BOINC UK
UPDATE NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 01 - APRIL 2006

bunc

The Newsletter from www.boincuk.com

Distributed Computing
Molecular Biological Analysis
Search for Aliens

New Website, New Newsletter, New Focus

Our new website at www.boincuk.com has just launched and we hope you find it a useful place to visit whenever you're looking for your own stats, or the latest project and team news.

We may have started as 'SETI UK' but our members are crunching through data from numerous projects now, and our new focus is on our total BOINC stats, and so the website and domain reflect this recent development.

It may be safe to say that many members of our Team are still passionate about SETI, and devote a good portion of their crunching time to the SETI project; so expect to see a good deal of SETI related news around the website and the Newsletter.

As 'BOINC UK' we will bring you news and opinions about all the major BOINC projects, and this brand new Newsletter, 'bunc', will help us all keep in touch and up to date.

Who We Are

BOINC UK is the new name for SETI UK, and we are a group of people who are enthusiastic about Distributed Computing and science.

Our website and this newsletter are freely available to everyone and anyone interested in BOINC Projects, and you are invited to become part of the team by joining Team 'Lookers'.

Features

We need your stories for

bunc

The Newsletter for BOINC UK will grow and develop over the coming months; to have a hand in shaping our Newsletter, please email Wedgekin@gmail.com with your comments and feedback, but more importantly, please submit stories, articles, information and anything BOINC related for inclusion in the June issue of bunc.

It Was Great When It All Began...

But where did BOINC UK come from?

In days gone by, the people at SETI over at Berkeley had good intentions to provide UK specific information, but it never happened. Our young hero, Mike, got pro-active and wrote the content needed for the UK specific page, and so became entrenched in SETI.

Years later, with a domain name or two under his belt, Mike has lead 'Team Lookers' to develop more sophisticated websites and Team communications, for what has become 'BOINK UK' – Team Lookers is based on Mike's SETI username, and you can still see him around the web's stats pages as 'Lookers'.

So, Mike created Team Lookers and the SETI UK website, and we've now developed into BOINC UK, to reflect the enthusiasm for the BOINC system of distributed computing.

Mike's distant past was spent working with his father's amateur radio equipment (have you seen the film 'Contact'?) and playing hockey, but now Mike fills his time with computer related subjects, including the building of his personal systems, which seem to number six or seven at the last count – quite a SETI Farm!

"Why do I run SETI 24 hours a day ? Because I am convinced that other intelligence does exist and am fascinated by the possibility that we may discover it - and I want to be here when it happens!!"

How to Tell if You're a BOINC Addict

10. Your computer runs 24 hours a day; you sigh pointedly when newbies install projects with the screen saver option enabled.

9. You have your boincstats WAP page bookmarked on your WAP phone.

8. You'd like to meet Neil Munday.

7. You're considering spending more than you can afford on a new processor.

6. You understand what Whetstone and Dhrystone tests are.

5. You've sought permission to install BOINC on a dozen computers at the office.

4. You've not got permission, but you install Command Line BOINC anyway...

3. You begin to think of Non-BOINCers as being at the root of societal breakdown because of their flagrant ignorance and selfishness.

2. You've argued about 'pure research' in a pub as if you work for MIT.

1. You have a clear understanding of Cobblestones and how credits are dished out. You consider it perfectly simple and fair.

Why bunc?

bunc might be an acronym for BOINC UK Newsletter Circular, but mostly, it's a play on the 'BOINC' acronym, and a reference to 'bunk' or 'bunkum' which means "nonsense and empty chatter".

Geordie's SETI Stack:
Two PIIIs and three Dual Celerons.

Stacks and Farms

What's a stack? Why do farms get mentioned so much?

The thing about "getting into computers" is that it's tempting to buy a new system every couple of years. Sure, it's sensible to upgrade the CPU, the motherboard, the RAM, the hard drive and graphics card, but even if you do, you're left with a lot of left-over parts. So, people tend to have one or two older computers kicking about the house, gathering dust, while you promise to give it to your parents and 'teach them the internet'. Meanwhile, your parents have started building Linux boxes and have set up their own e-business…

With spare computers, comes the chance to set up a home network, shared music, and of course, more CPU time devoted to crunching through BOINC projects.

So, once we've got two or three computers humming away on BOINC, we call it a BOINC Farm, and there's some cool stuff you can do with a farm.

BOINC View from boincview.amanheis.de/ is a program (free to download) that can show all your BOINC clients around your home network, so that you can view and control all your BOINCing from your main computer.

BOINC View may not be 100% useful for everyone but it doesn't seem to do any harm and it can be of real use to people with larger farms.

Which brings us to stacks. A stack is a pile of computer bits, with the sole purpose of crunching BOINC projects.

Whereas a farm is made up of multiple computers, a stack is crafted out of the bare-bones of computers, often just the basics: motherboard, CPU, RAM, hard drive, power supply and a cheap Operating System. Cases?, plugs?, monitors? – these things the stack needs not.

