Welcome to the 11th SUNCAT newsletter. EDINA would like to wish all our users and contributing libraries

**A Happy Festive Season and All the Best for 2014**

New libraries

This year, along with the usual routine of processing and loading the regular updates, our focus has been on having our system upgraded and on extensive testing of our new interface in preparation for its launch. As a result fewer libraries than normal have been added to SUNCAT this year. However, more are currently in process and in 2014 other libraries will be invited to join.

Added this year are City University London, Glasgow School of Art and Goldsmiths, University of London. This brings our total to 92 libraries plus the CONSER database, the ISSN Register and the DOAJ (Directory of Open-Access journals).

City University London
City University London is an institution which strives for excellence in education, research and enterprise and is focused on business and the professions. Its library service reflects this, with library sites serving all five campuses located in central London. Just over 60,500 serial records have been contributed to SUNCAT, including over 25,000 electronic journal titles.

Glasgow School of Art
The Library of the Glasgow School of Art has one of the finest art, design and architecture collections in the UK, reflecting the School’s long history. The School joins a growing number of art institutions in SUNCAT contributing just over 1,000 serial records.

Goldsmiths, University of London
Goldsmiths offers a range of study options within the arts and humanities, social sciences, cultural studies, computing, and entrepreneurial business and management. The Library has contributed nearly 6,000 serial records to SUNCAT, including electronic journals. Also included are the journals in the Women’s Art Library, housed as part of Goldsmiths Library Special Collections.

In addition to the new libraries, some libraries have changed their Library Management Systems (LMS). This means we have had to treat these libraries as new libraries, rewriting the data specification and changing the conversion processes. The format the files are sent in changes, as well as the local control number (LCN).

It is essential in updates that the LCN in the bibliographic record remains unique and constant. Updated records are matched on existing records in SUNCAT by their LCN (the 001 tag in SUNCAT). Not all libraries store their local control in an 001 tag so during the conversion processes the LCN is manipulated to an 001 tag. When a library changes its LMS, the LCN changes and will not match with any of the existing records. As a result, the new full file is loaded as new and existing records are removed from SUNCAT. After the new full file has been loaded, libraries can revert to partial updates if they so wish.

The latest library files loaded into SUNCAT are listed on the updates page.

Any library which wishes to become a contributing library should contact the EDINA Helpdesk.

The new SUNCAT Platform

In the last issue of the Newsletter we reported on the programme to redevelop the existing SUNCAT search platform. This year has seen quite major progress with the work and the emergence of the public version. A series of blog posts has highlighted and described some of the exciting new functionality which has been developed.

Limiting a Search in the New SUNCAT
The first major event in the year was the announcement, at the UKSG 2013 conference held in Bournemouth, of the preview version of the interface. In order to assess the user reaction to the new interface a survey was made available for five weeks until 13 May 2013. Overall, the vast majority of the survey respondents found the new interface easy to use and felt that it was better than the interface which had been in use until then. The respondents made a number of suggestions for changes and wherever possible these have been included in the development plans.

Further development work was carried out on the new interface over the summer and on 29th October the new interface was released. In order to allow users time to become familiar with the new interface it has been decided to keep the old interface operational for approximately a six month period. At the end of this period it is intended to remove the existing Aleph search platform. Work will then begin on developing a replacement for the existing database and ingest processes. This work will include developing a matching algorithm to reduce the number of duplicate records which are displayed.

Developments in Aleph version 20

SUNCAT started in 2003 with the Aleph version 15 upgrading to version 16 the next year and then moving to version 18 in 2006. Version 20 was initially released in 2009 but SUNCAT did not upgrade to it until this summer. This version contains a number of SUNCAT specific developments and these required quite a lot of testing before it was deemed that the upgrading could take place.

The most interesting development from the user perspective is that to do with increasing the size of the candidate pool which plays a key role in the process of trying to match incoming records with records already in the database. The software first of all identifies possible matches and assembles these in the candidate pool. Up to version 18 the number of records which could be accommodated in the pool was 100. If there were 100 or less records the software proceeded to a process of assigning scores to data elements in the records and determining if a particular score threshold was reached that there is a match. If, on the other hand, the number of potential candidates exceeded 100 the matching process stopped and the incoming record was declared to be a singleton. The development has allowed the candidate pool to be increased in size and this will allow more matches to be made.

