

# Services to Support Research and Teaching

**The Virtual Library**

**Computer Services and  
Technological Projects**

**Publishing Activity  
and New Formats**

**Portal, Journals  
and Web Space**

# The Virtual Library

**10**

New databases created during the 2005-2006 course, which amounts to

**252**

Databases Number of subscribers to Virtual Library services:

**20,768**

The UOC has participated in the evaluation of Catalan university libraries.

The IN3 building is already in a position to offer the physical UOC research library, which holds all the scientific output of Manuel Castells.

During the 2005-2006 course the Virtual Library, as well as continuing to offer information resources and services to all users, has contributed to the improvement of the investigation support. It has participated in projects for teaching improvement and in the quality evaluation process of the AQU.

## Quality evaluation process.

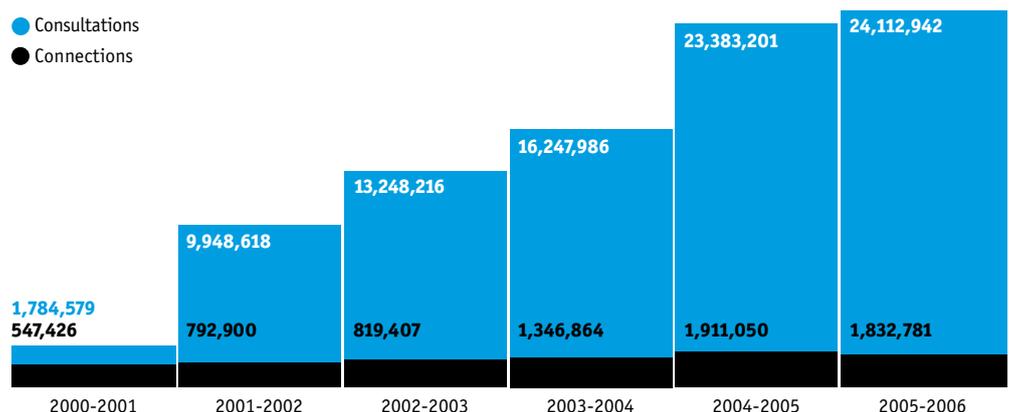
The UOC virtual library has participated in the quality evaluation process of the Catalonia library system. The UOC is one of ten universities integrated in this evaluation programme, which run the Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya (Agency for Quality of the Catalan University System, AQU). This is the second evaluation process of Catalan university libraries which the AQU has put into process and the first the UOC Virtual Library has participated in.

## The library collaborates in the new student classroom

The library has collaborated with the classroom project, which is led by the operative group for Educational Methodology, and whose objective is to develop the new student classroom. The project for the UOC Virtual Campus classroom began in September 2005 and its objective was to improve the current classroom, the necessities and expectations of its users having been taken into account. Hence, the idea to carry out this task using a design method centred on the user was put forward. The library has helped out with the design of the *Resources* site in the classroom, where sources of information and support aides necessary to carry out their academic activities are made available to the students.

## The physical research Library for research in Castelldefels

The actual physical research library was created during this course, it specialises in society information and knowledge, it is situated in The Parc Mediterrani de la Tecnologia in Castelldefels (Barcelona), in the Internet Interdisciplinary Institute (IN3) building. This physical research library also holds the scientific output of Professor Manuel Castells.



### **The press section expands**

From this course onwards a selection of main national and international, European, African, Asian, and American newspapers can be consulted, for example the National and International Economic press. Also other complementary resources have been added, such as press directories, news search engines and RSS.

### **The Library offers 4,457 new electronic resources**

The Virtual Library has added new databases. The first was the Elsevier (ScienceDirect) database, which offers access to the consultation of up to one thousand six hundred electronic journals in full text. Gale Virtual Reference Library has also been added, which allows access to forty on line reference texts. The third was JSTOR, which includes a collection of one hundred and sixteen academic journals in digital format. Finally, Springer-Link-e-books was added, which includes a collection of two thousand seven hundred specialised science and technology electronic books.

### **Projects, practical assignments and assignments, available at the digital collection**

The digital collection has initiated the collection process for end of degree projects (TFC), assignments and investigative work (TdR), in agreement with the student plan of each programme for student access. This new section also offers a compilation of links to end of degree research assignments from other universities, to other TFC holdings and a selection of information sources of interest (TdR publication licences).

### **New service of tourism news**

This new service (adds to the ten which already exist) has no subscription fee and every Friday provides news and recommended websites—amongst other types of information— regarding the world tourism field of interest. The existence of this service is possible, thanks once again, to the collaboration between the Library and the teaching staff. This collaboration has resulted in a work circuit which makes it possible for the selection of information and news sources carried out by the Library is endorsed by the know how of the lecturers of this diploma.

