

eduserv



eduserv impact report 2006/2007

advancing achievement





Welcome

Welcome to Eduserv's Impact Report for 2006/2007. Our aim is to realise the benefits of IT for learners and researchers at every level, and we look to do this both through the successful services we provide to clients and in the research that we can fund as a result of our success. This report is our opportunity to feed back to you. It details how we have built on our achievements in 2005 to deliver further progress.

Eduserv was born out of a shared service initiative, and we are delighted to unveil the positive impact our shared service solutions have had on the education and public sector communities. In December 2006, we highlighted annual savings of at least £25m for the education sector through our Chest service, which negotiates preferential licence terms for electronic resources. The last year has seen significant growth in the use of Chest licences, with the value of licences taken out under Chest agreements increasing by over 25%.

In March 2007, we launched OpenAthens, a new open architecture access and identity management (AIM) platform compliant with emerging international standards. Our access and identity management services are hugely successful worldwide, with over 4 million learners, practitioners, and researchers, in education and health, using our services. In November 2006 alone there were over 10 million access authentications.

Web accessibility has been a focus of both services and research in the last 12 months. Our web solutions team have developed a fully accessible website for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) which has over 1 million visitors per week, and is now one of the UK's most accessible sites.

Meanwhile, the Eduserv Foundation is funding research into accessibility for the visually impaired, using both audio and haptic (touch) feedback. Looking forward, the Foundation is funding research into the learning potential of 3-D virtual worlds, and is reviewing current thinking at its 2007 Symposium *Virtual Worlds, Real Learning?*

In 2006 we continued to develop our systems and, following an audit by the British Standards Institute, we received full accreditation for the ISO 9001, ISO 140001, BS 18000 and Integrated Management Systems standards for our technology services. This is a major achievement and we are proud that our investment in improving the way we operate, the services we provide to our customers and the support we give to employees has been recognised.

About Eduserv

Eduserv is a unique organisation: a not-for-profit, professional IT services group dedicated to realising the benefits of IT for learning and research.

Our charitable status ensures that our financial and intellectual property assets are used for public benefit. Surpluses from our trading activities are invested in our services and in the Eduserv Foundation, a body that supports the effective application of IT in education through a programme of grants, research and dissemination.

We are governed by a board of trustees drawn predominantly from UK Higher Education. The trustees delegate day-to-day management to Eduserv's executive management team, a group of professionals from IT, education and the information sector.

Our services support access for learning and research. They include the negotiation of appropriate and affordable access to digital resources for universities and colleges, managed web hosting and content management, and access and identity management. In addition to universities and colleges, we serve many national educational bodies, including the Department for Education and Skills, BECTA, the Joint Information Services Committee, the National Library for Health and the National Museum for Science and Industry.



Peter Ford
Chair of Trustees



Stephen Butcher
Chief Executive Officer

Access and Identity Management

Athens Facts

- 4.3 million users in 100 countries
- 189 content providers; 23 new content providers joined the Athens federation in 2006
- Over ten million authentications in November 2006
- 26 academic institutions used the Athens service for the first time in 2006
- 99.999% service availability
- 57 sites have adopted AthensDA (Devolved Authentication) to enable local authentication with integrated access to both external and internal resources

Eduserv is one of the world's largest providers of access and identity management solutions. Our Athens service is established in over 100 countries, providing single sign-on access for essential online resources from 189 content providers to over 4 million users worldwide, including university and college students, staff, NHS practitioners and researchers. Over **10 million authentications** were managed by Athens in November 2006 alone.

Building on Athens' success, in 2006 Eduserv committed to ensuring compliance and interoperability with SAML and other international standards, to ensure Athens meets the existing and future needs of the education community.

In March 2007, as part of this commitment, we launched OpenAthens, a new open architecture access and identity management (AIM) platform compliant with emerging international standards. OpenAthens enables institutions to gain secure access to Shibboleth protected, UK Access Management Federation¹ resources and maintain access to Athens protected resources at low cost and with great ease.

