

structure it for inclusion in the knowledge base. The LRC and the Business School will jointly manage these posts.

THE FUTURE

In the nine months that we have been working on ECW, we have learned a great deal. Both of us have had the interesting experience of trying to keep our 'day' jobs going while contributing to a fast-moving project that could easily absorb all the time available.

However, the benefits of the project have already been considerable, not least in breaking down barriers. Everyone involved now has a much better understanding of the contributions of colleagues in other departments to the learning process.

There is much still to do. Our production and support procedures need to be made scalable. For example, we need to investigate better systems for rights management and reading list management, and we need to establish the knowledge base. Above all, we need feedback from the learners, to identify what works and what needs improving. The current ECW project ends in the summer of 2002, but for e-learning at Glamorgan this is only the beginning.

CONCORD: the library co-operation website



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'In pesful felagheship & **concord** of voicys.'
(HAMPOLE *Psalter* 1340)

'All diuisions framde with such long dis-
cords, and not so much as a **concord** to end
withall.'
(R. HARVEY *Pl. Perc.* 1589)

No library is an island and the British Library (BL) has always co-operated and collaborated throughout its history. However, it was not until the British Library's Co-operation and Partnership Programme (BLCPP) was established in April 1999, following the Library's 1998 Strategic Review and consultation exercise, that a section of the Library was given the specific brief to encourage and facilitate partnerships and collaboration. Allied to this was the decision to set up Concord: the library co-operation website.¹

Many hands made the site work. Rocom New Media designed the web pages, the British Library hosted the site, the BL and the Library and Information Co-operation Council (LINC) provided funding. Concord was launched on 17 July 2000. Lynne Brindley, the Chief Executive of the British Library, commented at the time: 'Concord provides an innovative means of supporting and promoting collaboration across libraries, archives and museums.'² A clear-looking, and simple site, it has been designed with the visually impaired in mind.

The Concord website fulfils many functions. First, it publicises the activities of the British Library's Co-operation and Partnership Programme. On the site are details of all the projects funded by the Co-operation and Partnership Programme following

the two Calls for Proposals in 1999 and 2000. A common deliverable for the projects is a full report and these are made freely available on Concord. At present twelve have been added and there are more in the offing. No decision has yet been made about a Call for Proposals 2001 but relevant announcements will be made on Concord.

Second, the site brings together information about existing co-operative activity in library and information services. This is achieved by advertising collaborative conferences and seminars that might be of interest to the communities we represent. An online form allows anybody to submit an event for possible inclusion. If an event is co-operative, Concord is happy to give it publicity. Furthermore the links pages were recently expanded to include the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) projects in which the British Library is taking part, projects in which the British Library is a partner and co-operative projects between other institutions. Useful reports on Concord in this area include *Mutual Benefit: a map of the co-operative landscape (2000)*, a study undertaken by Education for Change Ltd and Acumen for CPP, and the three reports of the Higher Education/British Library task force issued in 2001:

- Report from the Higher Education/British Library Task Force to the Research Support Libraries Group
- Co-ordinating the distributed national collection of research resources
- A study of collaborative storage of library resources.

Concord supports the cross-domain agenda by supporting the *Full Disclosure* initiative on retrospective catalogue conversion and the Wellcome grants scheme, *Research Resources in Medical History*. The updated links pages have extensive entries on the archives and museums domains. Links pages can be like the proverbial piece of string but we intend to index all the main players in the co-operative, collaborative and partnership matrix.

The website has previously publicised LINC activities and issues relevant to its mission but with the demise of that organisation we have ceased to add new material. However, the LINC Health Panel, now called HELICON, the National Forum for Information Planning (NFIP) and the NEWSP-LAN panel will continue and we hope to keep track of their progress.

A website may have the best intentions in the world but if no one finds it useful it is a mere candle in the darkness of cyberspace. The hit rate for Concord is over 300,000 so far this year so someone is looking! BLCPP publicises the site on email lists and through the professional press whenever new and interesting items go live. We will soon be putting up a feedback form to enable us to obtain a better idea of who is using Concord, what they find useful, what they would like to see. Additionally, of course, we are always open to suggestions and certainly my door, electronic or otherwise, is always open.

(ENDNOTES)

1 <http://www.bl.uk/concord>

2 British Library press release 00/58