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About EDINA

EDINA, based at Edinburgh University Data Library, is a JISC-funded national datacentre. It offers a library of data, information and research resources. All EDINA services are free of charge at the point of use. For information on institutional subscription fees, visit the EDINA web site, or contact us (details below).

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The next edition of Newsline will appear in Spring 2005.

Digimap opens a window to the past

by Tim Riley

AFTER FIVE YEARS of delivering contemporary Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and mapping data to tertiary education, EDINA Digimap will soon be offering access to **historical** maps of Great Britain, dating from 1843 onwards.

Following an agreement made between the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Landmark Information Group, JISC have asked EDINA to develop a service to deliver the valuable Landmark® historic map collection to the further and higher education community.

The Landmark historic map data are digital scans of OS paper map sheets. These include:

- all available County Series maps at 1:2,500 and 1:10560 scales published between 1843 and 1939;
- all available National Grid maps at 1:1,250, 1:2,500 and 1:10560/10,000 scales published from 1945 and before the introduction of the Ordnance Survey's digital Land-Line product.

The historic map service will be part of the Digimap suite of on-line mapping facilities. As such, its look and feel will be familiar to existing Digimap users, and intuitive to all, regardless of their level of experience with maps. Users will be able to view maps through their web browser, save maps for printing,

and download the historic map data for use in geographical information systems and other image viewers.

Institutional subscriptions will be separate from the subscription for the existing Digimap service; institutions will be able to choose to have access to contemporary OS maps, the Landmark historic OS maps, or both.

Early Access

A **Pilot Service** will be made available during **March 2005**. If you want to be an early adopter of the service, wish to take part in associated workshops and usability testing, or just want more information, please contact EDINA (edina@ed.ac.uk).

Prototype interface for the Historic Mapping Service



Bibliographic and Infrastructure Service and Project News

GetRef – now available for institutional trial

by Peigi McKillop

GETREF IS A cross-searching tool, developed at EDINA, for finding bibliographic references contained in Abstract and Indexing (A&I) services. GetRef is configured to access numerous resources, and provides access to only those resources that the user is entitled to. This is achieved via an Athens username which links users to the resources automatically; the user does not need to have knowledge of their institutional resources.

GetRef can be accessed by means of a web interface or act as a broker for library portals via a Z39.50 interface (or other appropriate protocol).

The web interface aids resource discovery by displaying the subject terms found in the result set of each resource, which can help determine the relevance of any one resource, particularly if the query consists of a context-dependent term. Once a relevant resource has been found, the results can be examined within the web interface, but users are encouraged to explore the 'native' interface

for that resource since it will provide functionality suited to the data, especially for in-depth or refined searching.

GetRef has the following features:

- Provides OpenURL links which may be resolved by any institutional resolver service (such as SFX or LinkFinderPlus) via the JISC Open URL Router (<http://openurl.ac.uk/doc>).
- Removes the need for library staff to spend time on setup and configuration, as EDINA will configure targets.
- Allowing local branding so GetRef retains the appearance common to an institution's other local services.
- Provides a variety of online learning materials which cover cross-searching concepts and gives guidance to users on how to conduct research activities.

For more information or to request an institutional trial of GetRef please contact edina@ed.ac.uk.

Support for IP enabled access

by Ben Soares

AN INSTITUTION CAN NOW request that access to the Education Media OnLine (EMOL) and Education Image Gallery (EIG) services be enabled through IP checking.

Allowing access through IP checking may seem a simple option, but as the identity of the user is not established, functionality which depends on this knowledge – such as user profiles and email alerts – is not available. Usage statistics available to the institution will reflect access by IP number

rather than individual user.

This option is available in addition to the use of the Athens Access Management system, which remains the currently preferred mechanism used to check access eligibility to EDINA services. In the case of the EMOL restricted films, Athens is still the only access mechanism offered.

EDINA will be examining the feasibility of extending IP enabled access to further services where appropriate and where licensing conditions allow.

SUNCAT: launch of pilot service

THE national union catalogue of serials for the UK research community will be launched as a pilot service in January 2005. SUNCAT has two main purposes:

- a means to locate serials in UK research libraries
- a means to upgrade local catalogues.

SUNCAT includes over twenty of the largest research libraries accounting for a critical mass, perhaps over 90%, of journal and other serial titles held in UK.

JISC is funding Phase 2, as pilot service and as development activity. Over the next 2 years, improvements in the SUNCAT service will include increased coverage as holdings from more research libraries are added and enhanced matching to increase de-duplication. The SUNCAT team will carry out project activity on emerging international protocols and formats for handling electronic journals and subscription information in a union catalogue.

The achievements of the SUNCAT project team at the University of Edinburgh were recognised in this year's awards at Online Information in December 2004, where they were chosen as finalists for the Best Information/Knowledge team in an Academic Environment.

