the HERON approach or to "go it alone" (dealing directly with content providers).

Also covered are the relevant technical standards, specifications and methods of access management for e-resources in general and with specific reference to VLEs and digital course-pack management. Even though the book was published before the finalisation and release of the recent CLA HE Trial Licence (sometimes referred to as the Digitisation Licence), the advice offered is very relevant to the terms of that licence. While it works well as a whole, the book also operates as a useful reference tool. It is easy to dip into, with each chapter being relatively self-contained, with its own conclusion, notes and references.

There are some valuable extras, for instance the use of case studies and practical examples, which help to liven up what could be a very dry topic and which also serve to give the book a solid grounding in real experience. A particularly useful extra is the inclusion of two sample letters in the appendices – one to be used for requesting permission to download material from websites and the other to request permission from publishers to use printed materials.

The book will work equally well for those who are just starting out and those with more experience in this area. The book will be an excellent primer for the less experienced reader, and the author gives additional guidance through the provision of links to online glossaries and a list of commonly used abbreviations. For those with more experience, there will be much that is familiar here but the book is a great confidence-booster, helping

to confirm that you are taking a sound approach and acting as a checklist of the core areas that need to be addressed. All in all this is an excellent, well-presented and easy to use text.

Russell Burke, Electronic Resources Co-ordinator, ISS - Information Resources, King's College London

Press Releases & News

SAGE signs agreements with CLOCKSS and Portico to Preserve E-Journal Content

As a publisher of over 400 scholarly journals, SAGE Publications is committed to ensuring the long-term stability of its valuable journal content so future generations of scholars, researchers and student will always have access to it. In order to accomplish this goal, SAGE is participating in CLOCKSS (Controlled LOCKSS Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) and has signed an agreement with Portico, a new, not-for-profit electronic-archiving service launched last year.

In the event of a disaster that would prevent the delivery of content, CLOCKSS will assure that access to the journals is maintained. A joint advisory board, made up of societies, publishers and libraries, will determine if the content is orphaned and whether it should be made publicly available. Since it's collectively managed, publishers are assured that content is controlled and no one entity has authority over orphaned digital materials in the system. During the two-year pilot, participants will collect and analyze data for use in developing a proposal for a full-scale archiving model. As part of a longer-term strategy to permanently preserve published work, CLOCKSS will report the results to the research community and begin a dialogue about a global infrastructure to ensure preservation of all past, present, and future scholarly content.

Portico will provide an ongoing, permanent online archive of SAGE journals, ensuring that an accessible copy of each issue will exist for decades to come. The service also offers the migration of the content into future technological formats as they are developed. Portico's archiving service meets library demand for a trusted, third-party archive and perpetual access while providing SAGE with insurance against loss of the journal content. "It's important that SAGE preserves our content using a variety of archiving solutions", commented Alison Mudditt, Executive Vice President of SAGE's Higher Education Group. We're pleased to add both CLOCKSS and Portico's specialized service to our other archiving agreement with the KB (Koninklijke Bibliotheek, the National Library of the Netherlands) ensuring that access to our journals is not only protected indefinitely, but will still be accessible as future technologies are developed.

About SAGE

SAGE Publications is a leading international publisher of journals, books, and electronic media for academic, educational, and professional markets. Since 1965, SAGE has helped inform and educate a global community of scholars, practitioners, researchers, and students spanning a wide range of subject areas including business, humanities, so-

cial sciences, and science, technology and medicine. SAGE Publications, a privately owned corporation, has principal offices in Thousand Oaks, California, London, United Kingdom, and New Delhi, India.
www.sagepublications.com

About CLOCKSS

CLOCKSS is a collaborative, community initiative to build a trusted large dark archive. The CLOCKSS governance and administration structure is distributed to insure no one-single organization controls oversight of the archive or has the power to compromise the long-term viability of the content's safety. CLOCKSS is a decentralized and safe solution to long-term archiving based on the LOCKSS technical infrastructure. Access to archive content will be granted in response to a trigger event (for example, when content is orphaned or abandoned or a long-term business interruption), reviewed by a group of people all of whom will be working on behalf of the broader community. Our goal is to build an archive where content, when accessible, will be available to all.
http://www.lockss.org/clockss

About Portico

Portico is a new, not-for-profit electronic-archiving service established in response to the library community's need for a robust, reliable means to preserve electronic scholarly journals. Portico was initiated by JSTOR (www.jstor.org) and has been developed with the initial support of Ithaka (www.ithaka.org), The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (www.mellon.org), and the Library of Congress (www.loc.gov). Portico's mission is to pre-serve scholarly literature published in electronic form and to ensure that these materials remain accessible to future scholars, researchers and students. www.portico.org

Pilot subject-based cross-repository search tool now available

A Pilot service http://www.engineering.ac.uk providing subject resource discovery across a variety of digital repositories of interest to the engineering learning and research communities has been released by the PerX Project. Although the target repositories included in the Pilot are relevant to engineering, the cross-searching methods and interface used, plus the range of repository types included, should be of interest to many as a demonstrator of one method of resource discovery across multiple digital repositories.

