



Staffmail

The email services run by EUCS for staff and students have been tremendously successful – but their popularity can create problems. The Staffmail service now supports so many users that a little bit of self-help is in order... See article on page 2.

Oracle User Group

MIS has established the Edinburgh University Oracle User Group to provide a forum for discussion relating to the use of Oracle technologies in the University. The group will provide these services:

- email alerts about security and technology updates as they are released;
- a discussion forum for problems, hints and tips;
- regular workshops;
- information on licensing options, including the University's Campus Licence;
- access to a group of Oracle technology specialists.

If you are interested in or already using Oracle, this group might just be what you are looking for. To join it, or to find out more about Oracle technology or licensing options, please contact Iain Fiddes (email mists@ed.ac.uk).

Iain Fiddes (MIS)

Library opening hours

As usual the Library is carrying out extra staff training on Wednesday mornings in February. The Main Library opens at 8:30AM as normal, but with no staffed services until 10:15AM. All site libraries will remain closed until 10:15AM.

The dates are 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd February.

Sheila Cannell (EUL)

Historical maps to become available online

EDINA Digimap has been delivering contemporary Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and mapping data to tertiary education for over five years, and is about to extend this with access to historical maps of Great Britain.

This is the valuable Landmark historic map collection, which includes all available County Series maps published between 1843 and 1939 and all available National Grid maps published from 1945 until the introduction of the Ordnance Survey's digital Land-Line product.

A Pilot Service will be launched in April 2005; if you would like to be an 'early adopter' and take part in workshops and usability testing, or if you would just like more information, please contact EDINA (email edina@ed.ac.uk).

Tim Riley (EDINA)

Go-Geo to find geographical resources

The Web carries a wealth of geographical information, and a new service from EDINA can help you find specific items from this.

Go-Geo! is a website which will search through a host of geo-spatial datasets and related resources within UK tertiary education and beyond, finding occurrences of a specified keyword. The result is a collection of records telling you what relevant resources are available, who provides them, how to get hold of them, when they were produced, and other useful information.

Go-Geo! is a trial service for the academic community, on the Web at <http://www.gogeo.ac.uk/>

Emma Sutton (EDINA)

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Staffmail service

You may have noticed that the staffmail service has from time to time been having slight problems. During October we took remedial action to try and reduce the very high loads on the server. This was only a temporary measure, and further developments will include:

- the procurement of a front-end server to split off the webmail service and spread the load;
- the introduction of a new version of the IMP webmail client, which will support:
 - the deletion of attachments from messages to allow more effective use of quota allocation;
 - better caching of data to improve performance and reduce load on the server;
 - greater customisation of the user interface with the use of 'themes';
 - support for uploading previously downloaded or archived mail folders;
 - many other enhancements.

The load problems on the server are primarily related to its success, in that we now host the mail for nearly 5,000 staff and associates of the University. This covers most academic staff – who have mailbox space of typically 200MB each, and up to 300MB if required.

However, a significant number of people are using the IMP webmail client to access mail, and this makes inefficient use of the server. Furthermore, many people have very large mailboxes, leading to a very high load at peak times.

The webmail client is primarily provided:

- to give people access to their mail when they can't use a 'proper' IMAP email program;
- to allow people to administer their account, *e.g.* to change passwords or manage mail filtering.

Email clients such as Outlook, pine, Eudora and Apple Mail place a much smaller load on the server, so we request that staff use one of these rather than the Web interface for day-to-day access at the workplace.

In order to reduce the load on the server, we also ask that all users – especially those who use the IMP webmail client – to perform regular housekeeping tasks:

- transfer messages to folders to keep your INBOX as small as possible;
- delete all email that is no longer required;
- clear out your suspected spam folders frequently;
- archive old mail folders to local disk and then onto the University's archive service or to CD/DVD.

These simple measures will help to keep the staffmail service running smoothly for everyone.

Graeme Wood (EUCS)

More HSS supporters

The Humanities and Social Science Support Team in Computing Services has been expanded so that it can offer an enhanced service to its College.