For further details see <http://www.suncat.ac.uk> and Newsline 9.3.

The Feds are coming: developments in access control

THE JISC has chosen the technology for access management to replace EduServ Athens currently used to log into JISC-sponsored services, with a view to its launch into service in 2006.

With the biblical name of **Shibboleth**, this comes from the US-based Internet2 initiative. Each community of service providers and user institutions using Shibboleth for access management is called a "federation".

JISC has funded EDINA to set up a prototype federation for UK higher and further education as part of the Shibboleth Development and Support Services (SDSS) project. This is in addition to the work EDINA and MIMAS are carrying out to enable Shibboleth-based access to their services.

The University of Newcastle has become the first Shibboleth-

enabled institutional user of an EDINA service, successfully accessing BIOSIS using the new technology.

The project is now actively seeking to work with other early-adopters of Shibboleth: they will benefit from being able to use the same usernames and passwords for external services like EDINA BIOSIS and for local on-campus services (such as room-booking or secure exam databases).

The system supports single-sign-on, so a username and password only needs to be given once in a session to access any mix of on-campus or external resources.

EduServ are implementing a gateway to provide Athens users with access to Shibboleth resources.

The feds are definitely coming!

Spatial service and project news

Working together on spatial service interoperability

by James Reid

JISC HAS RECENTLY funded a six-month project to develop a set of simple applications that demonstrate how interoperability might benefit research and teaching. Using spatial data, these applications will show how it is possible to access, combine and view maps and spatial data which are held in databases that are geographically distributed.

JISC has been actively investing for the past five years in the development of innovative spatial data services, and related tools and infrastructure to support the use of such data. Some services are now relatively well-established: UKBORDERS and Digimap at EDINA and Landmap at MIMAS, for example. Our project will illustrate further uses of the spatial data resources already at the disposal of the HE and FE communities.

The JISC 5 Year Strategy includes the goal to build an online 'Integrated Information Environment' (IIE) providing secure and convenient access to a comprehensive collection of scholarly and educational material. The IIE is underpinned by a technical architecture specifying the set of standards and protocols that will enable users to identify and access information, move seamlessly from one database or service to another, and to access multiple databases and services from a single service. To date interoperability within the IIE has focused on cross-searching catalogues and the like. There has been little work done on interoperating with content services through the use of web services and the merging of the content retrieved.

The use of open standards to support interoperability is an integral part of strategies for JISC services and projects. For example, by using Open Geospatial Consortium (www.opengis.org) interface specifications, EDINA has deployed a range of standards-based web services to support the delivery of maps and data across a number of services. Thus, the Ordnance Survey maps aid the user of UKBORDERS service draw select boundary data, from the databases held in the Digimap service.

A formal study of spatial interoperability between the national data centres, or between the national data centres and users in institutions, is timely:

- interoperability standards are well understood technically, but need to be tested in deployment;
- the economic benefits of interoperability are becoming clearer, on both a national and international level;
- the UK academic sector needs to understand how best to exploit interoperability and developments in the various standards underpinning interoperability;
- greater understanding is required of how to support research and education in this area.

More information on the project can be found on the project web site at <http://edina.ac.uk/projects/interoperability/>. Led by EDINA, partners on the project include MIMAS, the Centre for Computational Geography (Leeds University) and the Department of Geomatics (UCL), with support from the NERC Data Grid.

Downloading Map Data just got easier!

by Emma Sutton

THE DIGIMAP DOWNLOAD facility within the EDINA Digimap service is undergoing a face-lift.

Digimap Download is the interface which allows users to select and download portions of Ordnance Survey map data products. EDINA is in the process of re-designing not only the look of the interface but also the way in which the selection and download facilities work.

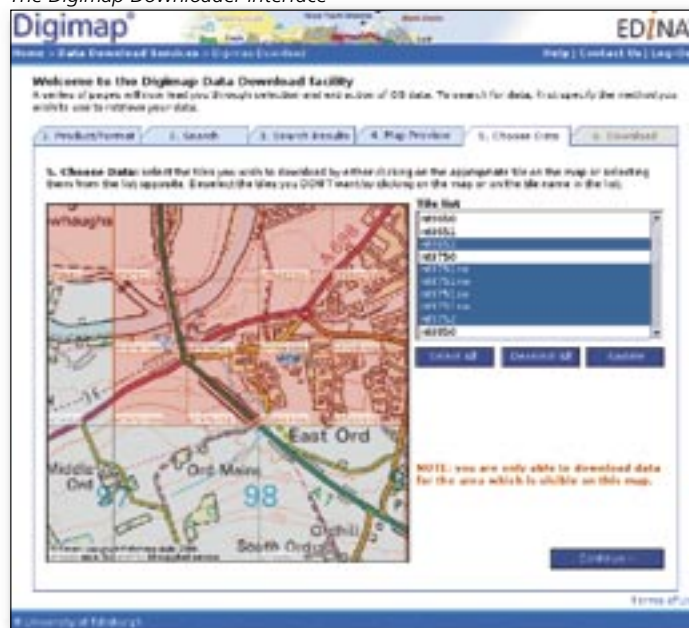
As a result of feedback from the user community, a map browse facility is being introduced, allowing the interactive

selection of data tiles. The usual locating tools (search by place name, postcode, tile name and grid reference) remain. The new facility will also make it easier to identify what data are available in each format.

