CCP4: PR, Conferences and Workshops

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3rd March 2004 PR Conferences and Workshops
Who’s involved?

• Daresbury CCP4 staff
  • Alun Ashton, Charles Ballard, Martyn Winn, Maeri Howard-Eales, Peter Briggs

• Harry Powell

• Others:
  • Newsletter contributors
  • People at workshops & conferences (developers and expert users)
What is PR?

From Dictionary.com:

**public relations**

*pl. n Abbr PR*

1. *(used with singular verb)* The art or science of establishing and promoting a favourable relationship with the public.

2. *(used with a pl. verb)* The **methods and activities** employed to establish and promote a **favourable relationship** with the public.

3. *(used with a sing. or pl. verb)* The degree of success obtained in achieving a favourable relationship with the public.
Who are our public?

• **User base**
  • Academic/non-profit institutions
  • Commercial organisations

• **Software Developers**
  • Contributors to the suite
  • Users of the CCP4 libraries *e.g.* **SOLVE**
  • Packages using CCP4 programs *e.g.* **SHARP, ARP/wARP**
Why bother having a favourable relationship with our public?

• **Promote new and improved software**
  - Raise profile of individual programs
  - Citations for program developers

• **Sell more commercial licences**
  - Funds new developments, workshops etc (*including this one!*)
  - Pays for many of the people at this meeting (*including me!*).

• **Developers**
  - Continue to contribute software & use the libraries/programs
  - Continue to make improvements to CCP4 software

• **Inform and educate next generation of Pxers**
  - Part of CCP4’s remit to educate and promote best practice
  - Results in “better science” ;)

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What methods and activities do we employ?

• Technical support
• CCP4 publications
  • *Informal newsletter*
  • *Journal-style newsletter*
• Presence at conferences
  • *Exhibition stands*
  • *Satellite workshops*

• *Website and mailing lists* (www.ccp4.ac.uk, ccp4bb, ccp4-dev)
• *Study Weekend*
• *Conference talks and posters by individuals*
• *Publications*
**Technical Support**

- Provided by CCP4 staff at Daresbury
- [ccp4@ccp4.ac.uk, ccp4gui@ccp4.ac.uk](mailto:ccp4@ccp4.ac.uk, ccp4gui@ccp4.ac.uk)
- All kinds of everything:
  - general queries, problems, bug reports, suggestions

- This is the CCP4 shopfront!
  - Need to address problems quickly and effectively
  - People who get good support are more likely to use the software in future
  - Please support our efforts in addressing user problems
Newsletters

• news@ccp4 (ed. Maeri Howard-Eales)
  • Informal “lightweight” glossy newsletter
  • Publicise releases, meetings, new staff, CCP4-related news
  • Sent to commercial customers & distributed at conferences

• CCP4 Newsletter on Protein Crystallography
  (ed. Charles Ballard)
  • “Traditional” newsletter
  • Articles on new software, methods and methodology
  • Now web-only publication
  • http://www.ccp4.ac.uk/newsletters.html
Conferences ...

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PR Conferences and Workshops
Conferences

• Generally organised by DL staff (& Harry!)

• Focus on non-UK conferences for 2004:
  • American Crystallographic Association (ACA) Chicago
  • Asian Crystallographic Association (AsCA) Hong Kong
  • European Crystallographic Association (ECM) Budapest

• Exhibition stands
  • Posters advertising latest release, future developments
  • Free copies of CCP4 manual, newsletters
  • Staff on hand to answer user questions, demonstrate software, and talk to developers
  • Good opportunity to meet non-UK users and developers!
Conferences

• Exhibition stands
  • Posters advertising latest release, future developments
  • Free copies of CCP4 manual, newsletters
  • Staff on hand to answer user questions, demonstrate software, and talk to developers

• Workshops focused on using CCP4 software
  • e.g. 1-day satellite workshop at ACA 2004
    • Practical talks on MOSFLM, SCALA, REFMAC, CCP4mg ...
    • In conjunction with the PDB
  • Possibly also @ ECM, AsCA…?
Conferences

- **Opportunity to promote the software to non-UK users**
  - Often they are less familiar with using CCP4
  - Helps get over the energy barrier
    - *Generally people like to use what they know*
  - Particular interest in MOSFLM and REFMAC
  - Can also provide useful feedback for developers
  - It’s fun! :)

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In conclusion…

It’s a good idea to promote the software, because
  • Fits in with the educational aims of the CCP4 project
  • Results in more users (and keeps the ones we’ve got)
    • Citations
    • Commercial licences

PR can be done in a variety of ways
  • Technical support is important
  • Newsletters can promote new software and developments
  • Conference exhibitions and satellite workshops
    • Educate and inform users particularly outside UK (& in UK?)
    • Give good feedback to developers
  • Please get involved!