People make stacks out of a cheap framework, wood, furniture, shelves and all the PC parts they can scavenge and find on eBay.

Do you have a stack or a good looking farm? Send a picture with your stats to Wedgekin@gmail.com for the next issue of the BOINC UK Newsletter.

Quick Links

BOINC Related Sites

1. BOINC Wiki
http://boinc-wiki.ath.cx/
All you ever need to know.

2. BOINC UK Sig Stats
www.boincuk.com/redir.htm
Your stats in a great signature image.

3. BOINC Stats
www.boincstats.com/
The most comprehensive personal and team stats.

4. Distributed Computing
www.distributedcomputing.info/

5. BOINC Online Schedulers.
http://esea.dk/esea/bosgenerator.asp
See and get server status indicators.

6. Synergy Stats
www.boincsynergy.com/stats/
A different view of stats.

7. BOINC Combined Stats
www.boinc.netsoft-online.com/
Officially sanctioned stats.

8. BOINC UK Forum
www.boincuk.com
Join our Forum for help and

Farm and Stack Links

BOINC View
http://boincview.amanheis.de

Geordie's Stacks
http://www.nelliott.demon.co.uk/distributed/setistack.html

BOINC UK and Our Projects

We may have come from SETI, and we may love SETI, but there are more Projects than you may know out there, and so perhaps you'd like to devote a proportion of your crunching time to a new project or two?

BOINC UK run several teams, all called 'Lookers' and all of them add to our overall BOINC Team Stats.

Looking at the table of Team Lookers Projects, you might find there's room for you to join more than our SETI Team.

Project & Link	Founder	Active Members
SETI@Home	Lookers	73
Einstein@Home	Chris Dodd	11
CPDN	Chris Dodd	10
LHC@Home	Chris Dodd	7
Predictor@Home	Lookers	7
SETI@Home Beta	Complicity	5
Rosetta@Home	Lookers	5
QMC@Home	Wedge	4
PrimeGRID	Shawn	2
BBC Climate		2

Project Run Down

SETI@Home - many of us were introduced to the concept of Distributed Computing by the Classic SETI Screensaver back in 1999, and we're still proud of our Classic Totals. Searching for patterns in radio signals from space – evidence of Extra Terrestrial Intelligence.

Einstein@Home - is he? Enquiring Minds want to know. Analysing gravitational wave date in the search for spinning neutron stars out in space.

CPDN – ClimatePrediction Dot Net (get it?) – forecasting needs a lot of processing power, join the largest forecasting experiment.

Predictor@Home - virtual prediction of protein molecule shapes based on their protein sequence. Understanding the shape of proteins helps all sorts of biological endeavours.

QMC@Home - Quantum Monte Carlo; hmm, maybe it should be 'Quantum Mechanics…' – nope, apparently 'the Monte Carlo Method' is a mathematical method of analysing data using random numbers and …stuff. QMC is a Quantum Chemistry project that approximates and infers the state of molecules, rather than measuring them. Understanding the shape of molecules helps all sorts of chemical and biological endeavours.

Rosetta@Home - Virtually folds protein molecules to analyse protein interactions. Understanding protein shapes in this way has enormous implications for biology and disease.

LHC@Home - simulates particles traveling around the LHC particle accelerator to study the stability of their orbits, allowing the Large Hadron Collider to be built and giving further insights into physics. Very cool screen saver apparently, for those of you who like that sort of thing.

SETI@Home Beta – Live testing of the next version of SETI@Home.

Orbit@Home - cool Linux based project, monitoring the orbit of all the asteroids passing near the Earth.

SIMAP – database of calculated protein similarities that requires a lot of computational power to keep up-to-date.

Each of us should consider what we feel great about getting involved with – there are debates about the worthiness of BOINC projects; what we do know is that discoveries occur in two ways; by happenstance, and with hard work.
Get involved, support another project this month.

Get involved

If you are already part of the team, then spread the word about bunc & www.boincuk.com

Get BOINC

http://boinc.berkeley.edu/download.php

Get a Project

http://boinc.berkeley.edu

Join Team 'Lookers'

Spread the word

Once attached to a Project, use the Project's own website and search for our team, 'Lookers' and then use the link to join.

About BOINC UK - www.boincuk.com

BOINC UK, the website of Team 'Lookers' provides statistics, news, articles and this Newsletter for everyone and anyone; we also offer great 'Stat Signatures'. We have a developing Message Board for members to get to know each other and exchange hints and tips.

About bunc

bunc is an electronic newsletter provided for free from BOINC UK Team Lookers, and covers anything of interest regarding BOINC and the BOINC Projects.

bunc is distributed by email, and available from the BOINC UK website; sign up to the Newsletter mailing list to be sent this PDF.

bunc is published six times a year; bunc accepts information and articles from anyone and any team, submit articles or news ideas to Wedgekin@gmail.com

Thanks to Graeme and Ian for their help and support.

Copyright

Editorial and submissions:

Wedgekin@gmail.com

www.boincuk.com