

[Jean Sykes](#)

The European Digital Library for Economics

Keynote Item

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Decomate II

The European Digital Library for
Economics

Jean Sykes, Librarian and Director of
Information Services

London School of Economics



Outline of Presentation



- ◆ Part One: extending Decomate
- ◆ Learning lessons from the project
- ◆ Technical, organisational, legal issues
- ◆ The importance of user requirements
- ◆ More content is needed
- ◆ An exploitation plan is essential



Outline of Presentation



- ◆ Part Two: Putting Decomate into context
- ◆ Lessons apply to any subject
- ◆ The wider digital scene
- ◆ National and international digital library initiatives
- ◆ Everything on the desktop
- ◆ Decomate as part of the future vision



Extending Decomate (1)



- ◆ First, the lessons learned need to be documented:
- ◆ Technical issues
- ◆ Organisational issues
- ◆ Legal (especially copyright) issues
- ◆ These lessons will form a good basis for extension of Decomate



Extending Decomate (2)



- ◆ Next, the importance of user requirements and user behaviour:
- ◆ Previous generations of projects tended to leave the direct end user out of it, relying on librarians to interpret user needs
- ◆ The new generation of desktop projects and services is putting the user at centre stage



Extending Decomate (3)



- ◆ More content is needed:
- ◆ Can we add access to relevant datasets?
- ◆ Digitised versions of older print materials: JSTOR agreement is a major achievement
- ◆ We need to engage more libraries with strong collections in Economics - for both content and expertise



Extending Decomate (4)



- ◆ We should invite other major European Economics libraries to join Decomate eg:
- ◆ IFW in Kiel; Athens University
- ◆ Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne
- ◆ Other major Economics institutions
- ◆ Then Decomate will truly be The European Digital Library for Economics



An Exploitation Plan



- ◆ Add more Economics libraries to the consortium
- ◆ Find more commercial partners
- ◆ Look for non-commercial third parties
- ◆ Enhance content and attractiveness
- ◆ Market the product, with the help of the commercial partners



Decomate in Context (1)



- ◆ The lessons learned can apply to any subject
- ◆ Decomate must disseminate widely its progress and its findings
- ◆ Libraries in other specialist subjects can follow Decomate - the software is not subject-specific
- ◆ Contributing to the wider digital scene



Decomate in Context (2)



- ◆ Frameworks into which Decomate could also sit are:
- ◆ National and international digital library initiatives
- ◆ In the UK, the DNER (Distributed National Electronic Resource)
- ◆ Digibib and other regional projects, part of the German Digital Library vision



Decomate in Context (3)



- ◆ Netherlands digital library initiatives
- ◆ Any other digital initiatives in Europe
- ◆ And why not further afield:
- ◆ National Digital Library (USA)
- ◆ Canadian Initiative on Digital Libraries
- ◆ Both as demonstrator of a discipline-based tool and to enrich with European content



Decomate in Context (4)



- ◆ More on the desktop:
- ◆ Subject-relevant digitised collections (eg RSLP in UK, NSF and CMI in USA)
- ◆ National Library digitisation projects
- ◆ Public libraries and archives initiatives (eg People's Network and A to A in UK)
- ◆ End user electronic document request and delivery - for articles not available online



Decomate in Context (5)



- ◆ Everything on the desktop (continued):
- ◆ Specialist subject portal services like Decomate will play a key part in the development of integrated national and international digital information resources
- ◆ The key is to ensure awareness of Decomate amongst those shaping the digital future



Final words



- ◆ Like all good research, Decomate poses more questions while solving earlier ones
- ◆ So ongoing development is necessary
- ◆ Otherwise, you haven't done anything new
- ◆ Like all good products, it can survive if its marketing/exploitation is effective and it is continuously improved as a result of user feedback and technical ingenuity