

# Semantic Support for Smart Laboratories

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CINF, ACS San Diego  
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## Talk: Workflow

- Introduction to *e*-Science & the Combechem Project
- Pub / Sub
- Semantics for Smart but not Dark Labs
- Conclusions: Publication@Source



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# The CombeChem Project

- Collect data with regard to how it could eventually be used
  - Make sure the metadata is of high quality
  - Record properly at source in Digital Form
- The Chemistry Lab
  - People & Machines working together
- End to End linking of data and information
  - Publication@Source
- But then.... "Who needs provenance?"

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## Adapt SHG lab

- Set out to store the data coming from our non-linear laser experiment
- Use a database!

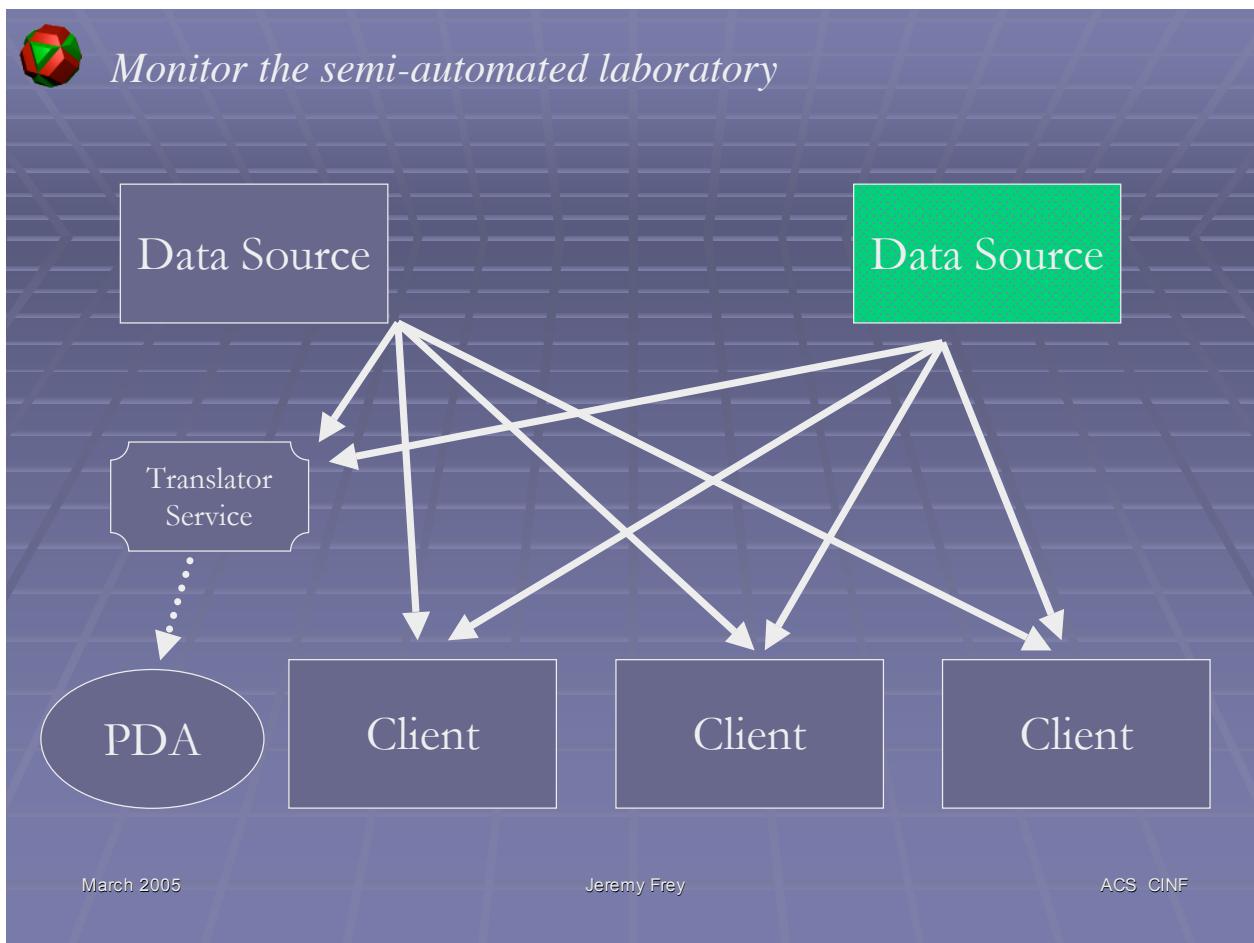
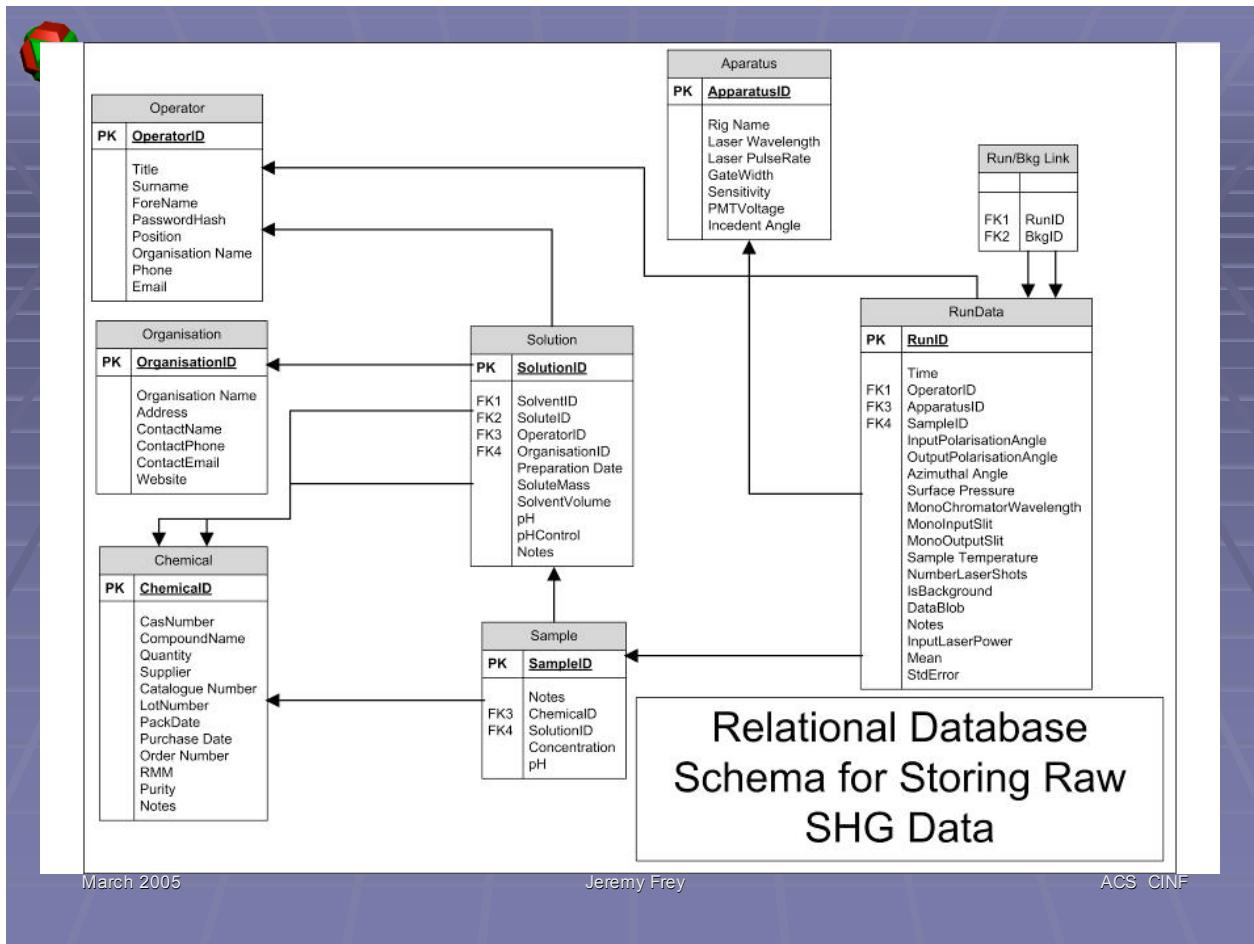