OpenAthens offers Further and Higher Education Institutions the benefits of federation membership without the cost of developing, managing and maintaining their own in-house identity provider service. It will also enable institutions to act as both identity providers and service providers, facilitating the sharing of resources across institutions, and enable those institutions to join multiple federations around the world as and when they emerge.

As part of the JISC funded service, OpenAthens is available free of charge to institutions until July 2008. From July 2008, OpenAthens will be available to institutions for as little as £800 pa for the smallest institutions to a maximum of £9,500 pa for the largest.

Our pricing reflects the economies of scale we derive from delivering a shared service. At the same time, our professional approach to service provision means that we provide institutions with support agreements and defined SLAs that guarantee secure access to critical resources whenever and wherever they're needed.

OpenAthens ties directly into our mission to serve the needs of the education community. The response to the launch has been positive – we welcome your feedback and comments. Visit <http://labs.eduserv.org.uk/aim> or email contact@eduserv.org.uk

¹The UK Access Management Federation was launched by JISC in November 2006. It is a group of institutions and organisations that have signed up to an agreed set of policies for exchanging information about users and resources, based on Shibboleth technology. Shibboleth enables federated access management by triggering the authentication process within an institution and supporting the secure exchange of information to establish authorisation.

Athens User Quotes

“Academic journals are an essential part of my studies, and I use Athens to access them online every day. The great thing about the system is that it enables me to access as many articles as I want, wherever and whenever I want, without having to memorise dozens of different usernames and passwords.”

Kerstin Maier

PhD student, Organisation, Work and Technology
Lancaster University

“Online journal access is a vital part of any research process, and students here are strongly encouraged to make use of the range of peer-reviewed journals, since these are likely to contain the most relevant and academically rigorous information.

“I would never advocate the death of hard copy, but there is now less need to trudge through the rain to spend hours poring through dusty archives in the hope of stumbling across relevant material.”

Nick Mosdell

Lecturer and Course Coordinator, MA Political Communications, Cardiff School of Journalism Media and Cultural Studies

“I always use Athens to access online journals when doing research for a literature review. It's so convenient to log on, do a few keyword searches, and save the most relevant articles onto my laptop. That way I can access them when off-line or on the move. I think that Athens is an indispensable tool for most academics.”

Phil Gibbs

PhD Student, Occupational Psychology
Lancaster University

“Our users have been extremely positive about the move to AthensDA.

They really like not having to remember the extra username/password, and they like the way that SSO works so smoothly. We on the helpdesk like the simplicity of the whole process, too!”

Mary Kelman Harrison

Research Support Librarian
Manchester Metropolitan University



e-resource Framework Agreements for Education

Chest Facts

- Eduserv provides preferential licence terms and conditions for over 4000 products and 80 key suppliers
- 97% of UK Higher Education and Further Education institutions benefit from at least one Chest agreement
- 750 new licences were taken out by institutions in 2006
- The value of the agreements managed by Chest increased by 27% to £8.2 million

Since 1988, Chest has negotiated preferential licence terms and conditions for electronic resources on behalf of universities and colleges in the UK and Ireland. Chest agreements reduce the burden of complex negotiation and licence management for individual institutions. As a result, institutional budgets go further and valuable staff time is saved.

The impact of Chest has been significant, with annual savings of at least **£25m** on the cost of licences, and additional savings on licence negotiation and management. Every negotiation Eduserv Chest secures is driven by the needs of the education community. Institutions join forces by 'making a wish' on the Chest website for resources that Eduserv then negotiates on their behalf.

In 2006, over **97% of universities and colleges** in the UK benefited from at least one Chest agreement.

