



Managed Desktop starts to roll...

Over the Summer, the Open-access Computing Laboratories were upgraded to Windows XP using the facilities developed by the Managed Desktop Project. All open-access lab PCs have been built using a standard Windows XP image. Additional device drivers not included in the base image are downloaded from a central library. The PCs then join the Active Directory (see the August issue of *BITs*) where lab-specific configuration details, including security, applications and printers, are installed.

Some of the benefits which open-access lab users will see this year include the following:

- Windows XP: Microsoft's latest desktop operating system.
- Dynamic software updates: all patches from Microsoft will be automatically applied as they are released.
- More robust software installation: applications will be installed using Microsoft Installer (MSI) technologies and will be self-repairing.
- Redirected storage: "My Documents" is redirected to user home directory space.
- Universal Serial Bus (USB) support: initial support covers flash memory pen drives for personal storage up to 1Gb.
- Locked down desktop: users will no longer lose work by inadvertently saving to the Windows Desktop.



Some school labs have also been built using this technology, including the TLPC lab in Moray House, the CALL/CAHL lab and the Divinity labs in the H&SS College.

Applications

One of the services developed during the Managed Desktop Project has been software deployment using MSI technology. This enables applications to be installed remotely without user intervention, using pre-prepared software installations. Currently there are over 50 software applications prepared, including Microsoft Office, EndNote, SPSS, Minitab, Maple, SSH, Exceed, Dreamweaver, and a rich collection of browser plugins.

Staff Passwords

As well as being able to use the open-access lab PCs, members of staff will also encounter the new Windows XP desktop in the MALTS lecture theatres. It should be noted, however, that one of the changes from last year is that all labs and lecture theatres now use Active Directory for password authentication. Staff users who have not already done so should set their Active Directory password to the same password as they currently use in the open-access labs or lecture theatres. To do this, visit one of the 50 Password Reset Stations (located in most of the open-access labs), or visit the EUCS Automation Portal from any web browser, and select the **Password Lookup** tab. The Portal can be found at <https://www.automation.ucs.ed.ac.uk/portal/>

Staff Managed Desktop

The same technologies and — more importantly — the same resources are the foundations for the managed desktop implementations for staff desktop computers across the University. The EUCS Desktop Services Team is working closely with college and school Computing Officers to integrate the system into their local environment.

Graham Newton (EUCS), Kenneth MacDonald (EUCS)

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Supplement:

Software distributed by Computing Services

OtherSides 2003 exhibition

OtherSides 2003 will open on 12th November to reveal again the exciting diversity of talents in the Information Services Group (ISG). The opening reception will take place at 1.30pm in the Wolfson Suite exhibition room (ground floor of the Main Library), where contributions will be displayed, spreading out to the corridor cases. During the opening, at which light refreshments will be served, Brave Harps will entertain us with a selection from their repertoire. We are delighted that Ms Helen Hayes, the recently appointed Vice Principal of Knowledge Management and Librarian to the University, has agreed to open the exhibition this year.

This is our sixth year, and for those of you unfamiliar with the purpose of this annual event, the exhibition shows the many talents and activities of the people who work in ISG. For example, there have been contributions



Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre

Introductory sessions

We welcome bookings for groups of students to visit the Resource Centre, for an introduction to whatever technologies they need for their course work.

eLearning developments

If you are preparing a submission for support from the eLearning project fund (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/news/callforprops.html>), remember that the GMRC's facilities are available for preparing eLearning materials. GMRC staff have experience in this field, and we are interested in working in partnership with eLearning developers. We can offer consultancy in many other fields as well.



GMRC Studio (room 2901)

Loans

If you need to use GMRC equipment outside the Centre, we do lend out some items. That is typically how the digital cameras, camcorder, minidisk recorder and suchlike are used. Naturally, we need a guarantee that somebody (usually a school/unit/department) will pay for any loss or damage.

Bulk data

One new item available for loan is a 60Gbyte "pocket drive" – a portable Firewire/USB2 hard drive. Also for handling bulk data, we have read/write/rewrite drives for several DVD standards: DVD for high-quality video, DVD- and DVD+ for data storage (4Gbytes per disk and upwards). For testing and playing DVDs, there is a DVD video player/recorder.