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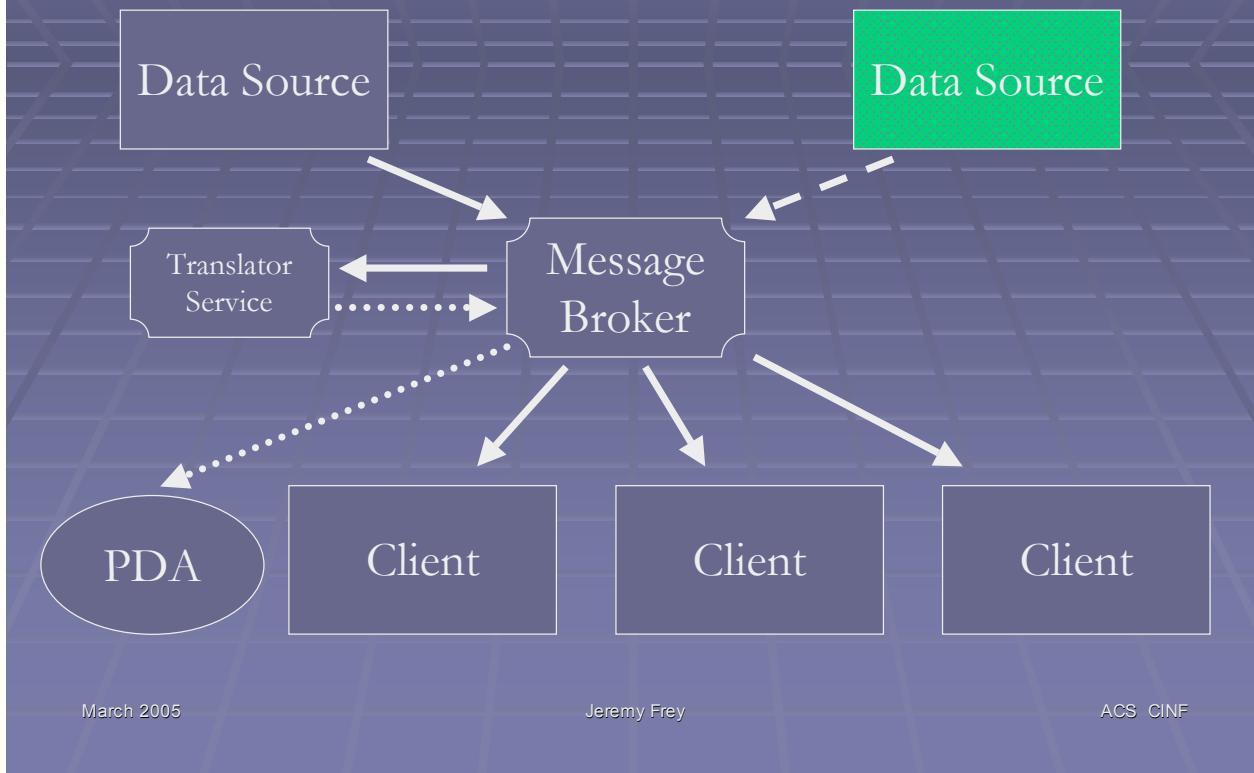


