Reflecting on user feedback

All across the ‘JISC family’ we are keen to transform our information about usage of services into knowledge we can share. The purpose is two-fold: to improve the quality of the user experience (for researchers, students and their teachers) and to report back on uptake and impact, nationally and to each university and college.

Last year we investigated how to gain more from the very positive comments we were receiving in user satisfaction surveys and feedback forms. As you would hope, the overwhelming majority found our services easy to use, saved them time or enabled them to do what would otherwise have proved impossible.

As part of the push for quality improvement, we also opted to examine in more detail what negative feedback we could find. The exercise was very useful and informed service development; in addition, a report was sent to JISC and the EDINA Management Board.

The analysis of 7,500 responses to the 2011/12 user satisfaction survey will contribute to the current JISC Portfolio Review of EDINA services and is presented on the EDINA impact page (edina.ac.uk/impact).

Asking end-users is important, but the ‘middleware services’ we provide as part of digital infrastructure remain invisible to end-users, so we have also gathered feedback about these services from site-reps and others who help make the UK digital library a reality.

Our users – those researchers, students, and lecturers – need to succeed within an institutional and work-based setting. For many years now we have provided registered site-reps at universities and colleges with monthly usage reports and access to archived statistics for a range of online services at EDINA (edina.ac.uk/support). We are always keen to hear feedback on our services, including the provision of these statistics.

Demonstrating value for money

As an example of how JISC-funded EDINA services offer value for money, we recently carried out a monetising exercise for the Digimap service which now underpins research projects and coursework. The conservative estimate of the aggregate value of data downloaded and maps printed from Digimap Collections during 2010-11 is £24.8m, on top of the imputed value of providing a world-class online mapping service for 108 universities and 40 colleges. We plan to send organisation-specific estimates to each site-rep.

What your users said

Digimap: “Simple to use, very straightforward. The level of information provided with each map is brilliant. The service saves hours and hours of time that can be spent much better elsewhere.”

“I recommend it on a weekly basis to students, colleagues and others. OS maps are the best in the world and having access to such a wide range of their products is an incredible boost to research and teaching.”

JISC MediaHub: “Easy access to the images I needed for my essay – amazingly quick!”

“Sourcing video, images and sound is time consuming and expensive in general.”

OpenURL Router: “This service saves so much time, I hope it continues to be funded.”

GoGeo and GeoDoc: “[I value the] ability to find relevant information from a single database.”

Unlock: “Almost all archaeological data has a geospatial component and Unlock Places/Text literally allows us to unlock this information from legacy data.”

SUNCAT: “It’s the first point of call when searching for journal holdings to ensure the details are correct, along with finding a potential supplier.”

“SUNCAT saves me time. “If not for SUNCAT I would spend a lot of my time trying to locate material.” Response by an information professional to the SUNCAT Impact Survey.
**Thematic Mapper application added to UKBORDERS**

A new application is now available to all registered users of the ESRC-funded UKBORDERS service.

The UKBORDERS Thematic Mapper application can be used to create a shaded choropleth map from area-based statistics uploaded in a CSV file.

The Thematic Mapper application includes the following features:

- Create choropleth maps from CSV files containing supported geographic identifiers
- Real-time data upload, editing and styling
- Wizard based data upload
- Polygon geometries provided by the UKBORDERS database
- Modern, responsive application with contextual help
- Ordnance Survey base maps from Digimap OpenStream
- Export choropleth maps as PNG image and PDF document
- Export choropleth map data as a Shapefile with style information in an Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) Styled Layer Descriptor (SLD) file

A short step-by-step tutorial demonstrating the use of Thematic Mapper with this dataset is available for download as a PDF document (957 Kb): [edina.ac.uk/ukborders/support/guides.shtml](edina.ac.uk/ukborders/support/guides.shtml)

Academic access to the UKBORDERS service is free via an Individual Registration system: [cens.ac.uk/Register_start.aspx](cens.ac.uk/Register_start.aspx)

- **UKBORDERS:** edina.ac.uk/ukborders

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**JISC MediaHub adds new content and features**

Thousands of new media items are now available in JISC MediaHub, the multimedia platform which forms part of the JISC eCollections service ([www.jisceollections.ac.uk](www.jisceollections.ac.uk)).

Recently we added:

- the **Royal Mail Film Classics collection**, previously part of Film & Sound Online. The 64 documentary films from the 1930s to 1960s are now viewable to users at subscribing institutions. These include seminal titles such as “Night Mail” and the experimental short sequence “A Colour Box”.
- the **Culture Grid collection**, which brings together a wide range of collections from independent UK organisations, to over 7,000 new records, bringing the current total to 363,000 from over a dozen regional archives.

New features added recently include an **Explore by Learning Materials** area with reviews of the content; an **Interactive Guided Tour** in the Help section; improving the display of brief and full record pages which now include additional metadata. More detail is available on the blog (see link below).

