



The University of Edinburgh

MARCH 2001 VOLUME 11 ISSUE 7

New email service

Computing Services has installed a new computer specifically to handle electronic mail for University staff. When this is introduced into service on 1st March it will complement the new student email server which has been operating very successfully since October.

The new server will provide high-availability access to email using IMAP – Internet Message Access Protocol – a more modern and flexible system than the current ‘POP’ (Post Office Protocol). IMAP allows you to access your email and stored mail folders from anywhere on the Internet. The new, dedicated server will provide at least 25 Mb of storage space for each user, and gives EUCS the opportunity to improve its monitoring for junk mail and messages carrying viruses.

Any IMAP mail client can be used to access the new server, but the *supported* clients will be:

- Outlook Express on Mac or PC
- pine on Unix
- Eudora Pro on Mac
- Pegasus for Windows (version 3.12c or later).

POP access will be provided for legacy software within the University’s network. Web access is also provided, allowing you to read and post mail using any Web browser. This Web interface is probably not suitable for everyday use at your desk, but will be of great benefit when you are away from the University. The Web interface will also enable you (or support staff) to carry out simple administrative tasks such as setting up a ‘vacation’ message when you are away.

Staff on the University payroll will be given an account automatically (using the new universal account names

described in last month’s *BITS*), but these accounts will not be enabled until they are requested by the user or his/her department.

EUCS will be encouraging anyone who uses **holyrood** solely for mail to transfer to the new server. If any departments or faculty groups want their staff to use the new server, they should contact the Unix group.

Individual users who want to use the service should first check with their Departmental Computing Officer before contacting their EUCS Support Team.

Information about the new servers, mail clients and mail documentation is at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/email/>

Graeme Wood (EUCS)

Quantum Computing

Dr J.F. Snowdon of the Department of Physics at Heriot-Watt will talk on “Quantum Computing” at 6:45pm on 14th March, at the Apex European Hotel, 90 Haymarket Terrace. The talk is organized by the local branch of the British Computer Society and is open to all. Please note the non-standard starting time and location. The local BCS Web page is at <http://www.cee.hw.ac.uk/~bcsed/00-01/meets.htm>

David Muxworthy (EUCS)

End of Oxford Molecular deal

The CHEST agreement for software from Oxford Molecular ends on 11th March. If you are still using software obtained from EUCS under this agreement, you must either stop using it and uninstall the package, or contact EUCS (email C.Moon@ed.ac.uk, tel 503347) to make arrangements to continue.

Charlotte Moon (EUCS)

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Printing: easier and better

Xerox Docutech and digital printing

Printing Services installed a Xerox Docutech 135 digital printer last July. This is a fast copier and printer (8,100 copies/hour) which can scan in hard copy, or receive files via the network. It has many features such as booklet making, double stapling, on-line binding, etc, and its ability to take print straight from disk/file to reproduce at 600 dpi makes its quality far superior to any analogue copier. Text and images are sharper and there is no need to produce your own hard copy, therefore saving your desktop printer toner and paper.

The Docutech is suited to any task, whatever the size, such as producing small-run books, booklets and academic publications. It is even possible to have a *single* book produced in paperback format because there are no conventional press set-up costs.

The Docutech is ideally suited for large mail merge runs, and can be used to produce personalised copies of a booklet, letter or newsletter, doing away with the need to produce and attach sticky labels for distribution. All that Printing Services needs to produce personalised documents is the source file and a database.

All our digital machines are linked to our pre-press section, which has PCs along with Macs, so you can transfer a file to us and we will print it according to your instructions.

The Docutech and all our existing digital printers/copiers, Océ mono and colour machines, are all linked to the University network, giving too many options to list in this article. If you would like to see how the Docutech, Océ and Colour Digital printers can improve the quality of your documentation and save you money, please contact Stuart McLean (tel 508006, email Stuart.McLean@ed.ac.uk).

Transferring files to Printing Services for printing or copying

Printing Services has installed a new Mac server which allows us to give each department its own directory. You can easily drop files in here for printing or copying, whether from a Mac or a PC with Windows 95/98/2000. This is especially useful if files are complex or just too big to put on a floppy disk.

Unfortunately, we still need the good old GL220 Internal Order form in order to receive job instructions and cost centre information, etc.

Ao laminator at The King's Buildings

To meet popular demand, particularly from users of the EUCS Graphics and Multimedia Resource Centre, we have installed an Ao encapsulator/laminator at The King's Buildings Copy Centre, which is currently located in room 2025 of the James Clerk Maxwell Building. This will laminate all large-format ink and digital print outputs with either matt or gloss lamination on both sides.

The new machine encapsulates, rather than just laminating, therefore the edges are sealed – making posters, etc, weather- and tear-proof. It will also extend the life of a poster by protecting it from UV light which normally fades print. It is ideal for exhibition hangings. See our price list at <http://www.printing.ed.ac.uk/>, or contact Martin or Anna at The King's Buildings Copy Centre (tel 505001).