Linda Anderson, Kaye Brewster and Fiona Carmichael will continue to work in the Language & Humanities Centre in the Adam Ferguson Building and David Hume Tower, but from an operational point of view they have been transferred into the EUCS Team to provide more integrated support.

Gavin Anderson and John Shanko have been recruited from outwith the University.

The team has also expanded its hours, and is now available from 9am to 5pm at both its sites, in the Main Library (tel 513000) and at Moray House (tel 516689). Its website is at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/hss/>

Abdul Majothi (EUCS)

Old EUCS documents looking for homes

We have been clearing out old cupboards in EUCS Reception in the Main Library, and have come across a number of EUCS publications which are not the most recent editions, but could still be useful – especially to people who are just starting out with a new application.

The titles include those listed below, and are available free until stocks run out, in EUCS Reception in the Main Library. If you know any students who might be interested, please mention it to them. Please let us know if you'd like any of these to be sent to you through the internal mail (tel 503344, email

EUCS.Reception@ed.ac.uk).

- Excel 98 for Mac (getting started)
- Fortran 90 (introduction)
- MicroEMACS
- Perl 5
- Reference Manager
- SQL (introduction)
- University Mail System with Mozilla on Windows XP
- Windows XP from scratch
- Word Mail Merge
- World Wide Web: starting to use the Internet
- World Wide Web with Internet Explorer on Windows XP
- World Wide Web with Mozilla on Windows XP
- Writing an essay in Word 2002 on Windows XP
- Writing an essay with Word 98 on a Mac

Irene Gordon (EUCS)

MyEd's targeted announcements

Since the MyEd launch in October 2004, the service has been used by 15% of staff, and usage continues to grow, with a large proportion of staff logging in every day. Over 120 channels are now on offer.

Increasing numbers of regular users means that channels like *MyEd Announcements* start to have real value. This allows people to submit short messages that will be displayed to users when they next log in to MyEd (like a personalised notice board). Announcements are sent in 'streams' which identify the area or topic of the announcement (for example MyEd Service, MALTS, MIS Hill walkers *etc*).

'Mandatory' announcements can be used to target important information at specific groups of users (all staff, or specific groups of staff), while 'Opt-In' announcements allow individual users to choose what information they want. Using an Opt-In stream has the double benefit of reducing email traffic and stopping 'spam' through targeting a willing audience. Opt-In announcement streams can be set up very quickly and could be used for almost any topic or area, ranging from institution-wide subjects like Freedom of Information, to local or social interest groups. The key idea is to increase communication by targeting the users to whom the content is of most benefit.

The Announcement system allows devolved localised management of streams, including monitoring of usage. Training can be provided as a short hands-on course, or via web-based reference pages. For more information, a demo or to arrange discussion with the MyEd team, please email misusers@ed.ac.uk.

Mark Wetton (MIS)

IASSIST Conference in Edinburgh, May 2005

IASSIST is the International Association of Social Science Information Service & Technology – an international organisation of professionals working with information technology and data services to support research and teaching in the social sciences.

For over thirty years, IASSIST conferences have been bringing together data professionals, data producers and data analysts from around the world. Only one in four of the conferences is held in Europe. Edinburgh University Data Library hosted the conference in 1993 and has secured Edinburgh as the venue in 2005 – the only UK meetings in the Association's history.

This year's conference is held jointly with IFDO, the International Federation of Data Organisation. Its theme is *Evidence & Enlightenment*, and it will be of interest to staff in libraries, data archives, statistical agencies, computing services, academic departments, research centres, government departments and non-profit organisations.

The conference is the forum for discussing both new and persistent issues relating to access to data, documentation of data, and digital preservation, with special (but not exclusive) emphasis on the social sciences. There are clear overlaps with digital curation, data publishing, and e-science and cyberinfrastructure initiatives.

The conference and a preceding workshop run from 24th to 27th May in the Holyrood Hotel, the National eScience Centre, the University of Edinburgh and Dynamic Earth. Local participation would be very welcome; for more information see <http://datalib.ed.ac.uk/iassist/>

Alison Bayley (EDINA)

First international conference on e-Social Science

Manchester, 22–24 June 2005

The 'Grid' first emerged as a solution for particle physics, but its potential for the wider scientific research community is now widely recognised and established in 'e-Science'. The *social* science research community is now exploring the prospects for 'e-social science' – including the creation in the UK of the National Centre for e-Social Science (NCeSS).