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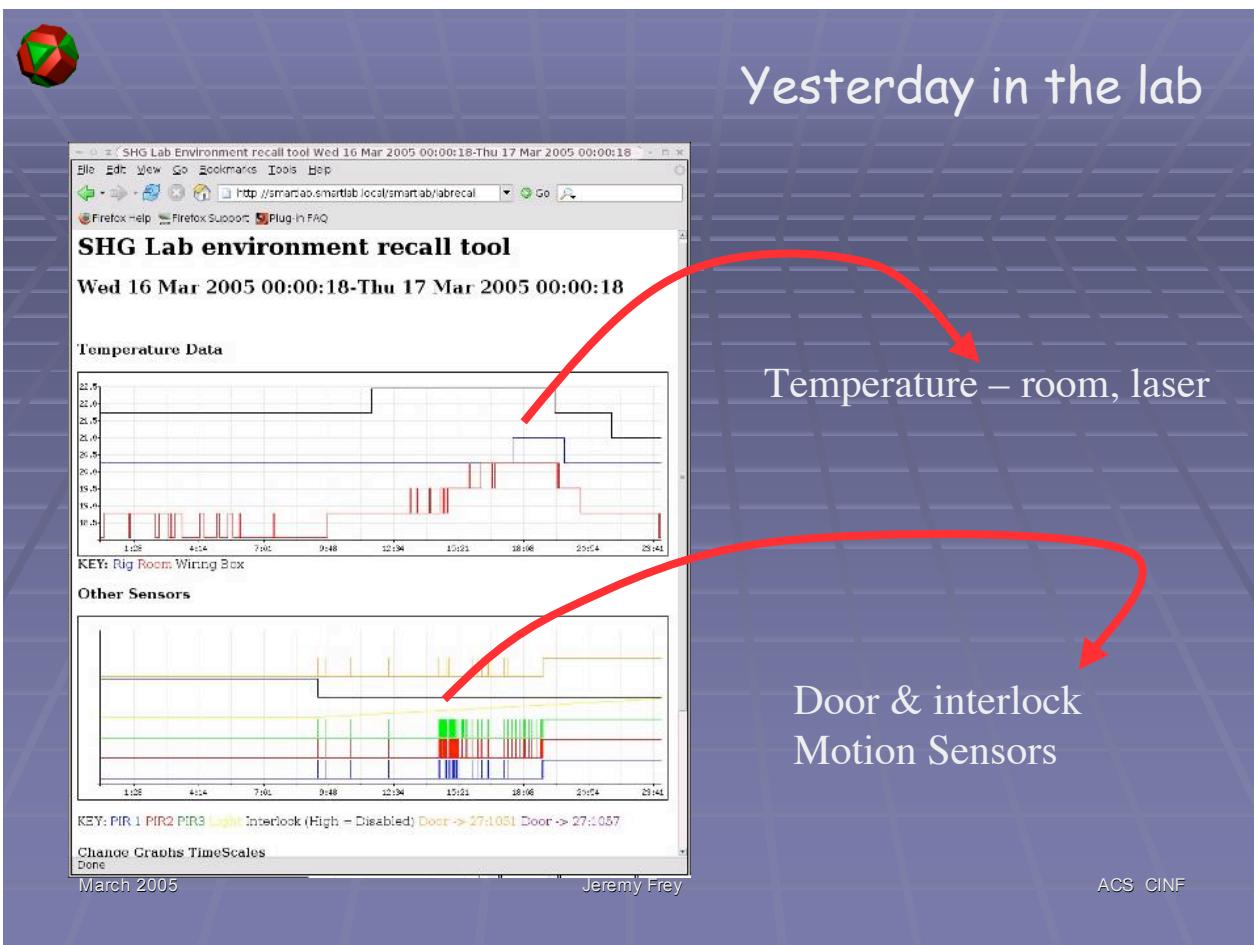
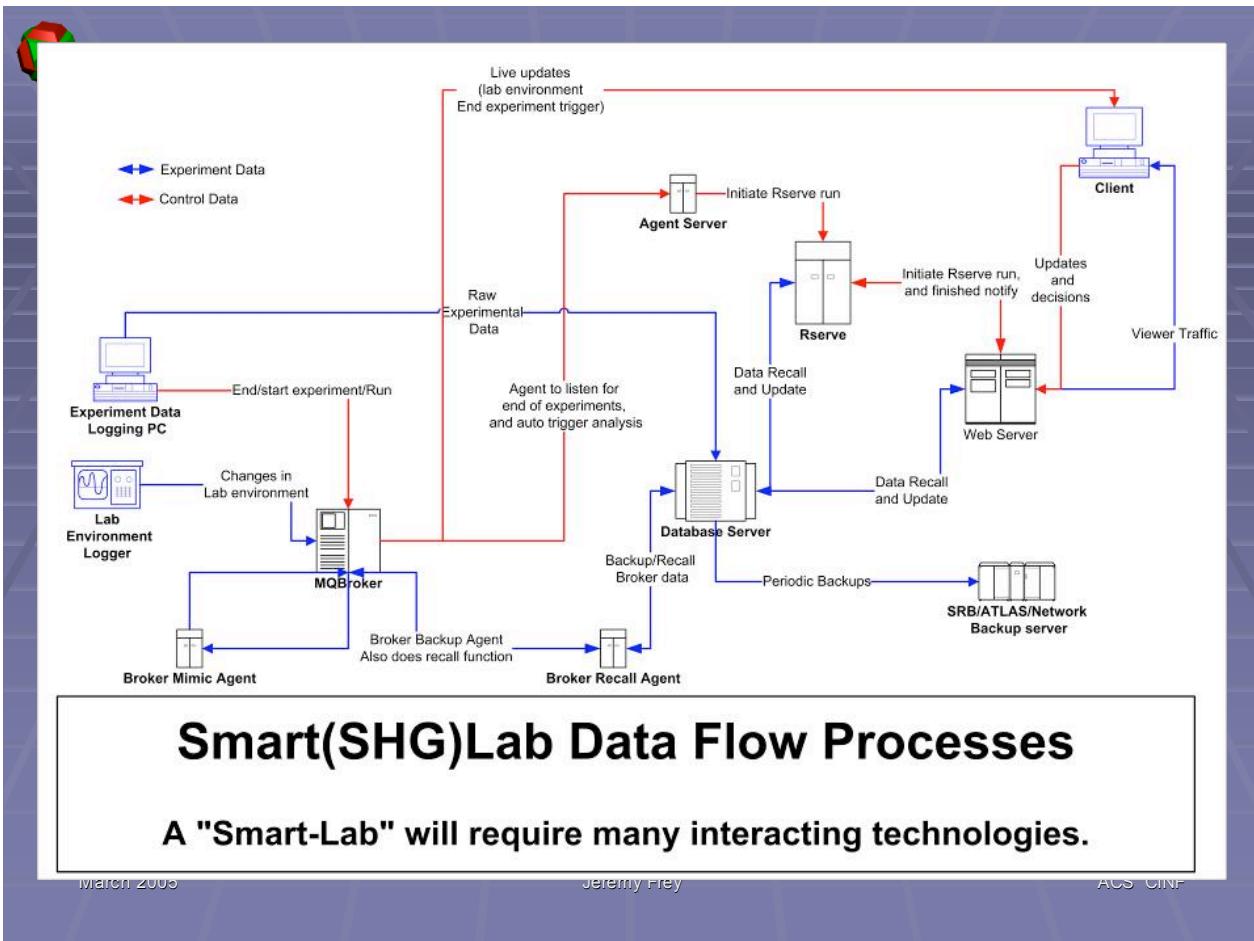


