RLUK Research Libraries UK

SCONUL Shared Services

RLUK and Open Data – what will it mean for us (and for you)?

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Old dogs, throwing new bones and can we
get the 'Long Tail' to wag?

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- RLUK founded 1983
- 29 Research Libraries, including national libraries
- Long history of collaboration and partnership with the SCONUL & JISC
- Innovation in resource discovery and content licensing

➢ RLUK able to deploy an aggregation of some 16 million items (in MARC format)

➢ Strong belief in open data and commitment to public good (charitable foundation)

But.......Principles in practice?

Pounds, shillings and pence as much as philosophy

Internal motivations:

➢ RLUK has long supported the idea that research communications be freely and openly available (SHERPA, OPENDOAR)

➢ Evolution of the idea of openness – from access to freedom to re-use, in the context of e-research data

Conundrum: how can we advocate and then remain the devil?

RLUK's own data is re-usable, but not free

So, how to be more virtuous?

Librarians have to practise what they preach

External motivations - intangible:

- Free data expectation is growing philosophically and practically and others are taking the lead. CERN:

"Librarians should act as they preach: data sets created through public funding should be made freely available to anyone interested. Our action is made in the spirit of the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities"

http://library.web.cern.ch/library/library/announcement.html

Cologne libraries:

"Libraries appreciate the Open Access movement because they themselves feel obliged to provide access to knowledge without barriers. Providing this kind of access for bibliographic data, thus applying the idea of Open Access to their own products, has been disregarded until now."

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External motivations – tangible

SCONUL-JISC Shared Services:

"It is argued that, if libraries (such as the BL) or services (such as COPAC, Talis or OCLC) were to give their library catalogue metadata away more freely, this would enable public and commercial organisations to use new technology to re-use it (mashup) in order to deliver new and perhaps innovative low cost or free services."

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JISC Resource Discovery Task Force
Vision:

➢ Open metadata about institutional collections

➢ A licensing and sustainability model to bring together (open) metadata

➢ Ensuring that...aggregations are open, sustainable, reliable and suitable for reuse by service providers and their users

So, like a devil sick of sin (Wilfred Owen)...dare we change?

Problems:

- Will give up income – need to diversify revenue base – shift from unrestricted to restricted

- Will lose exclusive use of one of the core tangible benefits of RLUK membership

May be a political risk: will we discover that there's an underlying assumption about the neutrality of public bodies ('BBC syndrome')

Can we therefore devise convincing principles of freedom?

➢ Data, to be most effective, must be freely re-usable

➢ Data, to contribute optimally to knowledge discovery, should be free at the point of description

➢ Data, to preserve the record of research, needs to be encoded in open standards

➢ Data, to present the best route to content access, needs to populate open networks

> ➢ Freedom and yet...control?:Cologne libraries again:

"Evaluating the possibilities to transform data from library catalogs in such a way that it can become a part of the emerging Semantic Web. The **liberalization** of bibliographic data provides the **legal background** to perform this transformation in a cooperative, **open**, and transparent way.

Freedom and control #2

- ➢ An example: the success of open source for example based on licensing regime as much as transparency of code – could such 'enforced freedom and richness' work here, too?

- ➢ What do we mean by 'permissive'? Do we still want to say 'collective'?

- ➢ Not getting to re-use because you sign up to agreements but agreeing to give back because you use

OK, so what's on offer?

Tangibles:

- 16 million high-quality records in MARC and potentially millions more in other formats/forms

Intangibles:

- A network, formal and informal of libraries across sectors – outreach is going to be crucial to realizing the value proposition
- RLUK as core of licensing foundation? (echoing success of 19th Century Pamphlets)

➢ Can RLUK stand as licensing proxy for community data? Could this also be a community service – in order to get "open, sustainable, reliable and suitable" metadata?

➢ Part of RDTF vision speaks about using current aggregations – which ones, how will they be used, under what licences, SUNCAT, COPAC, M25?

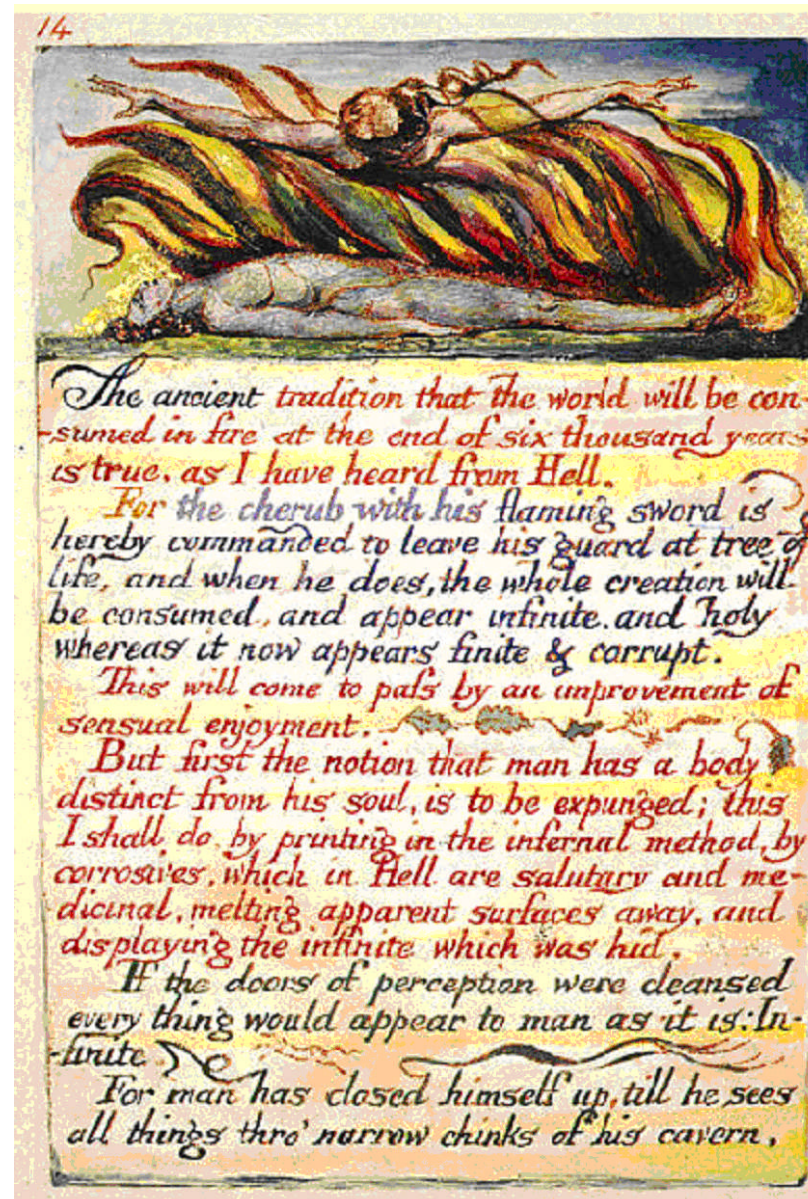SCONUL Shared Services report

"Does the opportunity to consolidate 'national' Discovery to Delivery (D2D) services for monographs & journals ring true in a way that UKNUC did not?"

Answer - ?

- Yes – Researchers are accessing non-HE material

- Yes – The collections convergence effect

- Yes – Non-HE institutions are more active now in establishing themselves and operating as research centres

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The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true, as I have heard from Hell.

For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at tree of life, and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed, and appear infinite. and holy whereas it now appears finite & corrupt.

This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.

But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.

If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is: Infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.

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In other words, we may need to free minds
and then free the data

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