Doing More for Less

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CHEST & NISS
Doing more for less

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IATUL
June 1998
Covering

- Background
- CHEST & NISS
- Datacentres (BIDS, MIDAS, EDINA)
- CHEST
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  - Agreements
  - Selection Process
  - Pricing and Licensing
- Recommendations
Background - History

- CHEST & NISS set up by Computer Board (predecessor of the JISC) on 1 Jan 1988
- CHEST - negotiate for quality commercial software, data and training materials for the use by the UK education community
- NISS - provide information services to the UK education community
Background - UK higher education

UK HE

UK Government

DfEE

Scottish Office

Welsh Office

DENI

HEFCE

SHEFC

HEFCW

DENI/HEFCE
CHEST & NISS

- Based at Universities of Bath & Southampton
- Part funded by JISC, part by earnings
- Approx 23 staff in total
  - (CHEST has 9 staff)
- NISS is part information service, part datacentre, part technology provider
Datacentres

- Created by JISC
- BIDS EDINA MIDAS (NISS)
- Resulted from 3 invitations to tender
- Specialisation expected to evolve
- Datacentres run data
  - negotiated by CHEST
  - negotiated by themselves
  - negotiated by others
CHEST Products

- Agreements
  - Software (55 agreements)
  - Data (30 agreements)
  - Courseware (5 agreements)
- Special Offers
- Directory entries (approx 1000)
Agreements

■ Institution licences
  – “free at the point of use”
  – common licence conditions
  – all non commercial use

■ Most are 5 years
  – fixed price
  – committed till end of agreement

■ CHEST collects fees, pays supplier

■ CHEST manages & administers
Selection Process

- Product selected as a result of
  - comparative evaluation
  - feedback from the community
    - formal
    - informal
  - request from JISC (CWG)
  - offer from supplier
Pricing

- Price the institution pays comprises
  - cost of data
  - cost of service
  - cost of management

- less
  - any central subsidy by
    - datacentre funding
    - contribution to data cost
Pricing

■ Take-up estimated on anticipated level of subscription
■ Total cost / take-up / years of agreement = price to institutions
■ JISC may underwrite
■ Experimenting with move to tiered pricing
  – banding institutions by subject size
  – banding institutions by specific characteristics
Licencing

- All staff and students
- All non commercial use
- Licence based on CHEST Code of Conduct which most institutions incorporate into regulations
- Access control by Athens
  - single sign on, national usage
  - multiple databases and datacentres
  - control devolved to institution
Athens Access Management

- protects resources
  - on geographically distributed servers,
  - under the control of different organisations.
  - on external, commercially operated, internet services.

- distributed user management
  - authorisation properties are hierarchically inherited by default.
  - facilities for self registration and bulk loading.

- Single sign on.
Athens

- any type of resource from database down to individual documents and multimedia objects.
- Supports access using web, telnet and telnet based windows clients.
- Scaleable and resilient.
- More information:

http://www.athens.ac.uk
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■ Win - win agreements
  – good for users
  – good for vendors
  – more institutions at a lower price = more vendor revenue

■ Collaboration
  – shared support and training costs
  – shared voice to vendor
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■ Critical mass
  – more institutions, lower service costs
  – add functionality
  – expand the user base
  – safety in the herd

■ Competition
  – between databases
  – between service providers
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■ Consistency/conformity
  – standard license agreement
  – long term agreements
  – standard access methods
  – standard user interfaces
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- “rogue” institution purchases
- getting decisions from institutions
- estimating the likely take up
- getting the timing right
- herding cats
- dealing with low volume products
- committees
- money
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■ Is it worth it?
  – Cost reduction for institutions
  – subscriptions
  – service
  – negotiation

■ Added value to community
  – £ 750 m ?

■ Adds to sense of community
Advice for any consortium

■ Enthusiasm and Dedication better than committees
  – pick your people well
  – give them room to manoeuvre
  – give them your support
  – don’t let your organisation get in the way

■ You can’t do it on a part time basis

■ You can’t do deals to a timetable

■ Agreeing the price is about 1% of the work
Further Info

- Current CHEST list at http://www.chest.ac.uk/datasets
- The CHEST brochure http://www.chest.ac.uk/about-chest/about-chest.html
- Code of Conduct http://www.chest.ac.uk/conduct.html
- General licence conditions http://www.chest.ac.uk/appendix-a-data.html
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