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BIT BY BIT

by Joyce Ogburn (Penn State University) and
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This is a new column which will address technical issues including networking, consortia activities, electronic resources, and access. We welcome contributions. Please send your ideas, comments, and suggestions to either:

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This column is on EDUCOM - The Electronic Connection for Higher Education Academic librarians support the higher education community in a variety of ways, many of which involve electronic resources, networks, or data files.   To better serve this community, librarians have expanded their professional concerns and associations to include groups outside of librarianship. One such group is EDUCOM.

EDUCOM is a consortium of institutions and businesses concerned   with   educational computing and technology. This non-profit consortium comprises approximately 600 members committed to the   use and management of information technology in higher education. Founded in 1964 at the University of Michigan by five medical school deans, EDUCOM was intended to foster the sharing of computing and technical expertise among medical schools. In 1965 EDUCOM 's charter was broadened to encompass all institutions of higher education. Last fall EDUCOM celebrated 25 years of service to higher education in managing technology to assist the education and research process.

Attendees at EDUCOM meetings include teaching faculty, librarians, administrators, directors of computing centers, and others who   serve   higher   education information needs. Among the interests of EDUCOM 's constituents are intellectual property rights, licensing, and electronic information resources. Two major goals of EDUCOM include: 1) to create an instruction and research electronic network to link scholars around the world, and 2) to infuse computing into higher education curriculum in the U.S. To meet these goals EDUCOM has developed its Software Initiative (recently renamed Educational Uses of Information Technology), which is aimed specifically at expanding uses of information technology in teaching and learning process. The Educational Uses of Software sponsors

three major resources: 1) EDUCOM/NCRIPTAL Distinguished Software Collection (EDSC), 2) Academic Software Catalog (ASC), and 3)EDUCOM Selected Software List (ESSL), a subset of ASC.

EDUCOM's accomplishments include developing (with ADAPSO, the computer software and services industry association) a code on ethical use of software, publishing materials on software management, collection and use, and creating an awards program for outstanding instructional software. In March 1990, EDUCOM joined with ARL and CAUSE (the Association for the Management of Information Technology in Higher Education) to form the new Coalition for Networked Information to explore the potential uses of the proposed NREN (National Research and Education Network). The group will attempt to identify public policy issues and to assign priorities among information resources slated for NREN.

EDUCOM's publications

include:

Using Software: A Guide to Ethical and Legal Use of Software for Members of the Academic Community (brochure, 1987),

Managing Academic Software: Leadership, Law and Logistics for Administrators, Faculty and Publishers by Shirley C. Smith (1988),

Facilitating Academic Software Development edited by Jerry W. Sprecher (1988),

Campus Networking Strategies edited by Caroline Arms (1988),

Ivory Towers, Silicon Basements: Learner-Centered Computing in Post-Secondary Education by the FIPSE Technology Study Group, Diane P Balestri, Editor (1988).

Serial publications include:

EDUCOM Review and Software Initiative Newsletter.

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