The Centre is organising the first international e-social science conference, and invites contributions from members of the social science and Grid research communities with experience of – or interests in – exploring, developing and applying e-social science research methods, practices, tools and technologies.

Full details of the conference themes and programme committee are available at http://www.ncess.ac.uk/conference_05.htm

Lee Callaghan (NeSC)

Software deals from Chest

You can find out about future Chest academic software and data agreements, or make a wish for software to be included in an agreement, at <http://www.eduserv.org.uk/chest/future-agreements/>

Not all software agreements require annual fees or the setting up of a site licence. For example, 'Inspiration', mind-mapping software from Inspiration Software (<http://www.inspiration.com/>), has a special Chest pricing of £88 for a pack of five licences and £17.60 for each additional licence. There is no need to order through EUCS. More details and an order form can be found on the Chest website at <http://www.eduserv.org.uk/chest/software/inspiration/>

Frances Provan (EUCS)

Library service quality: LibQUAL+ Survey

During February and March, the Library will be taking part in a survey to define and measure service quality. The LibQUAL+ survey was developed by the Association of Research Libraries, and has been run over the past four years in some 550 institutions in North America, Europe and Australia. The survey allows libraries to measure their users' perceptions of service quality and identifies gaps between desired, perceived and minimum expectations of service. Edinburgh University Library participated in 2003.

The Library will contact a random sample of staff and students in the week beginning 21st February to invite their participation in a web-based survey which should take less than 15 minutes to complete. The responses are confidential, and no personal information is passed to the survey organisers. The questions are akin to those the Library asks in its own postal and in-house surveys. Permission to carry out the survey has been obtained from the University's Data Protection Officer and the Student Survey Panel.

The LibQUAL+ team analyses the results and compiles reports for each library, showing how users perceive the quality of their library service. Libraries can compare user perceptions against expectations, and identify where improvements are desired. They can also compare their service quality with that of peer institutions, to develop benchmarks and understand best practice.

LibQUAL+ is just one of many tools which allow libraries to evaluate the quality of their services, to ensure they meet the needs of their users.

For further information visit <http://www.libqual.org/>

Richard Battersby (EUL)

Britain in Print wins Lottery backing

The second stage of the *Britain in Print* project has just been approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The project is led by Edinburgh University Library on behalf of CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries) as part of a partnership of fifteen libraries from across the UK. The aims of the project are:

- To create electronic records for all pre-1700 British books in participating libraries and deliver these through a web-based catalogue and an online learning resource, containing high-quality information about the books and what they reveal to us about our shared past.
- To create web-based learning materials that draw on these resources, based on the model established in Phase One of the project, as described at <http://www.britaininprint.net/>

The innovative website provides an immediate portal, not only to information about the books held in the member libraries but also to primary source material and eLearning resources. In keeping with the policy of widening access, University academics have contributed material that is unique to the site but is now available both to the students participating in the project and to the wider public.

The *Britain in Print* project provides free access for all – from home, school, library or workplace – to information about the rich collections of early British books that are held in twenty-one of the nation's most important libraries.

For further information contact Norman Rodger (tel 506823) or visit the website at

<http://www.britaininprint.net/>
Norman Rodger (EUL)

Structural Engineer online

The Structural Engineer is published twice monthly by the Institute of Structural Engineers (IStructE). Each issue contains news, usually two papers, and features covering a wide range of material.

There are also Verulam, products and services, discussion sections, book reviews, exam reports, and a diary section. Once a year the Journal carries a supplement covering the Institution's Structural Awards.

Both on and off campus, access is through <http://www.istructe.org.uk/thestructuralengineer/index.asp>

You must then enter a Membership Number in the 'Subscriber Login' box; you can get this – within the University – via the secure accounts page at <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/secure/accounts.html#istructe>

If you have any queries, please email Sarah.kelly@ed.ac.uk.

Sarah Kelly (EUL)

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