An overview of the background and functions of JISC MediaHub was given recently at a webinar well-attended by site-reps. The slides and the recorded event can be viewed on the EDINA presentations page ([edina.ac.uk/presentations.html](edina.ac.uk/presentations.html)).

We also highlight content from the various collections in a variety of ways:

- Within the **interface**, via a showcase of eight items, updated monthly: [jiscmediahub.ac.uk](jiscmediahub.ac.uk)
- On the **blog** as standing descriptions, as well as featured blog posts: [medihub.blogs.edina.ac.uk](medihub.blogs.edina.ac.uk)
- Via **Twitter**, with topical references: [twitter.com/jiscmediahub](twitter.com/jiscmediahub)
- On **Facebook**: Search for “JISC Mediahub”

We are always keen to hear feedback on the content or the search interface, via comments on those channels or by email to edina@ed.ac.uk

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**Digimap homepage**

As mentioned in Newsline 16.4 (Dec 2011), a new Digimap homepage is under development with the aim of making it easier and quicker for users to access the applications within Digimap. It will also act as a shop window to EDINA’s Geospatial services, with much of the information about the services being viewable before users need to log in.

We are also creating a new resource centre where we will bring together all of the support and help resources that are available, to make it easier for users to find and get support. This new website will in due course replace the existing login page at [edina.ac.uk/digimap](edina.ac.uk/digimap)

More information will be made available in late Spring.

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A choropleth map created within Thematic Mapper following the upload of a public dataset provided by the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change.

An early version of the new Digimap homepage.
UK RepositoryNet+ (RepNet)

Having invested in projects to foster institutional capacity and the production of tools and facilities, JISC intends to establish a socio-technical infrastructure to sustain universities in the Open Access agenda and support improvement in research information management – specifically to provide managers of institutional repositories with shared services.

The task of bringing that to fruition has been given to the ‘RepNet’ project at EDINA. The set-up phase is nearing completion, moving soon to the build and launch phase over the period until March 2013, with an opportunity to report progress at the OR2012 Conference in July 2012 (or2012.ed.ac.uk).

An early priority has been to validate the mapping of the Open Access and Repository landscape that we had presented at Repository Fringe. Initially engaging UK funding bodies, publishers, and institutional repository managers, this is being broadened to principal investigators and institutional research managers. Further detail is on the project blog: ukreponetplus.blogs.edina.ac.uk/2012/02/03/test3/

Working with JISC Innovation, the project team made contact with the key providers of what are being regarded as service components. Several of these are household names in the repository world, covering a wide spectrum of functional areas for delivery via RepNet: aggregation and search; benchmarking, statistics and reporting; registries; deposit tools; and metadata enhancement.

- RepNet: ukreponetplus.blogs.edina.ac.uk

Trading Consequences

A winner of the second Digging Into Data challenge (www.diggingintodata.org), the Trading Consequences project is a multi-institutional, international collaboration between environmental historians in Canada and computer scientists in the UK to use text-mining software to explore thousands of pages of historical documents related to international commodity trading in the British Empire, involving Canada in particular, during the 19th century, and its impact on the economy and environment.

Information will be extracted to transform unstructured text into a rich structured data resource, allowing historians to discover new patterns and explore new hypotheses.

The University of Edinburgh, the University of St Andrews, and York University, Canada (Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies) are collaborating on the project. EDINA, as part of the Edinburgh team, is leading the database design, user interaction, and marketing work packages.

Using the techniques honed in the project, historians will gain invaluable experience in how vast amounts of data can be used to answer significant economic and environmental questions related to the past. The Canadian test case will act as a well-developed prototype that will provide a model for historians interested in other regions.

Partially sponsored by JISC, the Digging Into Data Challenge seeks to address how ‘big data’ changes the research landscape for the humanities and social sciences, and challenges the research community to help create the new research infrastructure for 21st century scholarship.

- Trading Consequences: edina.ac.uk/projects

UK Discovery

EDINA is contributing to the JISC/RLUK Discovery programme being managed by Mimas, our sister datacentre. Discovery is designed to open up the databases behind existing websites through the creation and enhancement of metadata in order to assist developers and to foster the development of new services. This includes aggregations of what can appear fragmented across the Internet. Our work builds on our commitment to standards-based interoperability for machine-to-machine access, including technologies that support the semantic web through open linked data, in a variety of projects:

**Will’s World: Walking through Shakespeare**

This is a thematic project whose overall aim is to be a example of how a registry could attract content and to expose it for further development. The plan is to explore the concept of ‘tactical aggregation’ by building a registry of online resources relating to the life, times and work of William Shakespeare.

The project is now out of the scoping stage, with the first offering having its focus on ‘the Scottish play’ for use in a CultureHack Scotland event. As the focus widens to Hamlet and other plays, the registry will support ‘actionable metadata’ on exciting content from providers such as the Bodleian, the British Museum, the RSC, National Library of Scotland and the Folger Library.

The emphasis will be on providing open APIs (the machine-to-machine interface) in order to ease access for developers who will, in turn, create new and imaginative applications with the data, demonstrating the value of aggregated metadata and similar registries.