**The Virtual Library offers new resources, such as national and international press directories, a news service related to tourism, and new journal and book databases.**

**A new plan has been initiated to ensure that the research carried out in the UOC is made available in the Virtual Library.**

# Computer Services and Technological Projects

## Awards received

Throughout this academic course the UOC was recognised for technology projects with the following awards:

- Award for best management project, from Oracle users association
- National award for Telecommunications, Internet division, from the Catalan Government
- Award for the creation of custom formats in XML, from the Global Internet Congress

**The UOC is committed to fostering the use of free software amongst its students and lecturers.**

**The UOC heads a Project to provide online and a combination of offline and online education in all Catalan universities: the CAMPUS project.**

## Free software pilot project for information technology students

Throughout the 2005-2006 course, a lot of hard work has gone into offering a pilot project of a workspace based on free software for students and information technology teachers at the beginning of 2006-2007

Although the use of this initiative is totally voluntary, the UOC plans to establish a support and maintenance system which will be based on laboratories and specialised consultants, with the aim of facilitating its use to all students who chose this option.

This Project follows the UOC's general strategic line, whereby the UOC collective tries to offer the highest level of freedom possible to those connecting and working with the UOC when choosing technology tools.

## Contingency plan in the computer room

During the month of August a real contingency plan was carried out in the UOC computer room.

The test imitated a general crash of the Castelldefels computer room (the UOC DPC) which activated basic UOC services from the back-up room of the Tibidabo building. For more than three hours the UOC users could access normal services through the back-up system.

## The UOC heads the CAMPUS project

The UOC is responsible for the co-ordination and technology leadership of the CAMPUS project. This Project promoted by the Secretariat of Telecommunications and the Information Society (STSI) of the Catalan Government, was created through the voluntary work of the Catalan universities. The aim is to facilitate a virtual campus based on free software and free licensing GPL (General Public License), which allows exclusive superior online and a combination of offline and online education to be provided.

The UOC headed the Project and other Catalan universities were in charge of other parts of the development while imparting their knowledge and experiences.

This initiative can withhold up to ten thousand users connected at the same time. The design of the interface will be centred on the user. Aspects such as usability, accessibility, and personalisation of contents will be taken into account. On the whole the aim for the CAMPUS project is for it to become an international reference point in the field of *e-learning*.



### **Contents in XML, more easily used and accessible**

The UOC provides more than five thousand subject modules. During 2006, work was undertaken to separate content from its final format, with the intention of creating an agile generation and one which is adapted to the needs of the user.

The edition of the UOC didactic materials in XML format allows, amongst other things, the easy conversion of the content into html, PDF and audio files or to create interactive DVD and CD.

Exit formats have been created following design methods which centre on the user and standards of usability and accessibility. Over the next few years this work will allow flexibility where the UOC content type is concerned.

### **Management projects plan**

As a result of the analysis carried out in the areas of Operations, Marketing, Access and Student Care a plan of management projects has been defined laying down a timeline of implementation and a four-year plan of application of investments.

This projects plan, divided initially into 5 lines of action, incorporates process reorganisation projects, technical architecture renovation and the development of information technology tools which support the processes and optimise their performance.

Once the first year of the application of the plan passed during the 2006 course, the balance was considered highly successful.

### **The UOC participates in an automatic translation project**

The UOC Language Service has taken part in the Support Resources Project for the automatic translation, which is applied to education (RESTAD) together with the UAB, the UdG and the UPC language services. The project consists of developing information technology applications which facilitate and improve the automatic translation of educational Catalan documents, since a high number of educational materials are produced in Spanish and English.

As a special result, the documentation which the teaching staff provide for the students on the virtual campus have also been nominated to be translated, so that the subjects can be followed. In addition the academic administrative documents have been translated, increasingly these documents need to be offered in two or three languages.

**The edition of the didactic materials in XML format improves accessibility and use for students and teaching staff.**

**The UOC linguistic technology enables the development of automatic translation tools into Catalan of teaching documents.**



# Publishing Activity and New Formats



The new collection “Vull Saber” offers informative essays in Catalan with language and attractive price

The conversion of the materials into XML format allows them to be reused and updated easily and quickly.

## “Vull Saber ” (“I want to know”): books to understand the world

Editorial UOC has initiated the publication of a new collection of books: “Vull Saber”. The collection, inspired by the well known French “*Que sais-je*”, attempts to be a reference point in popular essays written in Catalan. The books have both pleasant language and attractive price (5 euros) in common, two aspects which not only prove attractive to the traditional university public, but also to all individuals wanting to continue learning throughout their lives. The collection published twenty titles in 2005 and twenty five more in 2006.

## New editorials grow by 65%

In the 2005-2006 course Editorial UOC published seventy one new items, this figure represents an important increase compared to the thirty seven titles published the previous year. The publisher has taken advantage of the 2005 operation to put into order its editorial objectives and its collections. Editorial UOC is centred on the university manuals (in Catalan and Spanish), on internet and the information society journals and on popular books.