On the move at The King's Buildings

The King's Buildings Copy Centre will be moving round the corner, from its current location in room 2025 to room 2026. The same excellent service will be provided by Anna and Martin but there may be some disruption during the actual relocation. Dates have yet to be finalised but the move is likely to be during March or April.

CTP

CTP is a 'Computer to Plate' System – plates in this case being what printing presses use to get an image printed on to paper via an offset process.

Traditionally, plates have been produced by a four-stage photographic process, in which the page-image was output from a computer on to film and then to an aluminium plate, using chemicals similar to darkroom developers and fixers.

With CTP the file is output directly on to a polyester-based plate which is processed in the same unit. Only two stages are required, just one involving the use of chemicals.

The benefits of the new process are superior quality first-generation printing, less harm to the environment by using fewer chemicals and raw materials, it's quicker, and it's more cost effective.

The Apex CTP system was installed in December 2000 at Printing Services, 13 Infirmary Street, and is now used on 99% of work, servicing all presses. It has been a success story that will benefit all our customers and staff (but our old plate and chemical suppliers aren't too happy).

Stuart McLean (Printing Services)

Online booking for EUCS courses

If you are a member of University staff and you know your Personnel number (which is shown on your payslip), you can now book online for EUCS courses. Indeed, we hope it won't be long before everyone uses this method to book on our courses, allowing us to phase out the use of the paper booking forms. See the section on 'Making a Booking' at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/iss/courses/>

Tracey Athay (EUCS)

Computing labs survey

Every year, Computing Services carries out a survey to find out what people think of the University's open-access computing labs. The results help us to plan the annual upgrade programme, and to identify problems which we can fix as part of routine lab management.

The results of this year's survey are in the 'Futures' section of EUCSinfo, at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/futures/>

Mike Baillie (EUCS)

Upgrade plans for Computing Labs

Computing Services has already started planning the annual upgrade programme for the University's open-access Computing Laboratories, due to take place over the summer vacation.

The draft plans, mainly relating to hardware, were discussed at the recent meeting of the Communications and Information Technology Committee, where concern was expressed that EUCS develops the open-access lab facilities faster than departments can match in their own teaching labs. This was particularly noticeable in the plans for a possible move to Windows 2000 Professional, the latest version of Windows for the business world.

Computing Services must obviously find the right balance between leading the University forward, and providing a stable environment which is as compatible as possible with faculty teaching provisions. Accordingly, we plan to delay considering the move to Windows 2000 Professional for a year, but would like to hear from anyone who doesn't agree (email C.Rees@ed.ac.uk).

There is similar concern about the possibility of moving to Office 2000 this summer, so we would like to hear whether delaying this upgrade for another year would cause any problems for departmental teaching.

*Andrew McKendrick, Graham Newton,
Christine Rees (EUCS)*

Memo to all GCG users

Users of the national GCG (protein sequencing) service may be aware that there was a problem at the start of the year for Edinburgh University users re-registering to use the GCG package with the National Service in Cambridge.

The background was that at very short notice in mid-December, Hinxton informed EUCS that they would have to pass on the full increased software costs of the GCG software licence directly to the user. This would have cost each user £150, and effectively nullified the second year of the site licence which EUCS thought it had negotiated in order to give a two-year transition period for users moving from the local service.

Naturally, EUCS protested, and after some negotiation, to their credit, Hinxton accepted that this was not acceptable and agreed the continuation of the site licence for the second year, albeit at a slightly (inflation) increased rate which EUCS will pay as originally agreed. However, it is now clear that anyone who wishes to use GCG after 31st December 2001 will have to bear the full cost of registering (presumably for a minimum of £150).

Hinxton does, however, offer an alternative to GCG, called EMBOS, which – we are assured – is free to UK academics. It would seem sensible for Edinburgh users to consider moving to this package over the next ten months. Consequently, EUCS has arranged a conversion course from GCG to EMBOS to be run by Hinxton on 31st May in the computing lab in room 3210, JCMB, The King's Buildings, from 9:30am to 5pm (exact timing to be confirmed). EUCS will bear the cost of this conversion course (£35 +VAT per participant); any future courses will have to be financed by individual users or departments. Course numbers are limited to forty.

*Helen Chisholm,
Andrew McKendrick (EUCS)*

Apple Roadshow

Apple is widely credited with inventing or delivering many of the key features of the modern personal computer. The company is bringing a roadshow to the SECC, Glasgow, on 13th March, with a morning session to show PC users what might be coming next, and an afternoon session for existing Mac users. You can register, or find more details, at <http://events.euro.apple.com/>

Maureen Dolan (Scotsys)

EUCS on top of the world

Many thanks to all colleagues in EUCS, EUL and the University generally, for their encouragement and generosity in connection with my recent trek in Nepal. As a result, I have been able to send £426.49 to ActionAid, which I am pleased to report will augment their Indian Earthquake Appeal targeting the survivors of the disaster in Gujarat.