EDINA plan to launch the new version of Digimap Download early in 2005. The existing download service will continue to be provided for three months.

EDINA welcome any feedback on the new service. Email edina@ed.ac.uk with comments and queries.

The Digimap Downloader interface



UKBORDERS: out with the old, in with the new

The original UKBORDERS web interface was withdrawn on 1 December 2004 after seven years of service.

UKBORDERS began in 1994 (before EDINA was born) as a Telnet service, delivering 1991 and 1981 Census Boundary Data to the higher education community. The long standing web interface was launched in 1998, and accumulated over 50,000 unique user sessions.

Use of the original interface decreased after the release of UKBORDERS EasyDownload in 2003, and the release of its direct replacement, the **Boundary Data Selector**, in August 2004. With low use and a replacement interface providing many more quality assured datasets, it was time for the hard working and original UKBORDERS interface to retire to the EDINA archive.

Event Review

Launch of the Digital Curation Centre

by Robin Rice

DIGITAL PRESERVATION AND e-Science experts from around the UK and beyond gathered at the National e-Science Centre in Edinburgh on 5 November to celebrate the launch of the Digital Curation Centre (DCC) – a new centre of expertise in data curation and digital preservation funded by JISC and the e-Science Core Programme.

The high-profile event featured speeches from Principals O’Shea and Russell of Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities; Professor Tony Hey, Director of the UK e-Science Core Programme; and a special unveiling of a plaque

served for the guests, who had the opportunity to view computer demonstrations of new tools, posters about the DCC and related organisations, and an exhibit of obsolete computer storage media.

The guests reassembled to

The DCC outreach and services programme includes a helpdesk and advisory service (helpdesk@dcc.ac.uk), a set of online briefing papers, fact sheets, a curation manual and online tutorial, training and workshop events, an annual conference, and an e-journal, *The International Journal of Digital Curation*. The research and development programme includes a study of annotation of data in different disciplines, time-dependent citation of dynamic databases, a Representation Information Repository to help curators future-proof their digital repositories, testbeds and evaluation of tools; research into automated metadata extraction, and longer term goals such as an

audit and certification service for trusted digital repositories.

The DCC is keen to engage with its user communities in UK Higher and Further Education, research councils and data centres, and with industry and individuals abroad. The Associates Network has been set up to begin that process and allow peer to peer communication for those responsible for digital curation within their organisations. We invite all who are interested in any of the relevant topics to join the network and participate in a discussion forum hosted on the DCC web site, www.dcc.ac.uk/network.



Peter Burnhill (DCC Director, Phase I), Timothy O’Shea (Principal, University of Edinburgh), Lord Stewart Sutherland, Sir Muir Russell (Principal, University of Glasgow). Photo credit: Douglas Robertson Photography

by Lord Stewart Sutherland of Houndwood, President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

The DCC, which began its setup phase in March, 2004, is made up of a partnership of four institutions – Edinburgh, Glasgow, UKOLN at Bath, and CCLRC – the Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils, at Daresbury and Rutherford Appleton Laboratories. Each partner brings particular expertise and experience to the collaboration, as described on the DCC web site, <http://www.dcc.ac.uk>.

Following the official ceremony, a champagne reception was

hear a series of talks collectively entitled ‘Setting out the Agenda for the Digital Curation Centre,’ by Peter Burnhill, Director (Phase One); Liz Lyon, Associate Director (Outreach & Community Support); Seamus Ross, Associate Director (Services Definition & Delivery); David Giaretta, Associate Director (Development); and Peter Buneman, Research Director. An informal afternoon panel discussion gave the audience a chance to respond to the DCC’s agenda and offer new ideas for services, development, and research.

Forthcoming events

EDINA will be presenting the following training events over the next few months. For details on the times and venues of these events, and updates on further events, please see our training page at <http://edina.ac.uk/events/courses.html>

Digimap

University of Bangor
Tuesday 18 January 2005 and
Wednesday 19 January 2005

University of Strathclyde
Tuesday 16 February 2005 and
Wednesday 17 February 2005

Education Media OnLine and Education Image Gallery

Manchester Computing, University of Manchester
Thursday 13 January 2005

University of Bangor: EIG only - half day course
Thursday 20 January 2005

JISC RSC Scotland South & West
Thursday 3 March 2005

Netskills at University of Newcastle
Thursday 17 March 2005