

Who ?

- Project Name
 - Heriot-Watt ELF Search Service Demo
- Team at ICBL, Heriot-Watt.
 - Roger Rist (Director)
 - Phil Barker (Project Manager)
 - Santiago Chumbe (Technical)
 - Neil Fegen (Human Factors)
 - Malcolm Moffat (EEVL projects)

What ?

- Three search service toolkits...
 - d+ elf toolkit from Edinburgh
 - MDC elf toolkit from Oxford
 - SPP xSearch portlet from RDN
- ...embedded in two VLEs ...
 - WebCT Campus Edition 4
 - Moodle
- ... As simply as possible.

Why ? (human factors)

Initial rationale

- Lecturers wish to find resources for use in courses they run, and wish to make those resources available to their students via the course VLE.
 - E.g. as reading lists
- Is there any benefit to having resource discovery tool embedded in VLE?

Why ? (human factors)

- Interviews with staff have identified the use cases relating to:
 - Assessing the quality of online material retrieved according to Author/source, date, URL (e.g. ac.uk), citations
 - Relevancy of resources discovered
 - Notification of new resources
 - Post-search saving, printing, reviewing/rating, citing

How: Embedding in WebCT

- All three embedded as URL tool
 - Inspired by d+ WebCT “widget”
 - Very simple, very loose.

How: MDC & SPP xSearch in Moodle

- Embedded as a Moodle “resource”
 - Very simple, very loose
 - Behaves as external resource
- SPP Portlet could not be decoupled from SSP portal framework (which doesn't implement WSRP)

How: d+ in Moodle

- Embedding as simple “web resource” did not work: query went OK but d+ timed out before replies received. (Possibly know how to fix this now.)
- Created a Moodle activity to interface with d+ via SRU.
- (Attempted to use MDC via SRW failed —lack of time to explore this)

Challenges and Problem Areas

- Timing for talking to users
- SPP
 - WSRP implementation (or not)
 - Licensing/availability
- d+
 - A few bugs, quickly fixed with help
 - Time-out in Moodle (fixed?)
- MDC
 - Late (but stable)
 - Can't save resource lists

The Future

- Demos online for anyone to see, extensions available...
- Have not (yet) had time to
 - Solicit opinion on whether our implementation meets use cases
 - Look into resource lists

Recommendations

- Open source lifecycle: cradle and death
 - Start development as O.S., sort out ownership, licences, distribution
 - Ensure maintenance.
- Need community of users
 - We have solved problems through contact with developers and other implementers
- Standard XML for
 - Config files (environment, libraries)
 - Specify target repositories
 - Search results (RLI??)