RDA and SUNCAT

Resource Description and Access (RDA) is the succeeding cataloguing standard to the Anglo-America Cataloguing Rules Second Edition (AACR2), which provides guidelines for resource description and discovery in English Language Libraries.

Earlier this year, there was a call for papers for a special RDA-themed issue of Alexandria: the journal of national & international library and information issues (ISSN: 0955-7490). We had noted that there seemed to be relatively little literature regarding RDA and serials, so that this call was a good opportunity to ask some RDA-related questions to the SUNCAT Contributing Libraries. A questionnaire was put out in February, 2013, to the SUNCAT Contributing Libraries list. It covered such topics as how many libraries would be adopting RDA, and how RDA would affect not only cataloguing workflows but also OPAC display, as well as some more specialised questions, such as the use of the General Material Designator in the 245$f$h, which is no longer used in strict RDA records.

The results were collated and analysed, and have been most useful in helping decide on the SUNCAT use of RDA records.

Further details can be found in the Alexandria article, which will be linked to our publications page as soon as the issue has been released.

SUNCAT and UKRR

The UK Research Reserve (UKRR) is a collaborative distributed national research collection managed by a partnership between the Higher Education sector and the British Library. It allows Higher Education libraries to de-duplicate their journal holdings of a title if two copies are held by other UKRR members, ensuring continued access to low-use journals, whilst allowing libraries to release space to meet the changing needs of their users.

EDINA has been supplying a service to assist the UKRR in identifying the holdings for titles which UKRR members, of which there are 29, have offered to UKRR. Lists of titles supplied by the participating libraries are matched against the records held in SUNCAT and a report is prepared and sent to UKRR. In the UKRR Cycle 9 which ran from June 2012 to November 2013 the following work was carried out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libraries taking part</th>
<th>21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of lists submitted</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holdings processed (range of issues from a journal e.g. British Medical Journal vol. 10 – vol. 20)</td>
<td>7247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metres for the processed holdings</td>
<td>6879</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUNCAT Surveys 2013

The last SUNCAT impact and user satisfaction survey was conducted from December 2012 to February 2013. The responses were largely very positive and encouraging. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they would recommend SUNCAT to others, citing its ease of use, the comprehensive coverage of serials data, plus the reliability and currency of the data included. Eighty-nine percent reported that their work would take longer without SUNCAT.

“It is such a comprehensive reference source it would take me much longer to check information elsewhere.”

“SUNCAT is easy to use and its coverage of UK serial holdings is great.”

“Very trustworthy, fast and comprehensive. Records are to a very high standard.”

“Find Suncat invaluable. If it wasn’t available I would try to source an alternative. Don’t know what though!”
The feedback gathered has also helped us to plan and prioritise releases for the current redevelopment of the service and we are happy to report that a number of suggested improvements have now been incorporated into the new look SUNCAT. These include:

- Moving the search functionality to the homepage of the service to integrate the service and website more closely
- Adding print/electronic icons to the holdings display to enable users to more quickly and easily distinguish between print and electronic holdings
- Improvements to deduplication, following an upgrade from v18 to v20 of the Aleph software
- Addition of new libraries throughout 2013, with more planned for 2014

We also conducted a second survey in April, when we made available a preview of the redeveloped service. The responses were, again, very positive and we were already aware of, and working on, any significant issues raised. Over 70% of the respondents reported that the preview service was better than the current service and we hope to improve on this figure further when we conduct another survey on the new look service early next year.

“Very bold design, clear and simple. A great improvement. Will encourage use of the service.”

Developing the SUNCAT Blog

Over the past year SUNCAT has made a number of changes to its blog. SUNCAT was one of the earliest blog adopters in EDINA, setting up our blog back at the beginning of 2008 using the Blogger platform. However, with all other EDINA-based blogs using the WordPress platform it was decided that SUNCAT should move to the shared EDINA instance of WordPress. This has enabled the same cleaner look and feel as other EDINA blogs. There is also more choice when it comes to widgets. For example, we have added a tag cloud to the new blog. The SUNCAT WordPress blog went live back in June this year.