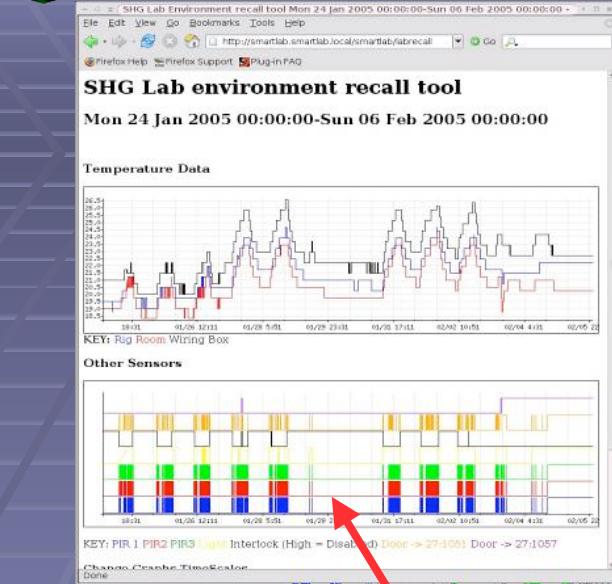
## Use IBM Web Sphere Technology (MQTT) - an asynchronous grid



## Pub - Sub for a Smart Lab

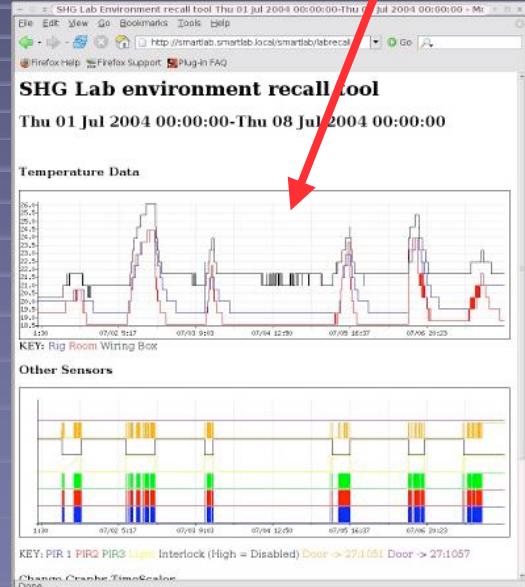






Air Conditioning failed

Student turned off a/c



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What you have to do to get on to the BBC web site



Pub/Sub for Laboratory data using a broker and ultimately delivered over GPRS



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BBC NEWS | Science/Nature | Chemists escape labs via mobiles - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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**Chemists escape labs via mobiles**

By Jo Twist BBC News science and technology reporter

Last Updated: Friday, 4 February, 2005, 08:47 GMT

E-mail this to a friend [Printable version](#)

**A blend of mobile technology and award-winning software is letting scientists finally escape the lab.**

The software, called "middleware", lets different computer systems talk to each other securely and instantaneously.

As part of a national e-Science project in the UK, it is being used to let Southampton University chemists monitor experiment conditions from mobiles.



The system is not smart enough to actually buy a round yet, but the system can alert chemists, wherever they are.

"It replaces the traditional notebook with some electronic

 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/help/3681938.stm

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BBC NEWS | Science/Nature | Chemists escape labs via mobiles - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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experiment in more detail.

**PDA's everywhere**

Members of Dr Frey's non-linear laser spectroscopy research group, working as part of the Combechem project, have been successfully trying out the system at conferences - and in the university bar.

The next step is to evolve the system so that at a push of a button on a mobile, scientists will be able to remotely change the conditions in the lab, like turning down the temperature.

It could also realise the promise of controlling home environments from phones easily and seamlessly.

But there are many other potential applications for the monitoring jobs done by the power industries, healthcare professions and other labs.

IBM won the Royal Academy of Engineering's MacRobert prize which rewards technological and engineering innovation for the program in June last year.



Chemists enjoy a drink at the bar while keeping an eye on the lab

Used by top global banks, the WebSphere MQ family is a decade old.

It has transformed e-commerce because of its ability to allow data transfers across computer systems and different platforms without extra coding.

Combechem is a UK e-Science project funded by the

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# What are the people up to?

We can capture the environment  
but need to capture the processes

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We don't  
want to  
take this  
technology  
too far.

There are  
privacy  
issues

“When we implant your pacemaker, we can, for  
a modest additional fee, also implant your  
beeper.”

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Like cash machine electronic notebooks have taken many forms - we want one that adapts to context, simple to use in the lab whilst doing actual bench chemistry but linked to more resources at the desk - the pervasive lab book grid



Smart  
Tea -  
Keep  
the  
people  
involved!



**“I just realized, Howard, that everything in this apartment is more sophisticated than we are”**

on. All rights reserved.  
From *The New Yorker Book of Technology Cartoons*.

