

# Enriching Resources

The BUFVC is currently in the middle its Shared Services project, which aims to expand access to television and radio resources for UK education.

**Hetty Malcolm-Smith**, the project manager, provides an overview.

## Introduction: The Richest Source of Broadcast Data for HE and FE

The BUFVC's ambitious new Shared Services Project is funded by HEFCE. The project aims to create the richest source of broadcast data for higher and further education by joining up holdings and information from three sources:

- Broadcasters
- UK educational institutions
- BUFVC databases

The project also received funding to procure a new expandable storage system for *BoB National*, which will allow further growth of the service as the number of institutions using the service steadily increases.

## Background

The project builds on the findings of the BUFVC's *Shared Services Feasibility Study Report 2009*. The Report was based on advice from an HE sector Advisory Group and the findings of two surveys of the off-air recording practice in higher and

recordings for broadcasts seven days in advance, from more than fifty television and radio channels. Users may also search thousands of programmes stored in the growing archive.

The BUFVC federated search environment, created in 2011, is a pioneering 'all-in-one' search engine, which provides users with access to nine of the BUFVC online databases, containing over thirteen million records, via a single entry point. It is the result of a collaborative project between the BUFVC and Royal Holloway, University of London, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The *VHS Register* aims to identify recordings held in higher and further education institutions' collections but not held by the BUFVC's Off-Air Recording Back-Up Service, which started in June 1998, thus allowing the BUFVC to identify unique and rare recordings and ensure their preservation.

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further education institutions. The results of the survey clearly highlighted a need for a shared online service to manage off-air recordings, better functionality through improved metadata and the ability for institutions to upload content for ease of access and aid the migration of off-air recordings from VHS (in terms of both cost and space saving).

Since the report's publication in 2009 a number of shared services have been developed including *BoB National* (<http://bobnational.net/>), the BUFVC's federated search environment (<http://beta.bufvc.ac.uk/>) and the *VHS Register*.

*BoB National*, launched in 2009, is a shared off-air recording and media archive. BoB (short for Box of Broadcasts) provides staff and students with online access to television and radio programmes from the previous seven days, as well as allowing users to book

## The Shared Services Project

The Shared Services Project aim is to consolidate, develop and expand the work that has resulted since the publication of the *Shared Services Feasibility Study Report*. The project consists of three strands: Strand A concentrates on importing broadcaster-originated programme data feeds into TRILT and creating unique identifiers so that broadcasts can be uniquely referenced and cited.

Strand B focuses on increasing the capacity and functionality of BUFVC's *BoB National* service and eventually seeking to obtain agreement for transfer of web-ready copies of programmes from broadcasters for licensed use in HE/FE. Whilst Strand C centres upon developing a union catalogue of off-air recordings held in HE/FE institutions and proposes services that could potentially be built on this information, e.g. sharing

of recordings under ERA, identifying programmes at-risk of loss, assisting in disposal policies, enable a UK off-air recording safe-house for rare recordings, etc.

### Strand A – Improved Data

At present TRILT is populated by programme listing data, with selected records enhanced by the BUFVC with extra information such as credits and keywords. Importing broadcaster data feeds into TRILT will further enrich this service. The feeds will provide the supplementary information contained typically within iPlayer, 4oD or ITV Player. This could be full production lists, detailed programme descriptions and links to dedicated programme sites. To achieve access the project team is formally contacting the broadcasters to request permission for access to these feeds. Initial indications have been positive – although there is always a risk when negotiating with external parties. It is not only broadcaster feeds that are important to achieve data richness but also the incorporation and cross-linking of other accessible data feeds. At the time of writing, the beta version of TRILT has now been cross-linked with BoB National and highlights to users which programmes are available on this service, as well as providing a link to click through to watch.

Also to be cross-linked is data from *TVTip*, Bournemouth University's *TVTimes* Project funded by the AHRC, which provides listings of the London Edition of the *TVTimes* from September 1955 – March 1985. This linking will be

added later this year to coincide with the addition of the data from the digitised Channel 4 Press Packs, part of the AHRC *Channel 4 and British Film Culture Project*. TRILT will then contain full listings data for Channel 4 and ITV programmes from 1955 to 1985 and then from 1995 onwards.

The final part of strand A is concerned with attempting to establish a consistent unique ID to link and reference various services and sources of broadcasting programmes and information. At present a citation group, led by Dr Sian Barber at Royal Holloway, is exploring user cases. In parallel, a trial is being run with the Entertainment Identifier Registry (EIDR) to create identifiers flexible enough to be capable of linking material together whether they be series, clips, metadata etc. EIDR technology is based on industry standard Digital Object Identifier (doi) technology and is currently being used by, amongst others, several large US movie studios.

### Strand B – Online Access

A scalable user management system and a new storage system have now been procured and added to BoB National. This service grows ever more popular and currently contains over 87,000 programmes (see page 4 for further updates). Once access to the broadcaster data feeds has been agreed, the project's ambition is to approach the broadcasters again to obtain agreement for transfer of web-ready copies of programmes. This would be for licensed use in higher and further education and allow institutions

to have access to two versions of programmes - web-ready and as broadcast. This is our aim, but as with the accessing of data feeds it should be highlighted that there is always a risk when negotiating with external parties.

### Strand C – Safeguarding Recordings

In January 2012 the Shared Services Project made a call for participation in a trial off-air recording union catalogue for HE and FE. There has been a really encouraging response and once the trial is completed and data collected the BUFVC will consider the future benefits of an off-air union catalogue. This could include informing disposal policies, so before an institution disposes of a recording it could ascertain whether it is unique, rare, common or very common – thus enabling an institution to prioritise how it releases shelf space. Another possibility is that it could enable the BUFVC to establish an analogue of the UK Research Reserve for off-airs; or again dependent on the success of the trial, the BUFVC could try to establish/facilitate an online interlibrary loan/copying system for off-airs.

Regular updates on the project will be sent out to BUFVC members, but in the meantime if you would like to discuss any aspect of the project please get in contact with me.

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