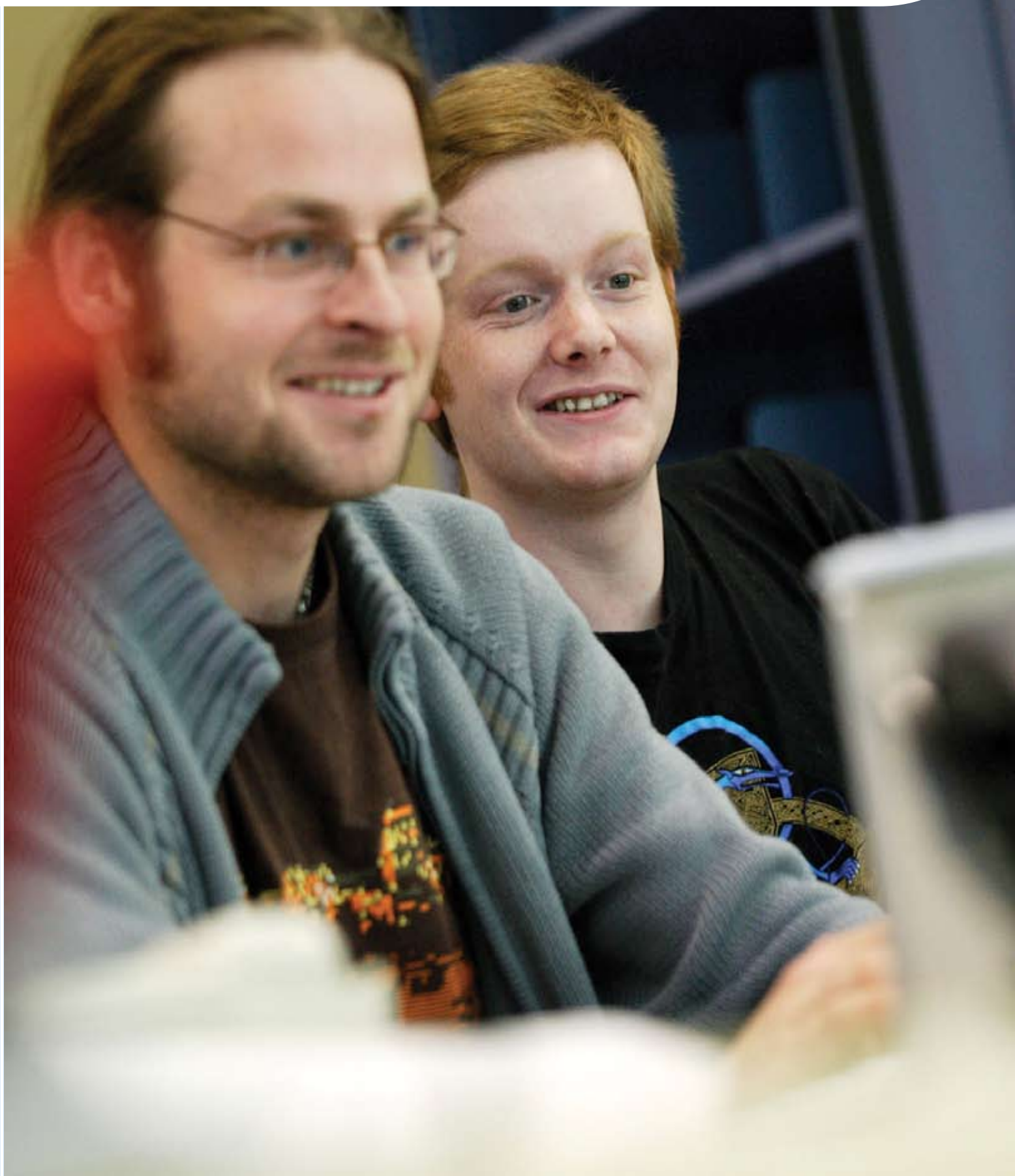
If you would like Eduserv to investigate an agreement for any e-resource that would benefit your institution, why not make a wish? To make a new wish, please go to: www.eduserv.org.uk/chest/future-agreements/wishform.html

To view the complete wish list and add your support for an existing suggestion, go to: www.eduserv/chest/future-agreements/wishes

In 2006, Eduserv invested significantly in Chest to provide additional staff, a new back office system and a web content management system (CMS) based on Sitecore. This investment will enable Eduserv to deliver further value to institutions in the procurement of essential e-resources.

