

**Information Services
e-Learning Committee**

15 June 2009

Edinburgh University and iTunesU

Brief description of the paper

A briefing on the development of Edinburgh University's iTunesU presence

Action requested

*For information.
For comment around developing the presence.*

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

Risk Assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and Diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No

Any other relevant information

The Edinburgh University iTunesU presence is being developed and managed by Communications and Marketing.

Originator of the paper

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05/06/2009*

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Edinburgh University and iTunesU



Edinburgh University and iTunesU

Date: 03/06/2009

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1. Introduction

The University of Edinburgh is in the process of developing a presence on iTunesU. iTunesU is a service to distribute educational audio and video content aimed at the interested lay-public or for students within a college or university via Apple's iTunes software. No charge is made for content distributed through this service. The audio and video files themselves are hosted on the University's podcasting infrastructure (provided centrally by IS).

A corporate presence has been developed by Communications and Marketing. There now exists an opportunity to extend this offering to allow academic units to add their own distinctive content to their own areas within the University's iTunesU presence.

To facilitate this a working group is being convened with representatives from Information Services, Communications and Marketing and the three colleges. This group will investigate the means by which devolved editorial controls and quality assurance procedures can be put in place to ensure that the service is available to all areas of the organisation.

2. About iTunesU

In the UK iTunesU is operated as an RSS aggregation service. Universities provide the RSS feed to content hosted on their own systems and iTunesU organises the data and makes it browse-able by categories, searchable by keyword etc. There is the ability to highlight and organise information on the University's home in iTunes but this is rarely seen by browsers – most simply search or use categories. The service is without cost to those uploading or downloading material.

Content is hosted and distributed on the University's podcasting infrastructure (provided centrally by IS) and iTunesU is a mechanism for distributing this content to a worldwide audience. The advantage to Universities in using the service is that it provides access to an established mechanism for delivering audio and video content to a world-wide audience - essentially it is a shop-window.

3. University of Edinburgh usage

The University's presence is being developed and managed by Communications & Marketing as an official University presence could have reputational benefits. Content on iTunesU will be accessible by users browsing/searching for relevant information. Content can also be highlighted on the University's home page within iTunesU or submitted to Apple to be highlighted elsewhere on iTunes. Decisions on which content from the University's iTunesU presence will be highlighted in this way will be made by C&M in a process analogous to deciding what should appear on the home page of the University's website.

It is currently felt that content that iTunesU should be used as a way of distributing distinctive content for students, academics and the general public. Content that is more appropriate to an internal audience or of less general interest should be distributed via University websites, the Virtual Learning Environment and other mechanisms, supported by the IS Podcasting and Streaming Service.

In particular given the proprietary nature of the software and the difficulty in supporting it within the University it is not considered an appropriate way to distribute material for teaching and learning. This does not preclude using it as a mechanism to distribute material developed to support teaching and learning to a world-wide audience of interested lay people.

4. Policy and legal issues

Following discussions within Information Services it was agreed that there are two major areas that further work is needed to support the University's presence. The details are given below under the broad headings *Legal Issues* and *Policy Issues*.

4.1. Legal issues

Need to draw up and clear with University lawyers:

- an agreement for content creators submitting material for consideration for iTunesU (and other distribution channels). Content creator will have performer's rights and University will have copyright/IPR, should also assert that there is no 3rd party copyrighted material included.

a nonexclusive, royalty-free right and license to use, reproduce, modify the format and display of content (not the substance of any content), distribute, transmit, perform and display content on the iTunes U Site and the iTunes Store throughout the world, in whole or in part, by any means now known or hereafter developed (such as, but not limited to, websites and electronic downloads);

- similar agreement/statement for contributors to seminars/conferences that are recorded.
- statement for attendees at seminars/conferences that are recorded at time of booking. This is assuming that notification is enough, as per attendance at a televised event (such as a party conference).
- seek clarification over where legal responsibility would lie for breach of 3rd party copyright and whether a clear take-down policy would be sufficient to protect the University.

4.2. Policy issues

- Would like to see a business plan and in particular a risk analysis prepared by C&M
- Need to develop standards for content that is submitted to be judged/quality assured against. This will provide a basis and guidance for approvers and should include something about content for iTunesU being distinctive. Standard content should and can be distributed internally, but this distribution channel is for content of worldwide interest.
- C&M should consider whether there should be a steering group for this and other distribution channels which have an official presence (such as youTube). This should be informed by the response from Schools & Colleges, and if formed should membership be sufficiently senior to take clear ownership.
This has been agreed with C&M.

5. Content creation opportunities

The ability to deliver content to a world-wide audience through an existing high-profile distribution mechanism provides an opportunity to encourage the creation of interesting distinctive content. Input around ideas for content to be created is actively sought, production may be led by C&M, Multi-Media Team, users or other units. Some existing ideas are:

Promotional content

- A collection of short (less than 2 minute) films featuring Professors or senior staff, including those from support groups talking about exciting challenges or work in their field;
- Short films by students showing aspects of their lives at the University and studying at Edinburgh;
- Mini tours of University of Edinburgh sites;
- Films featuring treasures from the CRC, museums and galleries;
- Films highlighting the lives of prominent alumni and staff past and present;

General content

- Inaugural lectures (which are already required to be public) should be routinely recorded and posted;
- Research projects should be encouraged to record summaries of their results as part of the public dissemination of knowledge, work with Edinburgh Research and Innovation
- Access to post material and support for production should be given to EUSA and through them Student Societies for student generated material