

Notes from Discussion at Internet2  
Advanced Camp in Minneapolis  
Thursday, June 19, 2008

**TOPIC:**

Service Discovery - What means are used to facilitate service discovery on campuses? Can they extend or articulate with federated services? How are service gaps or overlaps identified and dealt with? Who needs to play together in this space, both inside and beyond campuses?

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Service registry and query ability were discussed.

It was suggested that every possible service discovery mechanism will be useful to someone, so it's good to embrace as many as possible.

Registry should record:

- What the service is
- Where it is provided
- How to access and use the service
- Capabilities, requirements and cost
- License requirements
- Policies and obligations

A big challenge is making users aware that a service exists. Often a humanities scholar wants to do something and they don't know if they need to invent the wheel or if the service already exists, and if it does exist they don't know how to find it.

Work of other organizations:

- Open Grid Forum (OGF) has a working group looking at describing objects in a registry in a meaningful way.
- OASIS has a working group looking at creating interoperable consent issues for the medical area. Eventually OASIS wants to position this in a broader way, but the first use case is health and consent.

Should there be a global place to register services? Should finding services/registries be a matter of doing a cross-stitch across a global PKI?

For the Grid community, the most important naming is RNS (Resource Namespace Service). This is not the traditional file system with one root. Individuals have their own notion of root. The organization is very human. Things are community centric, organized by how the community thinks about services and information.

Perhaps in a services registry, information should be represented in a “flat” way, like on today’s Internet, where searches and crawlers find desired information.

What if a person is searching for the authoritative version of a service? Add to the registry how many people are using a service or how many downloads have occurred?

Different families of registries could be used. This was the idea of the \*.info domain on the web. However, there is no unified method for web registries. If a directory of directories is created, how does it get maintained?

What about a Facebook-for-Scholars approach to discovery, that’s based on networking with one’s colleagues?

Some scholars like the serendipity of going to the physical library. They find stuff they weren’t looking for, stumble across things they need.

How to motivate authors/owners of resources to enter things into a registry? Everyone wants to be a consumer, but how do we give people incentives to make contributions to digital commons? Suggestions:

- Make contributing to digital commons an aspect of getting tenure.
- Find the right set of early adopters.
- Advance one’s own scholarship by participating.
- Virtue and reputation, things that motivate people to participate in open source software projects.

Should there be a lightweight registration process or a common naming convention? If contributors are required to provide metadata or extra info, how can that be made organic and relatively painless?

Do we need to refine the concept of services? Use classification theory? What are the distinct parts?

Cataloging and classification are two different activities.

The disciplines have done a great job of describing their area (such as IEEE). Perhaps it’s necessary to establish meta-architecture and come to consensus on the commonality.