“As a college with an extensive programme in Applied Arts, we need to access a number of essential databases to run our courses. With our existing funding levels, many of these databases were just too expensive. Eduserv brought them all together in one negotiated Chest agreement, making them affordable to our college for the first time in years. Other departments also benefited from the additional databases that were included in the agreement, so a really great result all round”.

Chest user, Elaine Edwards
Carmarthenshire College



Web Solutions

Managed Web Hosting and Content Management

Web Solutions Facts

- Accredited Catalyst Supplier for Web Hosting
- Sitecore CMS Certified Solution Partner
- Microsoft Gold Certified Partner
- HP Developer and Solution Partner
- RedHat Business Partner
- ITIL Compliant support services
- BSI accredited for ISO 9001, ISO 140001, BS 18000 and Integrated Management Systems
- Dedicated Project management team utilising PRINCE2 methodology

Eduserv's web solutions are designed to meet the needs of the public sector – we design, create and manage the hosting infrastructures, websites, intranets, extranets and web applications of our customers. We have an in-depth understanding of government, national agencies, NHS and education and our clients include the DfES, BECTA, Ofsted, DVLA and JISC.

Commitment to Service and Security

Eduserv has continued to invest significantly in our infrastructure for delivering the hosting and management of critical applications, guaranteeing the highest levels of service and providing high levels of availability (over 99.999%) to our clients.

Breakthroughs in Web Accessibility

Web accessibility is a key part of our consultancy to clients. Not only have we developed fully accessible websites, the surplus from this trading activity has also been ploughed back into the Eduserv Foundation to fund research into accessibility for the visually impaired. This is one example of how Eduserv supports research, helping us to fulfil our charitable mission, and drive forward technology innovation.

DVLA

The DVLA's website - www.dvla.gov.uk - is visited by 1,000,000 people per week, and provides essential information for all vehicle licence owners in the UK. It unveiled its new, improved corporate website in October 2006, delivered by Eduserv and powered by Sitecore's content management system. The re-design has radically streamlined the site and non-technical staff can now easily edit and upload content. It meets the latest government accessibility standards and www.dvla.gov.uk is now one of the UK's most accessible sites.

Implementation of the new system now means that non-technical DVLA staff can quickly create and load content directly to the site. This replaces the previous system that was reliant on a small number of staff in the IT department developing content and uploading information on their colleagues' behalf.

All pages of the site can now be read by screen readers, allowing people with all levels of visual impairment access to essential medical and license information. As part of DVLA's commitment to treating the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality, the site is also delivered in Welsh.

No Down Time

As a government agency it was essential that DVLA's site suffered no down time. Eduserv ensured the transition from the old to the new website was very smooth and that information could be accessed by the public at all times.

"We enjoyed open and honest communication with Eduserv throughout the project, leading to an extremely productive supplier customer relationship."

Eduserv was flexible to our changing needs and generous with their time to train staff and resolve problems. Customer feedback so far has been very positive."



Janis Griffiths
Web and Development Account Manager, DVLA

NMSI

In March 2006, we were delighted to help the National Museum of Science and Industry roll out its new, interactive website, powered by Sitecore's Content Management System (CMS). As a result of our work together, 6.5 million visitors now have online access to over 2,500 objects from the Science Museum collection, which is the first part of a project to upgrade all museum sites.

The CMS will also allow NMSI to re-design all its websites in line with the requirements of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative.

