SCA updates in brief

SCA at the JISC Conference
The SCA held a session to introduce its work to delegates at JISC’s annual conference, held at the International Conference Centre in Birmingham on April 14. Speakers included the SCA team, the SCA IPR Consultants, the BBC/SCA Memoryshare Project producers and an Ithaka representative who discussed the findings of the recent business models and sustainability study. The conference was successfully ‘amplified’ with live blogs, micro-blogging through Twitter, podcasts and social networking. The live blog of the SCA session can be found here: http://sca.jiscinvolve.org

with the presentation slides from the session here: www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/events/2008/04/conference08/sca.pdf

Full coverage of the conference is available on the JISC website: www.jisc.ac.uk/events/2008/04/jiscconference08

Joint Declaration on Copyright Exceptions
The SCA has submitted a Joint Declaration to the Gowers Copyright Consultation on behalf of four of the seven UK public sector organisations – the British Library, JISC, the National Health Service, National Institute for Innovation and Learning and the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) – that sponsor the SCA. The Declaration states that the lack of copyright exceptions relevant to most public sector bodies obstructs the potential of their contribution to UK PLC and urges the UK Intellectual Property Office to redress the balance regarding the copyright exceptions to ensure that public sector bodies are equipped with copyright exceptions that are not only relevant, but consistent, clear and fit for the digital age.

Read the Joint Declaration in full: http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/2008/04/09/gowers-copyright-consultation-a-joint-declaration

SCA Affiliate Organisations Membership
The following agencies have agreed to join SCA as Affiliate Members: Library and Information Services Council, Northern Ireland; Napier University, Edinburgh; The National Library of Wales; The National Library of Scotland; University of Cardiff; University of Swansea; Research Information Network. Affiliate Organisations membership is a non-financial membership, designed to assist the SCA in developing and deploying the UK Content Framework.

Find out more on our website: www.jisc.ac.uk/contentalliance

Forthcoming events
- 8 May: Business models and sustainability workshop, New York
- 22 May: SCA Scotland forum, Edinburgh
- 29 May: SCA Northern Ireland forum, Belfast
- 5 June: SCA Wales forum, Cardiff

For more information on these events, please visit: http://sca.jiscinvolve.org

Further information
JISC, British Library, BBC, National Health Service, Becta, MLA and Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council working together to fully realise the potential of e-content for all users. For more information on the Strategic Content Alliance, please visit: www.jisc.ac.uk/contentalliance
Chris Batt has completed a series of 16 interviews with all SCA sponsors (except Becta) and other primary content suppliers. An invitation to tender for further work in this area to be released in May. A copy of Chris Batt’s Interviews Report can be found on the SCA blog: [http://sca.jiscinvolve.org](http://sca.jiscinvolve.org)

**Libraries Unleashed in the Guardian**

JISC has published an education supplement in the *Guardian*, accompanied by a micro-site, which will be live for a year, that explores the achievements of academic libraries in the UK, assesses current challenges and looks forward to the future. The supplement begins with some of the questions raised by the recently published Google Generation report, commissioned by JISC and the British Library, which explored the issue of ‘information literacy’. The report called for libraries to respond urgently to the changing needs of their users and to understand the new means of searching and navigating information.

The supplement also explores the ways in which libraries are changing physically as they incorporate functions more commonly associated with leisure activities and become more flexible and technology-rich ‘learning spaces’. Other articles consider Open Access, the phenomenon of ‘Library 2.0’, the integration of user generated content with traditional library content – e-books, new business models, digitisation, digital preservation and much more.

The supplement and micro-site are important elements of ‘Libraries of the Future’, the campaign to promote JISC’s work in this area and to initiate a debate – with partner organisations and librarians themselves – on some of the key issues facing academic libraries. Further information is available at: [www.jisc.ac.uk/librariesofthefuture](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/librariesofthefuture)

[http://education.guardian.co.uk/librariesunleashed](http://education.guardian.co.uk/librariesunleashed)

**WorldWideScience Alliance**

We are pleased to announce that Richard Boulderstone, who represents the British Library on the Strategic Content Alliance Board, has been nominated to chair the WorldWideScience Alliance Board.

WorldWideScience.org is a global science gateway connecting to national and international scientific databases. The initiative began with a Statement of Intent to partner between the United States and the United Kingdom. Since then, a multilateral partnership, the WorldWideScience Alliance, has been formed to provide a geographically diverse, long-term governance structure. The Alliance will promote and build upon the original vision of a global science gateway. [http://worldwidescience.org](http://worldwidescience.org)

**Jorum opens up**

Jorum, the UK national repository for learning and teaching materials funded by JISC, is to offer open educational resources. This will make it easier for lecturers and teaching staff to share and re-use each other’s teaching resources. JorumOpen – as it will be called – will also provide a showcase for UK universities and colleges on the international stage as resources will be available globally as well as across UK universities and colleges.