- edina.ac.uk/projects

**DiscoverEDINA**

This is work intended to open up data managed and value-added at EDINA. Project activity includes development of:

- a ‘web service’ facility that will extract metadata from and embed new metadata in multimedia content, with a particular focus on adding geo-tagging
- crowd-sourcing functionality, initially delivered as a feature within JISC MediaHub, to store and then make searchable, metadata contributed by users. Available openly as part of the existing metadata aggregation, the intention is to provide this metadata to the collection owners of the content

There is also further work on exposing data from SUNCAT, which provides information of the journal holdings of over 80 research and university libraries.
News in brief

PhoneBooth

PhoneBooth is a short collaborative project with the London School of Economics (LSE) Digital Library to build a smartphone app for delivery of the Charles Booth Online Archive (booth.lse.ac.uk), held by the LSE. edina.ac.uk/projects

GeoForum coming in June

EDINA is planning to hold a GeoForum event on 20 June in York. This will be an all-day event to showcase current geospatial developments at EDINA and in the wider community. It will also be an opportunity for the community to give EDINA feedback and discuss geospatial issues. The day will be a mixture of presentations and workshops. More details will follow shortly.

GoGeo upgrades resource interface and metadata tool

GoGeo has had a minor release, updating both the resources interface and Geodoc. Improved pagination of resources will make it much easier to find the most recent publications or other publications by authors you have found useful. And Geodoc now has a metadata import tool, making it even easier to share your metadata with the HE and FE community. gogeo.ac.uk

Digimap for Schools

The period of free access to Digimap for Schools ended on 31 January 2012. Subsequently, a campaign was launched to encourage schools to continue their access to the service by taking up a subscription. At the time of writing, over 500 schools have signed up to continue accessing Digimap for Schools, in addition to over 120 schools who were not part of the Free Voucher Scheme that have subscribed. digimapforschools.edina.ac.uk

Quaker library joins SUNCAT

SUNCAT continues to add more libraries, making it an increasingly valuable serials tool for HE and FE – for librarians as well as for students and researchers. About 2,000 serial records from the Library of the Society of Friends have just been loaded into SUNCAT. This is the first new SUNCAT Contributing Library of 2012, taking the total number of Libraries to 83 (excluding CONSER, ISSN and DOAJ).

The library holds collections relating to Quakers and their activities, including peace, anti-slavery and relief work. Over 200 periodical titles are regularly received. They range from academic titles such as Quaker Studies and The Journal of the Friends Historical Society, to special interests such as Towards Wholeness (Friends Fellowship of Healing) to the newsletters and journals of other Yearly Meetings. There are complete runs of many titles, plus older titles that no longer exist. Take a look at the Contributing Libraries page for the full range of libraries and their extensive journal holdings.

In addition we would like to draw your attention to the fact that work does not end with the inclusion of a library’s catalogue in SUNCAT. Much effort is spent on a regular basis updating the many holdings from all contributing libraries. The SUNCAT blog is used to post weekly information with all the latest updates.

• SUNCAT: suncat.ac.uk

New Staff

Cesare Bellini: Cesare has worked with two Italian companies as LAMP and web developer, and this is his first working experience abroad. At EDINA he will be working on the OpenURL Router Data Recommender Prototype development.

Kelley Campbell: Kelley has been a software engineer, technical writer and bicycle mechanic over the last 20 years. Now she is a member of the UK federation support team, providing support for Shibboleth SP and IdP installations and configurations.

Andrew Dorward: Andrew has 30 years’ experience in the print and publishing industry in Benelux, France, Germany, the US and UK. He joined EDINA in January this year as Business Manager for the UK RepositoryNet+ project.

David Speed: David worked as programmer / software engineer for the last 12 years both in private industry and for the University of Edinburgh. At EDINA he will be working on developing a new version of the SUNCAT interface.

Alex Stuart: After working as a software developer in the private sector, Alex spent the last decade working in the voluntary sector. At EDINA, his role is Federation Support Officer in the UK Access Management Federation.

Forthcoming Events

edina.ac.uk/events

UKSG 35th Annual Conference
26 - 28 March 2012 Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC) Glasgow
www.uksg.org/event/conference12

20th annual GIS Research UK conference (GISRUK)
11 - 13 April 2012 Lancaster University
www.lancs.ac.uk/gisruk2012/

Digimap Site Rep Update Webinar
23 May 2012

JISC MediaHub Webinar
30 May 2012

Digimap Site Representative Forum
20 June 2012, National Railway Museum, York
digimap.blogs.edina.ac.uk/2012/06/20/digimap-site-representative-forum-20th-june-2012/

RGS-IBG Annual International Conference
3- 5 July 2012, University of Edinburgh
www.rgs.org/AC2012

Seventh International Conference on Open Repositories (OR2012)
9-13 July 2012, University of Edinburgh
or2012.blogs.edina.ac.uk