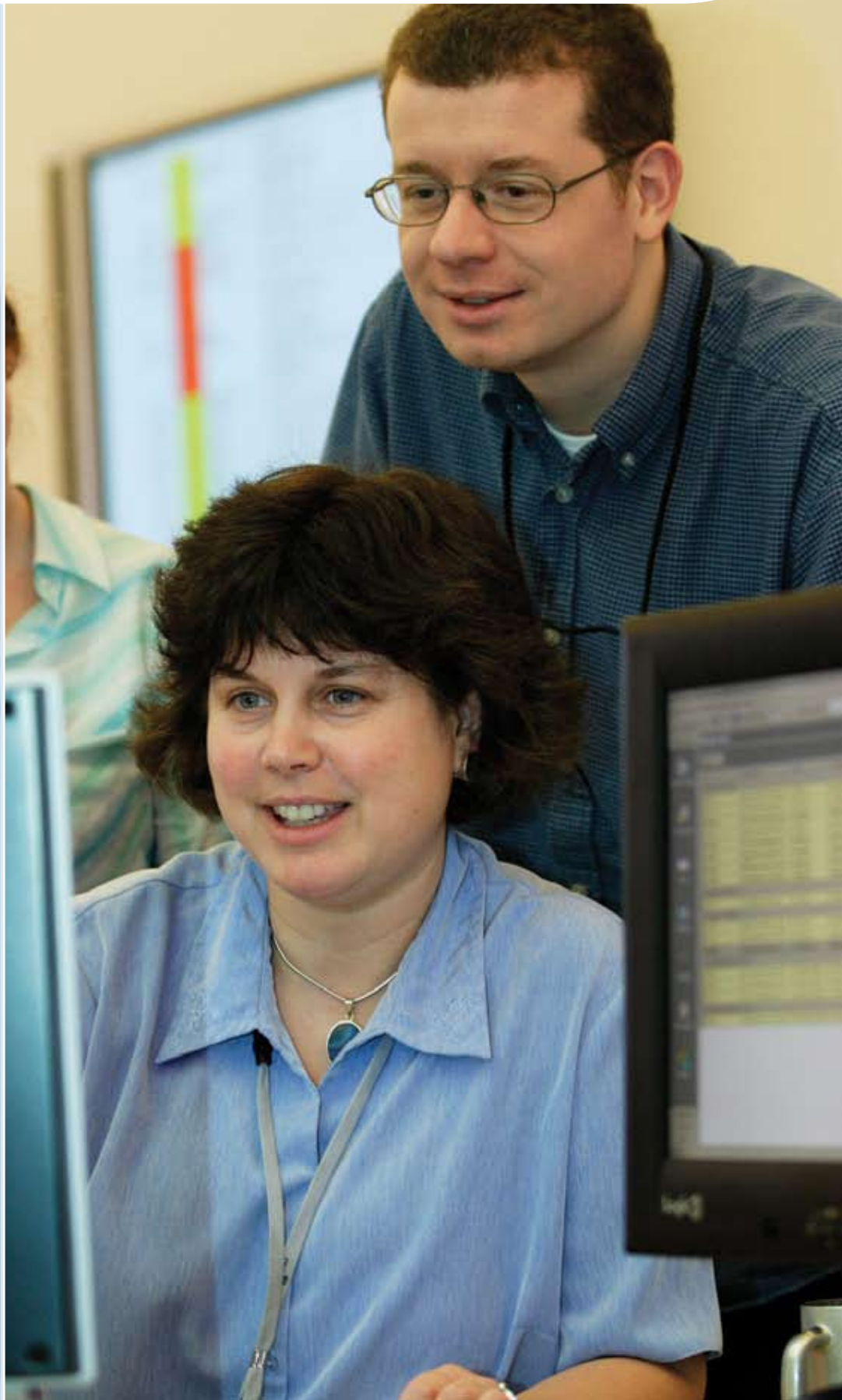
"NMSI offers visitors the opportunity to explore science, technology and innovation in a fun and engaging way. To do this, we need to have the right technology platforms in place.