JorumOpen will run alongside a ‘members only’ facility. JorumEducationUK, that will support sharing of material just within the UK educational sector; this will be available only to registered users and contributors, as is currently the case. Jorum is managed jointly by EDINA and Mimas, the two National Academic Data Centres funded by JISC at the universities of Edinburgh and Manchester. More information: [www.jisc.ac.uk/Home/news/stories/2008/04/jorumopen.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/Home/news/stories/2008/04/jorumopen.aspx)

The next meeting of the Educational Content Special Interest Group (EC SIG) on 27 May at the University of Manchester is being hosted by the JORUM team and they will be providing an update on the plans for the opening of the service. More details about the meeting: [http://wiki.cetis.ac.uk/ECSIG_May08_meeting](http://wiki.cetis.ac.uk/ECSIG_May08_meeting) [www.jorum.ac.uk](http://www.jorum.ac.uk)

**Rich Registry**

The JISC Information Environment Team recently announced that the Information Environment Service Registry is now richer by nearly 2,000 resources. These resources are collections of content that are hosted in the UK, relevant to UK higher education and free at point of use. The information about these collections was collected by the recent Digital Repositories and Archives Inventory. A copy of the report can be found at: [www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/publications/drafinalreport](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/publications/drafinalreport)

... the Information Environment Service Registry is now richer by nearly 2,000 resources

The inventory was completed in October and discovered 1,924 collections. Phase 2 of the inventory is due to be completed in June 2008 and is expected to push the total number of collections up to approximately 3,000. The collections gathered from phase 2 will be added to the Information Environment Service Registry (IESR) sometime after June 2008.
Users will benefit from this content being added to the Information Environment Service Registry as the resources can be easily discovered by portals and other applications. Similarly the collection owners will benefit as this represents another mechanism for discovering their resource.

http://iesr.ac.uk

**National Collections Online Study launched**

Flow Associates are conducting a National Collections Online Feasibility Study. They state that ‘Despite demand for rich online resources, museum collections remain under-utilised on the internet. Individual institutions lack the resources to invest significantly in the web and we find ourselves in a situation where these public resources lie scattered across unconnected websites, each developed to meet institutional rather than national strategic objectives, preventing the country from supporting the education sector and the creative industries as well as it could’.

Over the next few months the study will consult with experts in their various fields, bringing together opinions of past and existing initiatives (both successful and less so), current technology options and the institutional and political implications arising.

Despite demand for rich online resources, museum collections remain under-utilised on the internet

The aim is to outline an approach that will be both practical and accessible to all sizes of institution. The project is being championed by the Victoria & Albert Museum, The Science Museum, The National Maritime Museum, the National Museum Directors Conference and Culture24. We will circulate the study when available.

www.flowassociates.moonfruit.com

Brazilian telemedicine project seeks EU collaboration

A telemedicine project across Brazil is looking for European collaborators.

Brazil’s Education and Research network (RNP) is connecting all 57 university hospitals in Brazil in 2008 to form the infrastructure for this. So far, 19 are connected.

They are looking to work with European hospitals for the international component of this project. Any centre interested in this should contact Helga Spitaler (regional marketing officer of Dante, www.dante.net, helga.spitaler@dante.org.uk), in the first instance. There will obviously be connectivity and information governance issues to be tackled, but identifying interested clinical centres is probably the first step.

Read a report on this project at: www.nhs-he.org.uk/documents/Abstract%20RUTE.pdf


**Seminar report**

**Open Repositories Conference 2008**

Southampton, UK, 1-4 April 2008

Neil Grindley, JISC

http://or08.ecs.soton.ac.uk

Before my arrival at the recent Open Repositories 2008 conference, I was telling myself that this would be a dynamic, busy and vibrant conference, attended by a technically ambitious and knowledgeable community, and that I would take the opportunity to engage in constant blog activity, both the reading and writing thereof, to keep up to speed with all aspects of the conference as it unfolded. As it turned out, the preconceptions I had about the conference were exactly right. The aspirations I had about my own activities in the blogosphere, however, turned out to be more a case of ‘amplified expectations’ rather than ‘amplified conference’ as Lorcan Dempsey might have it (http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/001404.html).