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COSHH ASSESSMENT FORM			
Substance Name	Physical Form	Quantity	Nature of Hazard
Water	liquid	1000ml	None
Detergent	solid	200g	possible irritation to eyes and skin
Calamine	solid (powder)	2kg	Hazard of sensitisation, severe respiratory
Milk	liquid	100ml	As particular sensitiser
<b>NATURE OF PROCESS</b>			
Liquid extraction of calamine, followed by combination with detergent to produce a smooth paste			
Is there a health hazard? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If so, why not? #			
<b>CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED</b> (list specific measures required)			
Local extraction - fume cupboard			

# Getting not just the what and how, but the *why*



Get chemists  
and computer  
scientists to  
understand  
each other

# **By Making Tea!**

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# COSHH

leverage off things we already have to do

COSHH ASSESSMENT FORM				Record No.
SUBSTANCE NAME	PHYSICAL FORM	QUANTITY	NATURE OF HAZARD	
Water	liquid	1000ml	None	
Dextrose	Solid	<20g	possible irritation to eyes and skin	
Caffeine	Solid (tea)	<1g	harmful if swallowed, induce vomiting.	
Milk	liquid	<100ml	No particular hazards	
<b>NATURE OF PROCESS</b> liquid extraction of caffeine, followed by combination with dextrose to produce a sweet drink				
Is there a less hazardous substance? No If so, why not use it?				
<b>CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED</b> (Local exhaust ventilation, personal protection, etc.) <i>No specific measure required</i>				

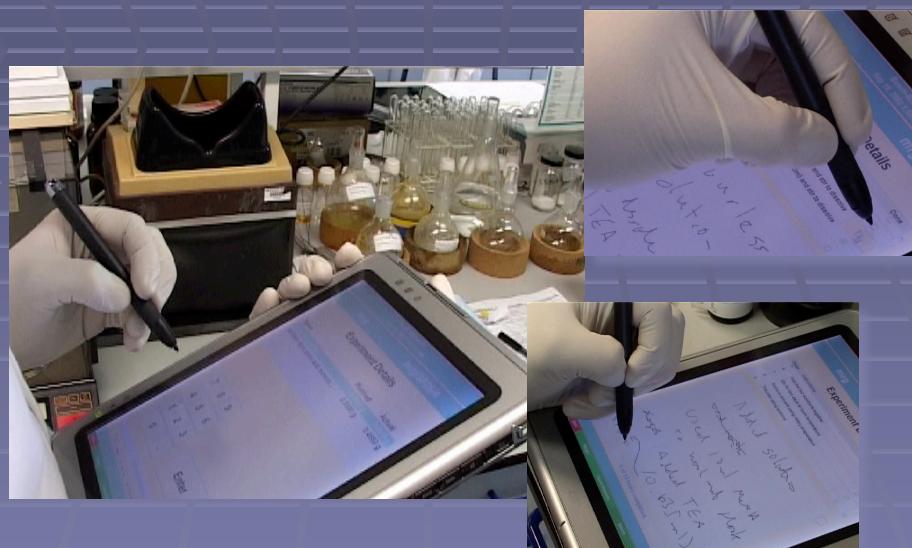
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## Tablet version



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Bench-Station #1  
11-Feb-2004 16:05:38

dj djbj3403

**Experiment Details**

Stage	Instructions	Done
3	Heat at reflux for 1.5 hours	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Cool and add Br11OCB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Heat at reflux until completion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**TLC**

All tasks completed.