Twenty-eight repositories are currently cross-searched by the Pilot. These include: the Directory of Open Access Journals (engineering and technology sections), DSpace at MIT, the Energy Citations Database, the GROW Digital Library, NASA Technical Reports, Jorum, ePrints UK, Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD), National Engineering Education Delivery System (NEEDS), Australian Research Repositories Online to the World (ARROW), CISTI – Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, Caltech Earthquake Engineering Research Laboratory Technical Reports, and several more established repositories of interest to the engineering community. More repositories will be added to the Pilot as they are identified and configured.

The Pilot's Basic Search interface http://www.engineering.ac.uk/index.html?action=basic and Advanced Search interface http://www.engineering.ac.uk/index.html?action=advanced enable cross-searching of the repositories, and allow filtering by resource type: articles, theses and dissertations, technical reports, books, learning and teaching resources, key websites, industry news and new job announcements. Overall, more than 1.5 million resources are cross-searched by the Pilot.

Access to the full text of items found is available from many of the repositories. In a few cases, the full items consist of details of books, articles, learning objects or websites, and in some others the full text may be available to subscribing institutions or by pay-per-view.

Other documents available from PerX include:

Listing of Engineering repository sources http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/perx/sourceslisting.htm. This document identifies the most significant repository sources of relevance to the UK Higher Education (HE) Engineering community.

Engineering Digital Repositories Landscape Analysis, and Implications for PerX http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/perx/analysis.htm
This document analyses the digital repository landscape identified in the Listing, and discusses various issues concerning repository provision in engineering.

'Marketing' with Metadata – How Metadata Can Increase Exposure and Visibility of Online Content http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/perx/advocacy/exposingmetadata.htm
This document gives a non-technical introduction to the means by which content providers can share, or embed, their descriptive data (metadata) with other websites, in standard and reusable ways.

PerX (Pilot Engineering Repository Xsearch) is part of the JISC Digital Repositories Programme (DRP) http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme_digital_repositories, and is based at the Institute for Computer Based Learning, Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh. Project partners are Cranfield University; the Institution of Civil Engineers/Thomas Telford Ltd; Geotechnical, Rock and Water Resources Library; and the Regional Support Centre East Midlands. For further details, please go to PerX http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/perx/
Roddy MacLeod, Senior Subject Librarian, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

UK and New Zealand sign ICT agreement

Partnership will bring major benefits to education and research communities in the UK and New Zealand

7th April, 2006. JISC and New Zealand's Ministry of Education (on behalf of New Zealand's Education Sector ICT Standing Committee and Ministry of Research, Science and Technology) have signed a formal partnership agreement which will see close cooperation between the two organisations in the e-Framework initiative and the exploration of other potential areas for collaboration.

With international cooperation becoming central to the development and deployment of IT standards and systems, the agreement will provide a significant boost to the e-Framework initiative which has already attracted considerable international interest.

The initiative, an ambitious and far-reaching programme, undertaken up to now by JISC and Australia's Department for Education Science and Training (DEST) with growing international support, is exploring more flexible approaches to the technical infrastructures for e-learning, e-research and e-administration. The development of such a service-oriented technical framework, based on open standards, will, it is argued, maximise the flexibility and cost-effectiveness of IT systems.

While the principal focus of the agreement between JISC and New Zealand's Ministry of Education is the e-Framework initiative, other areas in which the two organisations might explore joint activities or share experiences include e-learning, repositories, network, e-Science, e-administration and middleware development. The agreement follows the exchange of visitors between the two countries with two more delegations from New Zealand arriving in the UK in the coming month.

JISC's Head of Development Sarah Porter said: ''It has been fascinating to see how much similarity there is between our two countries, particularly in the current major government strategies for the adoption of technology to support education. Both countries share many interests and issues and the UK envies the speed at which New Zealand can move to adopt new technologies; there is a lot to learn and share from both sides. We look forward very much to fruitful collaboration in the future.'

Howard Fancy, Secretary of Education for New Zealand, said: 'We are proud to be contributing our locally developed expertise to an international body such as JISC. This relationship is going to bring us a lot of benefits as by working with international standards, we all stand to benefit from innovations as we are creating building blocks we can all use.'

For further information, please go to: http://www.e-framework.org/ or
http://www.minedu.govt.nz
or contact:
Philip Pothen (JISC) on +44 (0)20 7848 2935 or +44 (0)7887 564 006 or
p.pothen@jisc.ac.uk
New Zealand Ministry of Education – Education Sector ICT at
ICT.sector@minedu.govt.nz