The Open Archives Initiative Protocol

From the more comfortable perspective of two weeks after the energetic and meeting-packed week in Southampton, it is possible to look back and consider a few of the more prominent features of the conference. One principal item was the role that OAI-ORE (Open Archives Initiative Protocol – Object Reuse and Exchange: www.openarchives.org/ore) may have in describing the structure and semantics of aggregations of web objects, thereby making those objects available to a variety of applications. Though still in beta by the time of the conference, this data model was used in the development of the winning prototype of the ‘Repository Challenge’ competition (http://or08.ecs.soton.ac.uk/developers.html) – a JISC/CRIG sponsored event that is an important and characteristic feature of the conference.
In his keynote speech, Peter Murray Rust urged delegates to be wary of the ubiquitous use of the pdf format to capture the complexity of scientific information, and for some delegates, this reluctance to accept what has become the de facto deposit standard was clearly useful to articulate (http://scilib.typepad.com/science_library_pad/2008/04/or08—the-pres.html).

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One of the challenges tackled by many presenters was how to ease the burden of deposit and how to incorporate Web 2.0 interfaces and techniques into repository design and workflow. The automation of metadata tagging and the design of batch ingest procedures were also variously discussed.

Fringe benefits
All the papers are being made available in the OR08 repository (http://pubs.or08.ecs.soton.ac.uk) and this will give some idea of the complexity of the main part of the conference. What it won’t describe is the amount of peripheral but important activity that happened around these presentations, encompassing Fedora, e-Prints and DSpace group meetings; a repository manager forum; a developer barcamp; an international meeting about Global Registries; a EurOpen Scholar day addressing issues about Open Access … not to mention gatherings and briefings put together by commercial participants such as Microsoft, who introduced the research data repository platform that they have been developing.

All twittered out
Perhaps the very busiest part of the conference was the one that I almost completely missed. If Owen Stephens’ experience of the conference was anything to go by (and this was someone who wasn’t even at the conference), then all the ‘amplification’ that was going on was perhaps a bit too much! (http://ukwebfocus.wordpress.com/2008/04/08/micro-blogging-at-events/#comment-64627). The ‘chattering classes’ is obviously a thing of the past. Long live the ‘twittering’ classes.

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Breaking news
Digital Content Action Framework

Museums Galleries Scotland (formerly the Scottish Museums Council) has launched a guide to help museums and galleries get to grips with the technological age with a framework for developing and maintaining digital content about their collections. Although museums and galleries are striving to take advantage of the huge potential of the internet to greatly increase the access and engagement with their collections, the challenge is to ensure their content reaches its intended audience and will meet their information, learning and entertainment needs.

This is why Museums Galleries Scotland have produced the Digital Content Action Framework which has the creation, delivery, preservation and sharing of digital content as its priority themes.

“We examined common themes and issues facing the sector and from their responses have produced this action framework which sets objectives for us and our members over the next three years,” said Rachel Bhandari, ICT Development Manager at Museums Galleries Scotland.

“Our aim is to help Scottish museums and galleries keep pace with digital developments and maximise the potential of their online offerings.”

The Digital Content Action Framework is available to download from the Museums Galleries Scotland website: www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk.

National Digital Inclusion Strategy

A strategy to get the last third of unconnected Britons online is being drawn up, said Paul Murphy, minister for digital inclusion.

In his first speech since his appointment, he revealed the strategy could be in place by summer. Some 17 million citizens in the UK did not have access to a computer, either at home or at work, he said. The minister did not set a timescale, but said it would be in line with EU plans to halve the gap by 2010. “Chances are these people come from an older or socially, economically or geographically disadvantaged group,” said Mr Murphy.

Admitting that he was “not a technical person”, Mr Murphy said that he had been studying what was involved in the role since prime minister Gordon Brown appointed him in January.

“The more I thought about it, the more I realised that I didn’t need to be technical at all. It also became pretty obvious the enormity of the work,” he told delegates at the National Digital Inclusion Conference in London.

Mission statement

The new cabinet committee set up by Mr Murphy met for the first time last week. “We came up with the following mission statement: To co-ordinate policies and a coherent strategy that all citizens, especially the disadvantaged, can benefit from new technologies,” he told the conference.

Delegates welcomed the appointment of the first cabinet minister to have responsibility for digital exclusion. “The vision from government seems now to be bigger and bolder,” said Helen Milner, managing director of UK Online centres, community-based groups aimed at connecting the disconnected.

Jim Knight, minister for schools and learners, also had an ambitious target for his Children, Schools and Families department. “Our aim is to get access to every household with a child aged between five and 19,” he told delegates.

From pdf to Web 2.0

The Strategic Content Alliance Newsletter is written by Michelle Pauli and produced by the JISC Communications & Marketing team.

The SCA newsletter is produced by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) on behalf of SCA partners to raise awareness of the issues relating to e-content. Contributing authors include members of JISC, SCA partners and staff working in the e-content arena. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of JISC or SCA partners.