## Contents in XML - step forward

The DNA of the UOC’s materials is called XML. This course, the UOC has begun to convert its materials into XML format. This ensures that the educational materials for the students are available in hard copy, as a web page and a book, without the need to produce them again in the adequate form for each case. The conversion of materials into XML allows the teaching staff to use them again and also allows them to lay the foundations for an integral content management (Rubicon project). It also allows them to correct misprints quickly.

## The UOC establishes its metadata

One of the first milestones of the integral content management project, project Rubicon (Re-Use and Best Interoperability of CONtents), is to determine which of the metadata the UOC uses to mark contents for the teaching staff. LOM UOC is the name given to the collection metadata that all the UOC teaching materials will have. It is a synthesis of the standard LOM (Learning Object Metadata) and contains fifteen basic metadata.

## Quality control of the contents.

The Content Management team, together with the UOC Linguistic Service and Eurecamedia, the contents production company for the UOC group, has put the quality control of contents for the teaching staff into process. This allows the first Content Quality Plan to be activated, from the analysis of different variables which affect the educational materials (the satisfaction generated amongst the students, the obsolescence and the performance) and the orientation of the lecturers.

# Portal, Journals and Web Space

## The UOC website is updated for better navigation and accessibility

In March the new design and format of the UOC portal was launched. The aim was to offer better navigation and accessibility, to offer more flexibility and to improve the accessibility of its contents. The improvements concentrated on the following changes:

- a new modular structure
- the inclusion of resources to improve accessibility
- indexing of contents and advanced search
- cross navigation of seven new themed fields
- improvements to the virtual press office
- new graphic design

At the same time that these changes were made, a project started for a global revision of the UOC website. This project will offer a decentralised web, a complete renovation, communicatively more efficient and prepared to make the qualitative step forward the university constantly demands. This new portal will be managed through an open source CMS

## The electronic publications, a UOC proposal for the dissemination of knowledge

The UOC is the force behind the digital journals with the aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To fulfil the formal quality standards for scientific journals (evaluation system of expert evaluation articles —*peer review*—, standardised publication and bibliography reference rules, double summary and key words, ISSN, editorial advice, etc.).
- To prioritise an index policy on databases and directories of scientific journals which allows in the short term entrance to publication rankings with an impact factor.
- To fulfil the accessibility and ergonomic standards characteristic of a digital publication.

## The UOC digital journals

### **Artnodes. A journal on art, science and technology**

<http://artnodes.uoc.edu>

Promoted by the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Information and Communication Sciences, and the Faculty of Computer Science, Multimedia and Telecommunications

### **Digithum, Humanities in the digital age**

<http://digithum.uoc.edu>

Promoted by the Faculty of Humanities, and the Faculty of Languages and Cultures

### **IDP. Revista d'Internet, Dret i Política (A journal on the Internet, Law and Politics)**

<http://idp.uoc.edu>

Promoted by the Faculty of Law and Political Science

### **Mosaic. Multimedia technologies and communication**

<http://mosaic.uoc.edu>

Promoted by the UOC's Graduate in Multimedia Studies

### **RUSC. Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del Conocimiento (University and Knowledge Society Journal)**

<http://rusc.uoc.edu>

Promoted by the Unesco Chair in E-learning

### **UOC Papers. E-Journal on the Knowledge Society**

<http://uocpapers.uoc.edu>

Of an interdisciplinary nature

The UOC portal receives  
**2,630,000**  
visits every month.

**415,000**  
single visitors are  
registered monthly.

**3,900**  
subscribers to the  
UOC journals

**123,000**  
articles of complete  
text downloaded



### The journal *UOC Papers* is born

The UOC has launched, in digital format, a new academic journal, *UOC Papers*. It is of interdisciplinary character and its aim is to publish original university texts of interest which focus on the merging of the universities own thematic fields with the knowledge society.



*UOC Papers* is the sixth UOC electronic journal, its aim is to treat in an interdisciplinary way the merging of the universities own fields with the knowledge society.

### The 2005 Lletra award recognises the *El Llibreter* blog

The Girona literature awards have granted the Lletra prize to the personal blog *El Llibreter*. The panel of judges recognised the blog phenomena, which during the course of this year has positively galvanized the literary information and opinion on the Net.



### The World of culture analyses Catalan literature

Oriol Izquierdo, lecturer at the Ramon Llull University; Rosa Vergés, film director; Lourdes Malgrat, Editor for Arola Editors; Imma Monsó, writer; Jordi Puntí, writer and journalist; and Guillem Terribas, book distributor, analyse Catalan literature on the virtual space *Anatomy 2005-2006: A Balance and a Prophecy for Catalan Literature*, hosted on the “Lletra” web space.



Lletra is a virtual space for Catalan Literature, a place for Catalan literature on the Internet.

### An audio book for Sant Jordi

The UOC created, with regards to the celebration of the Sant Jordi festival, *La lletr@ ferida del llibre rosa*, an anthology of texts chosen from “Lletra”’s literature holdings, suitable for reading, listening to, recommending and downloading.