The trek itself was a brilliant experience, combining cultural tourism, straightforward trekking, and a little technical mountaineering. I achieved my personal goal in reaching the summit of Mera Peak (Central) at 6461 metres, thus maximising the performance-related element of the sponsorship! The bustle of Kathmandu, the views of Everest and other 8000m peaks, and the friendliness and amazing toughness of the Sherpa people are all abiding memories which will ensure my return to Nepal.

There are views of the trip at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/~erdb13/nepal/nepal.html>



Summiteers on Mera Peak, author on left. Everest to left, Makalu to right.

Dave Stone (EUCS)

Support for Microsoft Windows desktop operating systems

The position today is that EUCS offers support for both development lines of Microsoft Windows, Windows 95/98 and Windows NT.

For the Windows 95/98 line the current recommended, fully supported version is Windows 98, while for the Windows NT line it is Windows NT4 Workstation. Both of these systems are available and supported by Microsoft.

Microsoft now markets later versions of both lines, Windows Me and Windows 2000 Professional respectively, and it is expected that use of these later versions will grow over the next year. These later versions presently attract only nominal support from EUCS, but this level is expected to rise during 2001.

Current EUCS advice is that there is no reason not to buy a new PC supplied with Windows Me, as this appears to co-exist well with the earlier 95 and 98 systems, but we do not recommend upgrading existing, stable systems from either Windows 95 or Windows 98.

Windows 2000 Professional is not formally supported by EUCS at the time of writing: therefore, if you require full support from EUCS for a critical system, you should run Windows NT4 Workstation. However, if buying a new computer, you should consider buying a Windows 2000 Professional licence even if you intend using Windows NT4 for a preliminary period. This would allow you to upgrade to 2000 Professional when it is formally supported. Depending on the type of licence supplied with the PC, you might also have to buy Select maintenance to get this option.

Finally, two reminders:

- This guidance only applies to desktop operating systems.
- Support is no longer formally available for the older Windows 3.1 system: users should replace any remaining systems at the earliest opportunity.

Jeff Phillips (EUCS)

Online information

IEEE/IEE Electronic Library

Online access to the full-text of all IEEE and IEE publications from 1988 – including all journals, magazines, conference proceedings and standards – is now available at <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/>

A local consortium comprising the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, and the Institute for System Level Integration has negotiated a deal with the publishers which allows each institution a ten-user licence. On-campus access is available without need for username/password. For off-campus access a username/password is available from the Library's Web site, or from the Robertson Engineering and Science Library at The King's Buildings.

ACM Digital Library

Edinburgh University Library has taken out an online-only subscription to ACM (Association of Computing Machinery) publications. The ACM Digital Library is available at <http://www.acm.org/dl/>

No username/password is required for on-campus access.

British Standards Online

The full-text of all British Standards is at <http://bsonline.techindex.co.uk/>

Not included in the service are draft standards which continue to be available only through purchase of the individual draft from BSI; these may be purchased at a discounted rate through the Library.

A username/password to access the online service is available from the Library's Web site or from the Robertson Engineering and Science Library at The King's Buildings.

Access problems

If you have problems accessing these services please contact Jenny Flemington (tel 506474, email J.Flemington@ed.ac.uk)

Jenny Flemington (EUL)

Computers in Art & Design Education

CADE 2001, Glasgow, 9-12 April

CADE 2001's theme is "Digital Creativity – Crossing the Border" and an excellent response to this has come from academics, researchers and practitioners around the world. The Conference Programme, along with abstracts of the refereed papers, demonstrations, exhibitions and workshops, is on the Web at <http://www.cade.ac.uk/>

John McKay (Glasgow School of Art)

Digitisation Summer School

The Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute is running the 4th International HATII Digitisation Summer School at the University of Glasgow, for the week 8-13 July. Details are on the HATII Web site at <http://www.hatii.arts.gla.ac.uk/DigISSo1/>

The course consists of lectures, workshops, hands-on practicals, and visits to Special Collections at the Glasgow University Library, the Archives and the Performing Arts Data Service.

Edinburgh BITS

Published by:

The Editorial Board
Computing Services
The University of Edinburgh
for the Edinburgh IT community.

Contributions:

Email: BITS@ed.ac.uk
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Distribution queries:

BITS is distributed through departmental offices; departmental secretaries please notify changes in requirements to:

David Muxworthy
Email: D.Muxworthy@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3305

Printed on chlorine-free paper from sustainable forests by:

University of Edinburgh Printing Services,
<http://www.printing.ed.ac.uk/>

BITS on the Web:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/>

Some acronyms explained:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html>

Contributions to *BITS* are welcomed from all readers.

Copy deadline for April BITS:

Thursday 15th March