Eduserv has delivered a content management system that we hope will help us to enhance the visitor experience and allow our staff to author, approve and upload content faster without duplicating effort.

With the launch of our new Information Group and the CMS we hope to make more of our fabulous assets and information available to more people, quicker and better."

Mel Burns
Chief Information Officer of NMSI

nmsi



Eduserv Foundation

Foundation Facts

- Awarded research grants of almost £1.3 million since 2003 to fund ten substantial research projects
- £400k fund made available for new research projects in e-learning in spring 2007
- Launched the information literacy website
- Funding provided for five information literacy projects
- Developed online tutor guides for Level 3 childcare and engineering qualifications with Centres of Vocational Excellence
- Funded more than six hundred university and college site licences for assistive technology software

Established in 2003, the Foundation is part of what makes Eduserv unique. It delivers on its charitable mission with a mix of external grants and internal projects, including:

- A programme of groundbreaking research;
- The promotion of best-practice within higher and further education;
- The development of UK and international interoperability standards.

Foundation Highlights 2006 – Advances in eLearning

The 2006 Foundation Symposium 'I before E: identity management, e-portfolios and personalised learning'

The Foundation Symposium attracted more than 85 delegates, including policy makers, practitioners and technologists working across Higher Education, Further Education, schools and government. The aim of the event was to provide an active forum for discussion and debate and featured a keynote address by Alan Cranston (Information Policy Unit, DfES) who outlined the Department's current work in this area.

£400,000 Fund Launched For Up To Four Two-Year Research Projects

In December 2006, the Foundation invited bids from UK academic institutions for research funding in teaching and learning opportunities in 3-D virtual worlds such as Second Life, new approaches to learning based on Web 2.0 services, and access and identity management in e-learning.

Following assessment of all the applications, we will make the funding offers in 2007.

Virtual Worlds, Real Learning?

To support our goal of promoting best practice within higher and further education, we have been conducting research into the impact of virtual worlds, including Second Life, to ascertain whether they offer real opportunities for learners at UK education institutions.

As part of this research, we have created an experimental gathering space for meetings on Second Life (called the Eduserv Meeting Pod), which is freely available for use by the community.

To help develop our understanding further, we will be holding a symposium on this topic in May 2007 for policy makers, practitioners and technologists in information, communications technology and e-learning service delivery.

In 2006, the Foundation progressed in a number of critical areas that impact Higher Education and Further Education in the UK, including:

- Jointly authored the "Digital Repositories Roadmap: Looking Forward" report
- Jointly developed the Eprint Application Profile metadata specification (with UKOLN) for the JISC
- Authored draft technical specifications for the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative
- Launched the Foundation's blog efoundations.typepad.com

Foundation Grants – Community Impact

With Eduserv Foundation funding, Queen's University Belfast has developed a prototype to help visually impaired people navigate web pages and access online information more efficiently.

Two million people in the UK have some form of visual impairment. To overcome the limitations of screen readers, magnifiers and Braille keyboards, the new interface will combine visual, tactual and audio technologies to improve the user's browsing experience.

A key component of the technology is the intelligent software, which constantly monitors the cursor's location on the web page, detecting near-by objects and informing the user by activating the corresponding tactual and audio features.

This technology aims to promote the use of the mouse for visually impaired users, helping them to build up spatial mental models of web pages in a similar way to sighted users.

In practice, if the user's cursor rolls over an image, for example, the mouse will create a tactual buzz effect. A short auditory clip of a camera shutter clicking will reinforce the tactual response. This approach allows the user to develop an overview and a mental, spatial map of web pages and their layout.

To ensure that the new interface will be useful to as many Internet users as possible, it will be able to accommodate different levels of visual impairments. In addition, it will be fully compatible with existing screen readers, allowing it to be used alongside technologies that users are already familiar with.

