

Discover the Best of the Web with the Resource Discovery Network

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***Rezumat:** Helen C. Stokoe, manager de comunicare la Resource Discovery Network Centre, ne prezintă portalul național britanic RDN, gratuit, pentru sursele Internet care interesează comunitatea celor din cercetare și din învățământ. Cu această lucrare am vrea să deschidem o dezbatere care să aibă ca temă genul acesta de portaluri, necesitatea lor, cum le folosim, cum le construim. Sperăm să suscite interesul celor care lucrează în biblioteci și nu numai.*

(R.D.N.; resurse internet, descoperire; portal tematic)

<http://www.rdn.ac.uk>



The Resource Discovery Network (RDN) is the UK's free national gateway to Internet resources for the learning, teaching and research community.

Those using the RDN find high quality Web resources selected, described and catalogued by subject specialists from academia and affiliated organisations. The service currently links to more than 64,000 resources via a series of subject-based information gateways (or hubs). Each hub provides data for the RDN and is a gateway to Internet resources in a particular subject area. The hubs are also services in their own right providing extras such as newsfeeds and alerting services for their users, as well as search and browse functions.

There are currently seven hubs, covering a broad range of subjects:

- ALTIS – hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism
- BIOME – health and life sciences
- EEVL – engineering, mathematics and computing
- GEsource – geography and environment (official launch September 2003)
- Humbul – humanities
- PSIgate – physical sciences
- SOSIG – social science, business and law

A new hub, ArtIfact (arts and creative industries) will launch at the end of 2003.

The Resource Discovery Network (RDN) was ‘born’ in 1999 but it was more of a coming together of the e-lib and Subject Information Gateways projects which ran from 1995-1997 and 1995-1997 respectively. This is why you may have heard of some parts of the RDN such as EEVL or SOSIG several years ago.

As well as the subject gateways (or hubs) several other services are provided by the RDN. There is a multidisciplinary search tool, Resourcefinder, which enables users to make a general search across multiple subject areas. This, together with a top level subject browse facility (as required) can be embedded into educational institutions’ websites or intranets using a service called RDN-include. This means that users can access RDN resources without leaving the trusted, familiar environment of their institution’s webpages.

Another very popular RDN service is the Virtual Training Suite. This set of online tutorials is designed to help students, lecturers and researchers improve their Internet information literacy and IT skills. The tutorials are subject based which means the user will learn more about resources in their area of interest, as well as improving their Internet skills. By the end of June 2003 there will be over 60 tutorials available covering most subjects taught in universities and colleges. They are designed for people to work at their own pace and incorporate quizzes and interactive exercises to enhance the learning experience.

Behind the Headlines features selected RDN resources offering background information related to the latest news headlines. It has an archive search and is a useful way of linking educational resources to current affairs in a teaching context.

Over the last year the RDN has developed its service for the Further Education community, including more materials relevant to this sector such as Virtual Training Suite tutorials and case studies. The latter provide over a 100 examples of practical ideas and suggestions for incorporating RDN and other Internet resources into teaching and learning activities.

The RDN lives up to its name, it truly is a network, one that spreads right across the UK and beyond. In fact it is a collaboration of over seventy educational and research organisations including the National History Museum and the British library. This makes the RDN, without doubt, a service for the community by the community.

Standards are high at the RDN which means that all involved in it are dedicated to cataloguing quality resources. This means that everyone using the RDN can easily and quickly ‘Discover the Best of the Web’.