Thankfully, the migration of posts from Blogger to WordPress went smoothly, with only some minor formatting issues to resolve. This is thanks mainly to the EDINA Social Media Officer Nicola Osborne. All the tags were moved over with the posts as well, but these appeared in WordPress as categories! Therefore, the biggest piece of work involved moving these imported “tags” back as tags and assign new categories to the posts. This gave us a great opportunity to re-classify the different types of posts the way we wanted to.

These are our new categories:

- SUNCAT developments;
- SUNCAT news;
- Contributing Libraries;
- Weird and wonderful titles;
- Updates.

As well as the popular ‘weird and wonderful titles’ series, which started in earnest back in the summer of 2012, we have just started another series which features the more specialist SUNCAT Contributing Libraries. We have asked the libraries themselves to write posts on their library, focussing on their serials collections. The idea is to help increase awareness of both the collections and libraries found in SUNCAT. At the moment, we have had posts from the Royal Asiatic Society, the Courtauld Institute of Art and the Zoological Society of London, with more in the pipeline.

The blog has also been a great way of keeping people up-to-date with the new SUNCAT interface development work which has been taking place over the year, with posts highlighting features of the new service, some more technical posts about the redevelopment, as well as those highlighting SUNCAT surveys and any other news, such as our presence at conferences.

We use Google Analytics to gather statistics for our blog. There is a lot of really useful information available, not just the number of people who read the posts, but also how people access them, e.g. which browser they use, whether they access the blog via social media. It is therefore a great tool that we can use to help improve both the actual posts and awareness of the blog itself. Our most popular posts so far this year has been those on the new SUNCAT interface work, followed by the weird and wonderful titles posts, especially that for National Poetry Day and the fourth post in the series ‘Let There Be Music (which also incorporated a quiz).

The blog automatically feeds into SUNCAT on Twitter (@suncatteam), and Facebook (www.facebook.com/SUNCATUnionCatalogue), with links to new posts being tweeted and appearing on the Facebook page. Also people can still sign up to
receive posts through RSS feeds using Feedburner. We will be carrying on the development of the blog. If there are any items you would like to see on the blog, any suggestions for weird and wonderful title themes, or would like to write a post for our ‘Contributing Libraries’ series please let us know.

Meetings and Events

2013
- EDINA/SUNCAT stand at UKSG Conference, Bournemouth 8 - 10 April 2013
- SUNCAT Poster at Umbrella Conference, Manchester 2-3 July 2013. SUNCAT: transforming the service to create an open bridge from resource discovery to access (www.suncat.ac.uk/news/docs/poster-suncat-umbrella_final.pdf)
- EDINA/SUNCAT stand at UKSG Forum, London 15 November 2013
- EDINA/SUNCAT stand at Online Information, London 19-20 November 2013

2014
We are at an early stage of planning a number of workshops to highlight how EDINA services, including the redeveloped SUNCAT, can support libraries in managing their serial collections. We hope to hold the workshops in March 2014 in Edinburgh, Manchester and London and will circulate further details early next year.

Help and Further Information
For more information about SUNCAT please visit our website at www.suncat.ac.uk or contact the EDINA helpdesk at edina@ed.ac.uk or follow us:

suncat.blogs.edina.ac.uk
@suncatteam

Training and Promotional Material
In addition to user guides, FAQs and information on how to use both the web search interface and the Z39.50 connections, there are also two short videos available on the SUNCAT Help and Support pages and on EDINA’s YouTube channel. The first offers a brief introduction to the coverage and functionality of the service, and the second is a demonstration of SUNCAT, highlighting how to view Tables of Contents and access full-text articles.

A guide for library/information professionals about how to integrate SUNCAT into your library website and services is also available.

We are also working on a couple of new user guides and a short video to introduce the redeveloped service and these will be made available shortly on the SUNCAT website.