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Escape

Quit Weigh Liquid-Measure Bench Store

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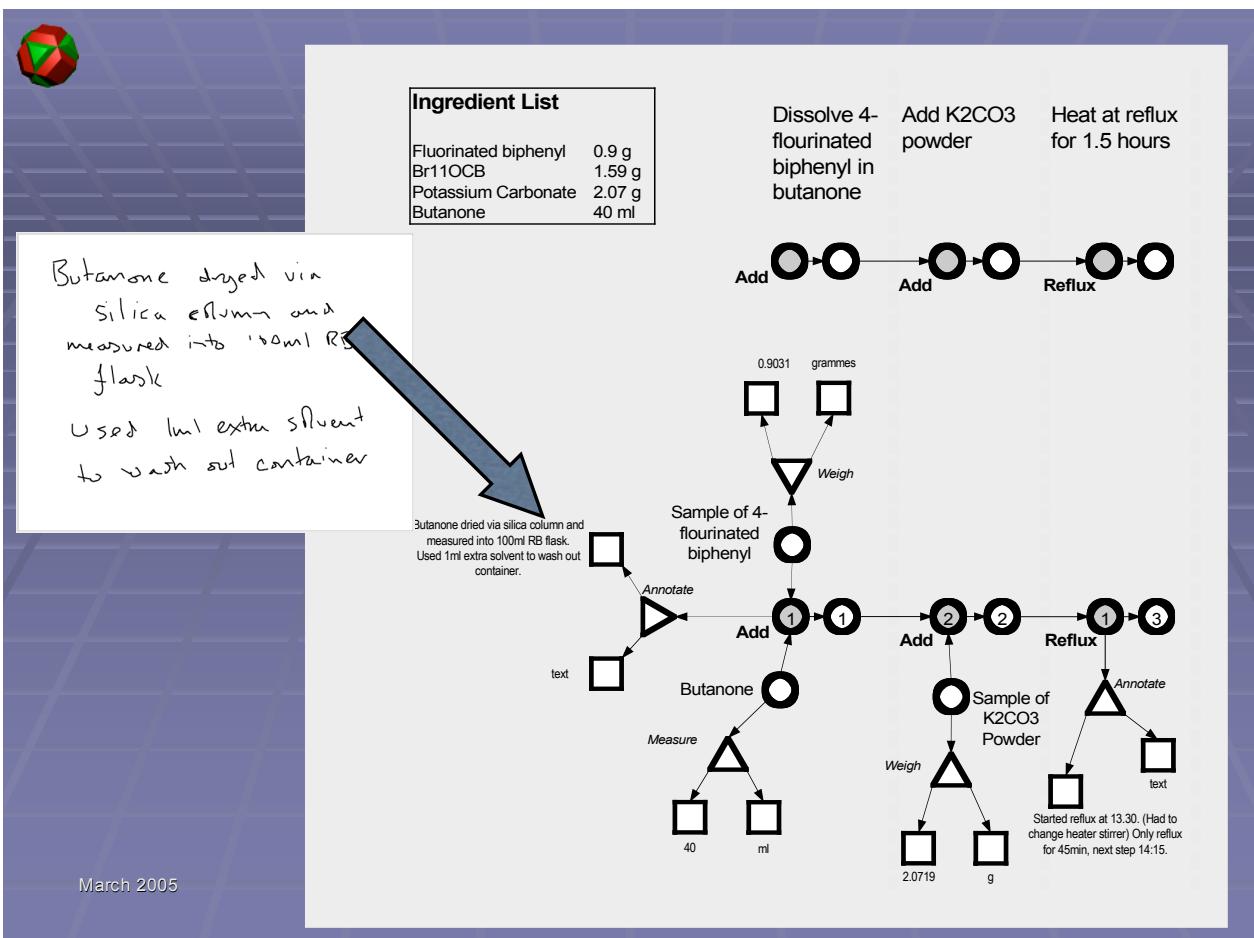