Claire Gallagher, who is blind and has a keen interest in using the Internet, tested the prototype:

“I haven't seen any computer software like this anywhere before. I found it very useful, as it was able to provide me with an idea of the layout of the web page - something that was never possible before. The package is very user friendly and quite straightforward to use, which is why I think there will be a lot of people interested in it.”

Claire Gallagher

Financial Summary

Statement of Financial Activities

Year Ending

	31/7/06 000's	31/7/05 000's
Total Incoming Resources	14,147	12,149
Net Incoming Resource	1,201	944

Funds

Eduserv Foundation	2,659	2,087
Development Fund	1,000	-
General Reserves	3,124	3,496
Total Funds	6,783	5,583

The above information is extracted from the statutory accounts for year ending 31st July 2006 which have been independently audited and received an unqualified audit report. The accounts have been filed with the Charity Commission and with Companies House. Copies of the accounts, including the auditors' report and the Trustees' report, may be obtained from the registered office.

Hilary Singleton
Company Secretary

Trustees

Peter Ford – Chair of Trustees

Peter Ford is a past Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham. Peter Ford is a graduate of Cambridge University. He held IT posts in the private and public sectors before becoming Director of the Cripps Computing Centre at the University of Nottingham. He is now an Emeritus Professor at Nottingham having, during his time there, held a variety of other posts, including Head of the School of Computer Science and IT, Dean of Science and Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

Tom Chadwick

Tom Chadwick gained over 20 years' experience in production and materials management with Ferranti and GEC Marconi. He became Director of Procurement at the University of Edinburgh in 1993, and from 1998 to 2003 was Director of Procurement Development for the Joint Procurement Policy and Strategy Group (JPPSG) for UK higher education. He continues to lecture in purchasing at Heriot-Watt University where he holds an honorary professorship."

Richard Barrington

Richard Barrington is Head of Government Affairs and Public Policy for Sun Microsystems. Richard has just returned to Sun after three years' secondment to the Office of the e-Envoy, part of the Cabinet Office, where he was Director for Industry. Richard has held a number of roles in the public and private sectors and specialises in helping organisations extract value from their IT investment.

Michael Breaks

Michael Breaks has been University Librarian at Heriot-Watt University since 1985. He has been chair of the JANET National User Group, a trustee of UKERNA and a member of the Joint Funding Councils' Libraries Review Group (Follett) Sub-Committee on Information Technology. He is a Director of EEVL: the Internet Guide to Engineering, Mathematics and Computing, and is President of IATUL (International Association of Technological University Libraries)."

David Teague

David Teague is the principal consultant of Symagis, a company he formed in 2006 to provide management consultancy on business development, leadership and customer focus across the private and public sectors. He was previously President of Fujitsu Siemens in the UK and Ireland. Prior to that he worked for ICL in sales, marketing and service management, culminating in the role of Group Director of Operations.

Simon Marsden

Simon Marsden, Director of Applications Division at the University of Edinburgh with responsibility for leading IT Strategy and delivering all centrally provided applications. He is particularly interested in the use of information technology to improve processes and aims to bridge the gap between management needs and the technologists who deliver the systems. Previously he worked for the international engineering consultancy, Mott MacDonald.

David Boyd

David Boyd, formerly Deputy Director of the e-Science Centre at CCLRC's Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, now acts as a consultant to Oxford University where he is involved in a research project on Integrative Biology. He is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Treasurer of the British Astronomical Association.

Eric Burrows

Eric Burrows is an independent consultant. His consultancy focus is on the leadership of market and customer led organisational change. His experience includes international line management and consulting roles with a range of organisations including Ford, Shell, PA Consulting and Kinsley Lord. His most recent roles have been as Director of Consulting at The Work Foundation, and a Managing Partner with Towers Perrin in the USA.

Annette Haworth

Annette Haworth is Director of Information Services at the University of Reading. Annette has been involved in several JISC activities and is currently a member of its Organisational Support Committee. She has been a school governor and trustee, and has contributed as a non-executive director to the Royal Berkshire and Battle NHS Trust.

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