Text capture

Speech recognition tools allow you to generate text files from the spoken word. We have a new version of the Naturally Speaking software for this task. For retrieving text from print, we have the latest Omnipage software, plus a scanner with an A4 sheet feeder to speed up the process.

Contact

See <http://graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/> for full information, or telephone 504965, or e-mail graphics_support@ed.ac.uk.

John Wexler (EUCS)

Artist-in-Residence at EdVEC

Following a successful funding bid to The Leverhulme Trust, we are pleased to announce that Edinburgh-based artist Beverley Hood will be artist-in-residence at the Edinburgh Virtual Environment Centre (EdVEC) over the next academic year.

Beverley has worked with digital media since the mid 90's and has taken part in numerous artist-in-residence programmes in Scotland and overseas. She exhibits internationally: recent presentations of her work include *Siggraph 2003*, San Diego Convention Centre, USA; *sins and senses*, Plug-in, Basel, Switzerland; and *Virtual Incarnations Exchange*, Institute of Contemporary Art, London.


The residency will be used as an opportunity to work towards the creation of an interactive 3D computer-generated self-portrait. Beverley's intention is to explore creatively how a synthetic and obviously manufactured figure can provoke an intimate and meaningful encounter with the viewer, yet at the same time remain recognisably artificial.

Staff are most welcome to come and visit Beverley in the EdVEC 3D Capture Lab (tel 507808), where she will be based two days a week. Please email b.hood@ed.ac.uk or Info@bhood.co.uk to arrange a visit.

Roy Middleton (EUCS)

Advertisement

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EUL and the Archives Hub service

The HE Archives Hub is a gateway to the holdings within the special collections and archives departments of UK universities. Edinburgh University Library (Special Collections Division) has recently been allocated resources to participate in the continued building of the Archives Hub service. The renewed funding, from August 2003, is for the provision of content to this gateway website. The resources are administered by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and its Committee for Electronic Information (JCEI), and the funding will apply until January 2005. EUL has contributed to the Archives Hub since the very first pilot phase in 1999.

The EUL team is one among sixty others from UK repositories (libraries,

archives, or special collections departments), mostly in the Higher Education sector, which have created descriptions of their archival collections for the Hub. Other Scottish contributions have been made by:

- the following universities: Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, Heriot-Watt, St Andrews, Strathclyde
- Edinburgh College of Art; Glasgow School of Art
- Lothian Health Services Archive; Greater Glasgow Health Board
- the Scottish Brewing Archive.

The website contains descriptions of these collections. The Archives Hub search mechanism can be located at <http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk/>

To browse the descriptions submitted so far from EUL, select the **Advanced Search** option, then at **Repository** select **Edinburgh** from the pop-up menu, and then **Search**. Other mechanisms can be used for more focused searching.

Manchester Information and Associated Services (MIMAS) is responsible for the Hub infrastructure and management under the auspices of the Consortium of University Research Libraries (CURL). Systems development work is undertaken at the University of Liverpool.

Currently, there are some 14,600 descriptions of collections that can be searched, and EUL is nearing completion of its 700th submission to the Hub.

Graeme D Eddie (Library)

EPCC joins the Globus Alliance

The 'Globus Project' was established in 1995 by the U.S. Argonne National Laboratory, the University of Southern California's Information Sciences Institute and the University of Chicago. The Globus Toolkit® is the *de facto* standard Grid software, and provides key enabling software and services that let people share computing power, databases and other tools securely online across corporate, institutional and geographic boundaries. It has been deployed broadly worldwide for science and industry and has developed a strong community of contributors and users.

By adding members from Scotland and Sweden, the Globus Project has now transformed itself into the 'Globus Alliance'. The new Globus Alliance partners are Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre (EPCC) and the Swedish Centre for Parallel Computers (PDC), which contribute database integration and security expertise, respectively.

"EPCC and PDC provide a much-

needed European dimension to the Globus virtual organization" said Professor Ian Foster, member of the new Globus Alliance governing board and associate director of Argonne's Mathematics and Computer Science division.