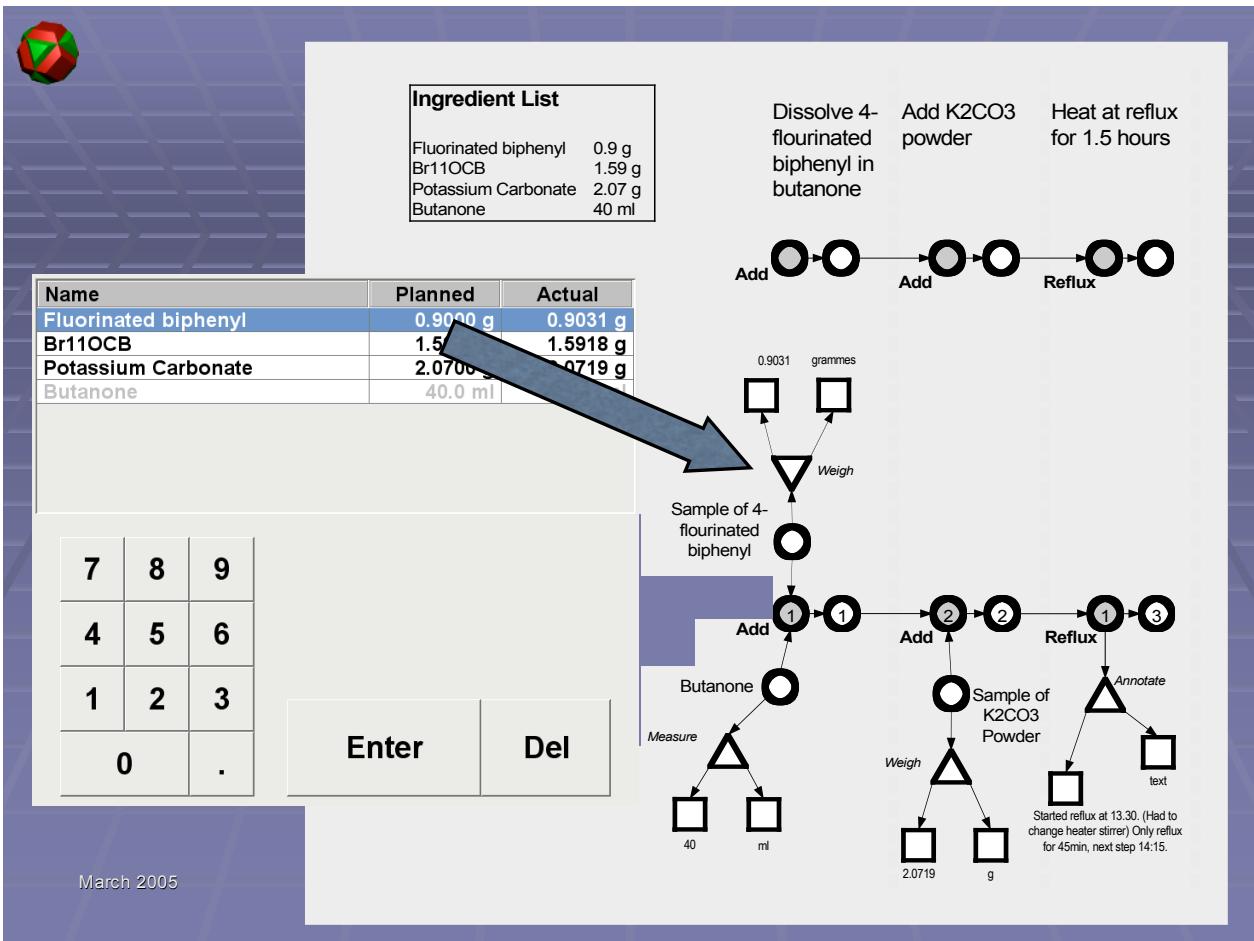
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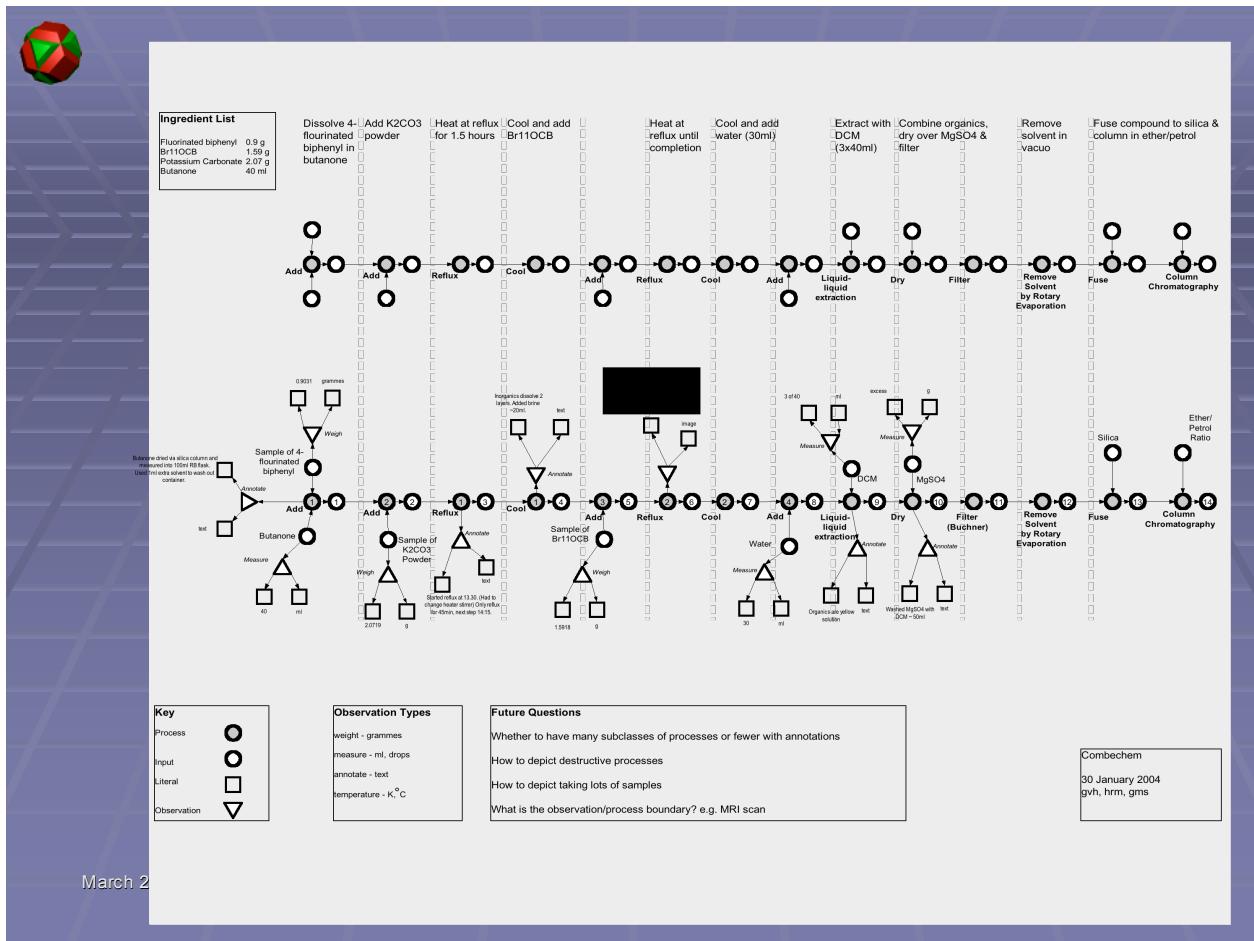
**Use RDF for both data and processes**

