

DCIS: A Library / ITCollaboration at Dartmouth College

Outline of the presentation

What is DCIS?

DCIS design goals

Quick technical look under the hood

DCIS as an instance of distributed computing
How DCIS works

How it looks from the user's point of view

Finding databases
Searching databases
Managing DCIS components

Examples of DCIS content

Full text
Images
Administrative documents
Library catalogs and reference materials

Recent developments

WWW interface
Expanded Navigator functionality
Expanded Online Library functionality

How does Dartmouth "do"DCIS?

Dartmouth organizational structures

Computing Services
Library
Provost's Office

Organizational roles

Funding
IT staff
Librarians
Community interactions

Examples of program and content "midwifery"

Kerberos authentication mechanisms
Administrative Guide
Works in philosophy and literature
Classics Dept. coins database

DCIS: A General Overview

The purpose of the Dartmouth College Information System (DCIS) is to provide information access to the entire spectrum of campus users, including faculty, students, librarians, non-technical staff, and senior administrators. The information available ranges from the library catalog and many academic sources to administrative and daily living information. This client-server system is widely and heavily used at Dartmouth. Portions of DCIS have also been installed at a number of other educational institutions.

The Dartmouth College Information System (DCIS) is a client-server based campus-wide information retrieval system. DCIS consists of several Macintosh client applications that provide access to a number of different commercially available database management systems and some locally developed ones. The databases at Dartmouth College are distributed across several central server computers. A common network protocol is used to connect clients and servers. A distributed authentication server, implementing the Inter Domain Access Protocol (IDAP), controls access to licensed databases. IDAP permits multiple institutions to cooperatively license information resources.

DCIS allows users to ignore the details of access and to concentrate on working with the databases. The Navigator application helps users browse or search the DCIS database directory and connect to a particular resource. The Navigator will determine what additional software is needed, download it to your workstation if necessary and start it running. Client applications like Online Library are used to search a particular database and display and print the results. A graphical user interface, complex searches, local data manipulation, and graphical display of results are among Online Library's features.

DCIS can handle many resources through the same user interface. The OnlineLibrary application is able to gain access to functionally different servers with similar content in a manner almost transparent to the user. The effort invested in learning to use this application benefits the user many times on many different databases.

DCIS also helps users locate, acquire, and maintain the client software on their workstations. The system provides a mechanism to update its components as they are developed. Users learn about updates to the software as they use it, with the system delivering the new version of a component automatically. Software distribution and user support is greatly simplified.

Relevant URLs

DCIS

http://www.dartmouth.edu/pages/softdev/DCIS_Project.html

Dartmouth Academic Computing

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/comp/ac/>

Dartmouth Library

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/>

Presenter information

[Malcolm Brown](#)

Director, Academic Computing
Computing Services, Dartmouth College
Kiewit Computation Center 6028
27 North Main Street
Hanover, NH 03755
phone: 603-646-1349
fax: 603-646-2810
email: malcolm.b.brown@dartmouth.edu
Web: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~malcolm/mbb.html>