EPCC developers and staff from the National eScience Centre in Edinburgh play a leading role in the Global Grid Forum Database Access and Integration Services (DAIS) working group that is writing specifications for this important Grid area. EPCC are the primary implementers of a reference implementation, OGSA-DAI, work funded by the UK eScience Grid Core Programme. Founded in 1990, and with more than 60 staff, EPCC has a long history of working with industry and public bodies in collaborative projects at the leading edge of computational research and development.

For more information please see <http://www.globus.org/>

Neil P. Chue Hong (EPCC)

Business Source Premier

A new database has been purchased for the University by the Management School & Economics. Although coverage is primarily in the fields of business and management, its subject area is far wider. For example, it has a good image library including pictures and maps. It is called 'Business Source Premier' from EBSCO, and is available to all members of the University (see <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resources/databases/> and follow the link to the alphabetical list of database services.)

This database, designed specifically for business schools and libraries, contains 2,966 full text scholarly journals and business periodicals, covering management, economics, finance, accounting, international business, and much more. It contains full text from the world's top business journals and is particularly strong in management and marketing. The database also includes country economic reports from the EIU, DRI-WEFA, ICON Group and CountryWatch.

Education Media OnLine

The June 2003 edition of *BITs* carried an article on Education Media OnLine (EMOL), the ground-breaking EDINA service for the UK HE and FE communities. Staff and students in subscribing institutions, which include the University of Edinburgh, are able to download near-VHS-quality film clips, encoded in Windows Media Player and QuickTime formats, from the growing number of prestigious collections available through the service (such as The Imperial War Museum, Films of Scotland and Sheffield University Learning Media Unit). The films, available in full or as 'segments', can be used freely in learning, teaching and research. The hundreds of hours of films and videos available via EMOL are of relevance to many areas of learning, from British and European history through media studies, archaeology and music to the medical, health and life sciences, chemistry and engineering. A full description of EMOL's contents can be found at <http://www.emol.ac.uk/description.shtml>

Now, in a collaboration between the Data Library and the EUCS Streaming Media Service, content chosen from the EMOL collections can be hosted for delivery 'on demand' within the University. Delivery by local streaming removes the inefficiencies entailed when users make lengthy downloads to their PC of each film or segment that they need to view. Streaming of EMOL content also prevents its uncontrolled proliferation and unauthorised use.

Local streaming ensures that the film and video content begins to play within a few seconds of its being requested. (Recent testing on PCs in open-access labs confirms this.) Content developers can easily and reliably integrate film and video streams into their applications for online delivery.

At present, only Windows Media Player versions of the EMOL films and videos will be hosted, and access will be restricted to computers on EdLAN, the University's high-speed local area network. Future development may support access to EMOL content via the Active Directory Service, allowing users access to the material from any location once they have authenticated.

Local developers of online and eLearning resources who wish to integrate streamed delivery of material from the EMOL collections into their applications should contact the Data Library's EMOL service representative, by sending email to datalib@ed.ac.uk. Readers wanting to evaluate a sample cross-section of EMOL content streamed to their PC should visit <http://webhelp.ucs.ed.ac.uk/services/media/emol.html>

John Smith (EUCS), Rick Loup (Data Library), Robin Rice (Data Library)

Business Source Premier (contd from p.3)

EBSCO is in the process of creating greatly expanded indexing and abstract backfiles for 300 top scholarly business journals back to 1965, with more than 200 of these in PDF full text. 5,000 substantial company profiles and 1,600 industry reports from Datamonitor are also included.

*Deborah Morrison
(Management School)*



Stills courtesy of Education Media OnLine (EMOL) collections

OtherSides 2003 (contd from p.1)

from budding athletes, artists, poets, novelists, scientists, and more (see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/exhibit/>).

We will be in touch with contributors nearer the time with information about how and when to submit. Meanwhile, if you are a member of staff within ISG and have something that you might like to submit for the exhibition, please let us know, even if at the moment your intention is just a wee sparkle in your eye! Please contact any of the following as soon as possible: Jenny Arnott (J.Arnott@ed.ac.uk), Frances Provan (F.Provan@ed.ac.uk) or John Glass (J.Glass@ed.ac.uk).

Jenny Arnott (EUCS)

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Contributions to *BITs* are welcomed.

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