BUBL – The Bulletin Board for Libraries

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Description

BUBL is the BUlletin Board for Libraries on JANET, the Joint Academic NETwork in the U.K. BUBL collects information of interest to network- using librarians and their users. A major aim is to provide librarians with information on services and resources on JANET and other networks (e.g., the European IXI network and the world-wide Internet). However, BUBL also covers items of general interest to librarians. Moreover, it is increasingly used by non-librarians - lecturers, students, and others - for the guidance it provides on finding and using networked resources and services. Most BUBL users are from the U.K. However, there are known users in several other countries, including Sweden, the Netherlands, Canada, Hong Kong, and the U.S.A.

BUBL is run by the Universities of Strathclyde and Glasgow on behalf of JUGL, the JANET User Group for Libraries. It is partially supported by the Information Systems Committee of the Universities Funding Council and by private sponsorship, but is run on a mainly voluntary basis by the two universities. The user interface is provided by a software package called 'USERBUL'(copyright Leicester University and NISS). This allows information to be accessed through a series of menus and sub-menus. However, since the hierarchical structure is apparent rather than real, users need not "climb" or "descend" 'through menus in order to reach the files or menus they desire. It also allows users to search large files by keyword, to transfer information to their host machine via electronic mail using the POST command, to send a message to the editor, or to display various kinds of online help. Versions of this software are also used by the humanities bulletin board HUMBUL and by the NISS (National Information on Software and Services) bulletin board.

Sections of particular interest are:

- B electronic reference works of various kinds, including manuals, guides, descriptions of networked services, bibliographies of networking
- C recent LIS publications with abstracts(courtesy of Book Data and others)
- D national and international e-text directories covering opacs, information services, electronic mail addresses, scholarly discussion lists, and resources in general

E the most recent contents pages of over 70 LIS journals.

H users information, including information from LIS organisations, news, items for sale, results of surveys

S electronic journals and texts, including sources of electronic text, a directory of electronic journals and newsletters, some electronic journals in the LIS field, and related items

V library systems and software items, including examples of Operational Requirements for library computing systems

Z Special user education team run by the Loughborough LIS Computers In Teaching team

Information on the bulletin board is updated on a daily basis, and update bulletins are sent out once or twice weekly to the 680 plus members of the LIS-link electronic mail discussion list on JANET.

The British Library Research and Development Division has recently funded a six-month study into the future of BUBL. The study aims to investigate how BUBL's role and, consequently, its coverage and facilities should be developed in the next few years, and to produce a coherent, co-ordinated and costed short to medium term development plan as a guide to future efforts.

Network Access

To access BUBL from the internet:

telnet sun.nsf.ac.uk or 128.86.8.7
login: janet

At the "hostname:" prompt, type uk.ac.glasgow.bubl

At the "terminal type" prompt, enter vt100

(a password is not required)

Who Can Use BUBL

No restrictions. Aim is to serve library and information workers in particular, but also to serve the wider networking community by providing access to directories and other publications which facilitate resource access.

Miscellaneous

Regular bulletins describing additions and updates to the service are sent to the members of the LIS-link email discussion list. Note, however, that there is a restriction on non-UK membership of this list. UK residents may join the list by sending the message:

Join lis-link Firstname Lastname

to: mailbase@uk.ac.mailbase

Non-UK residents should contact cijs03@vaxa.strath.ac.uk before joining the list.