**New, Improved SEMANTIC Web**  
Now with added meaning

More machine processable than before

May be incompatible with existing XML tools. Databases may take up to ten times as much memory and 24 hours to load.

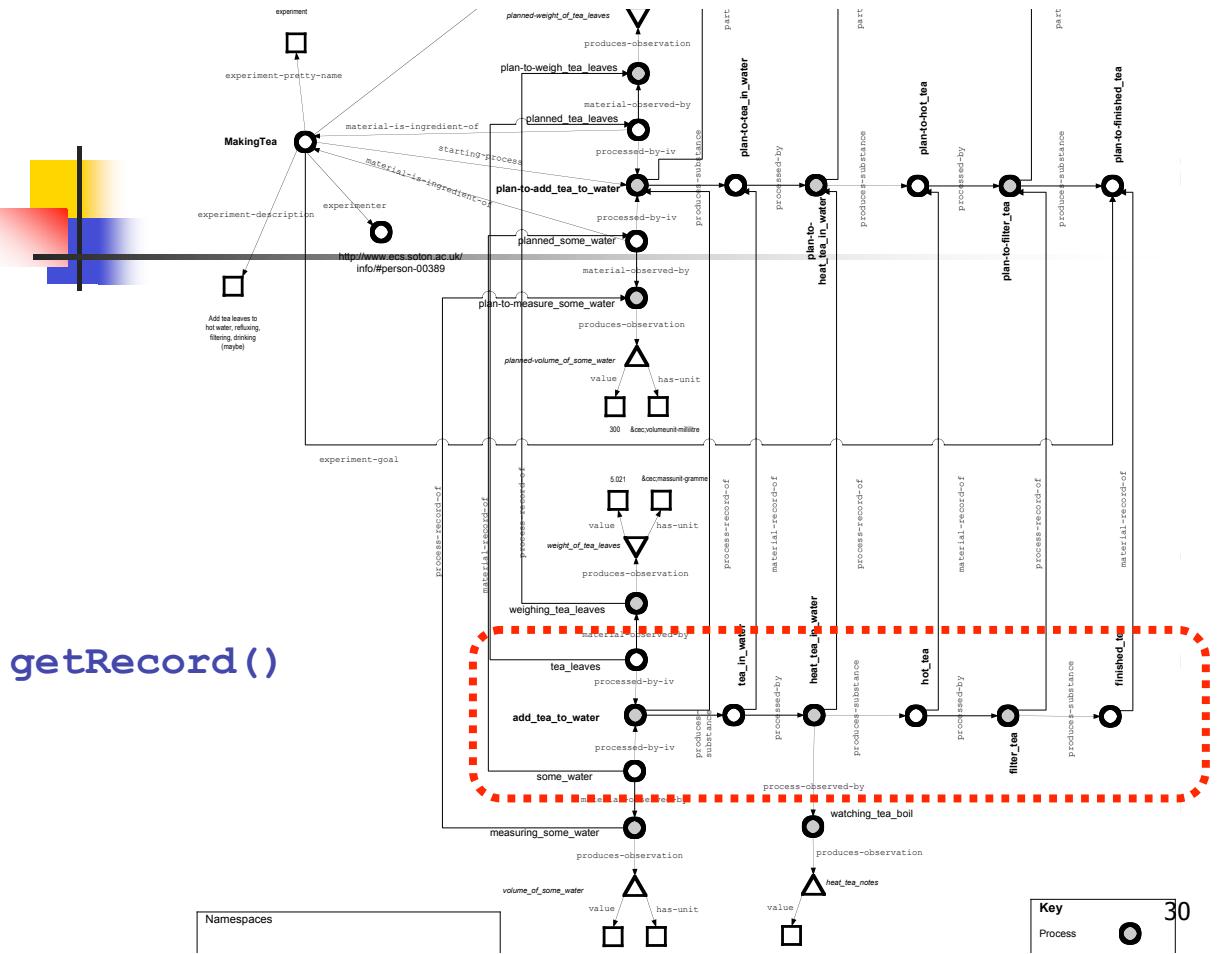
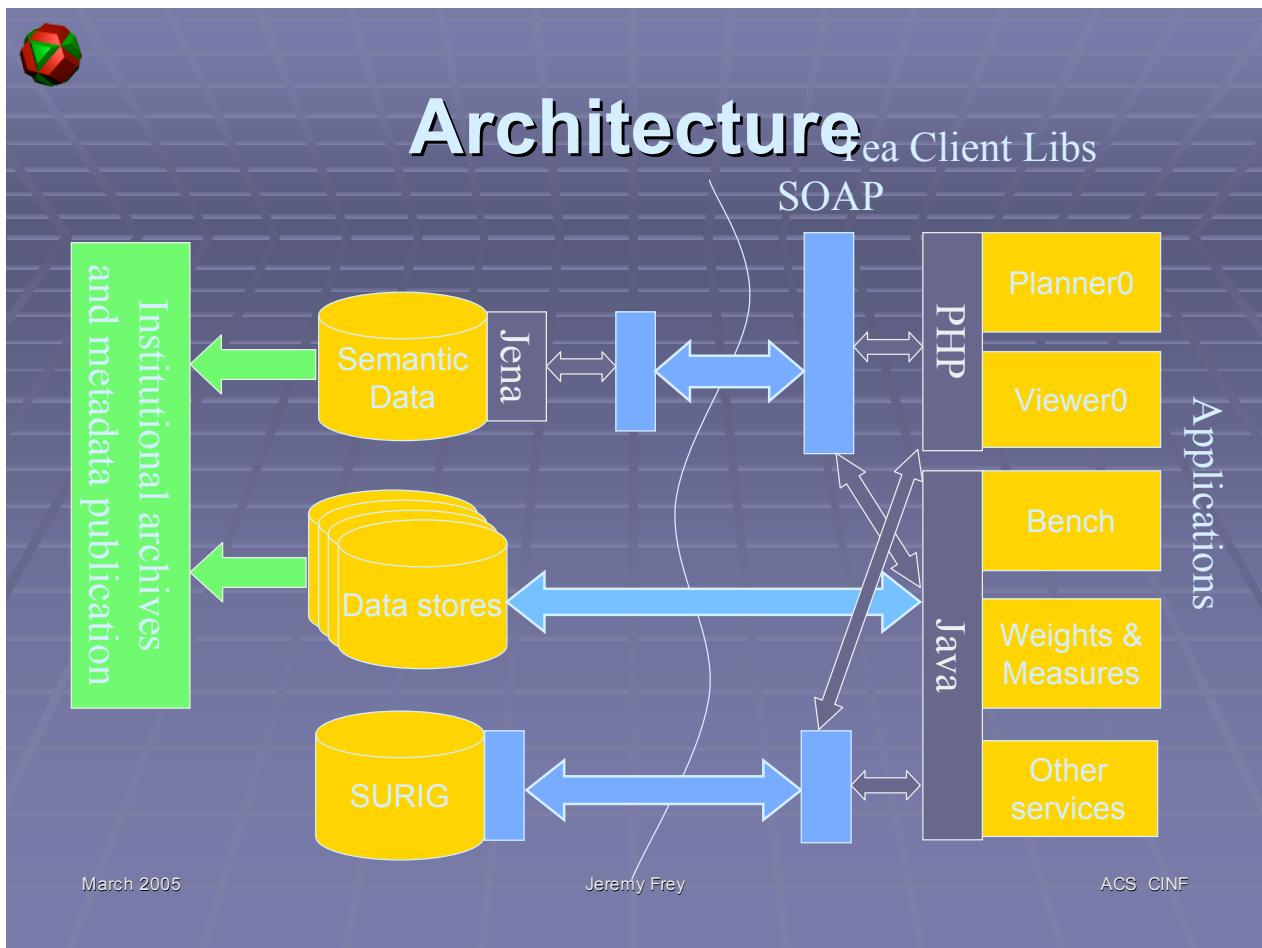


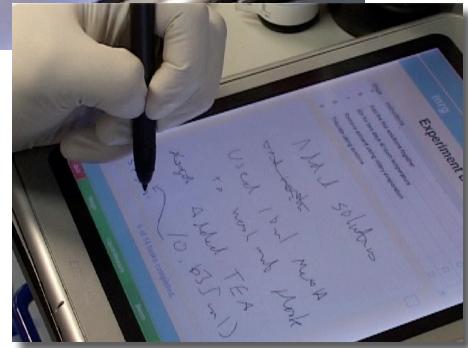
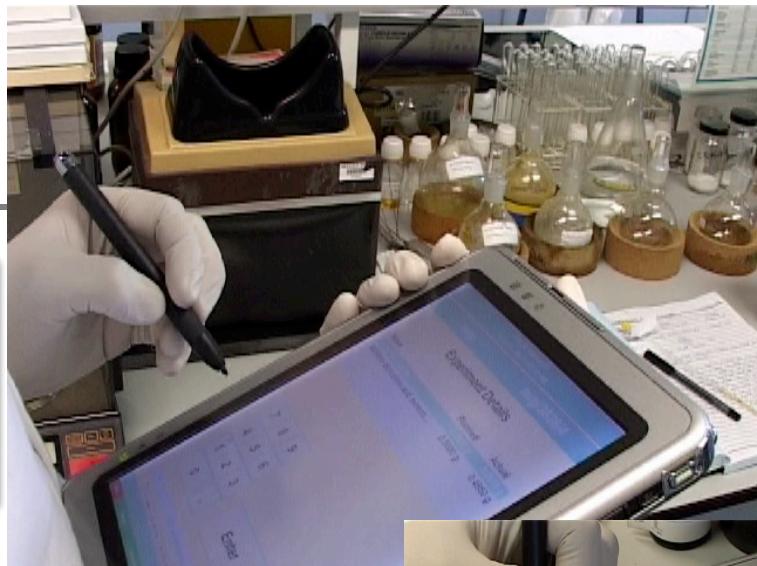


# Lessons

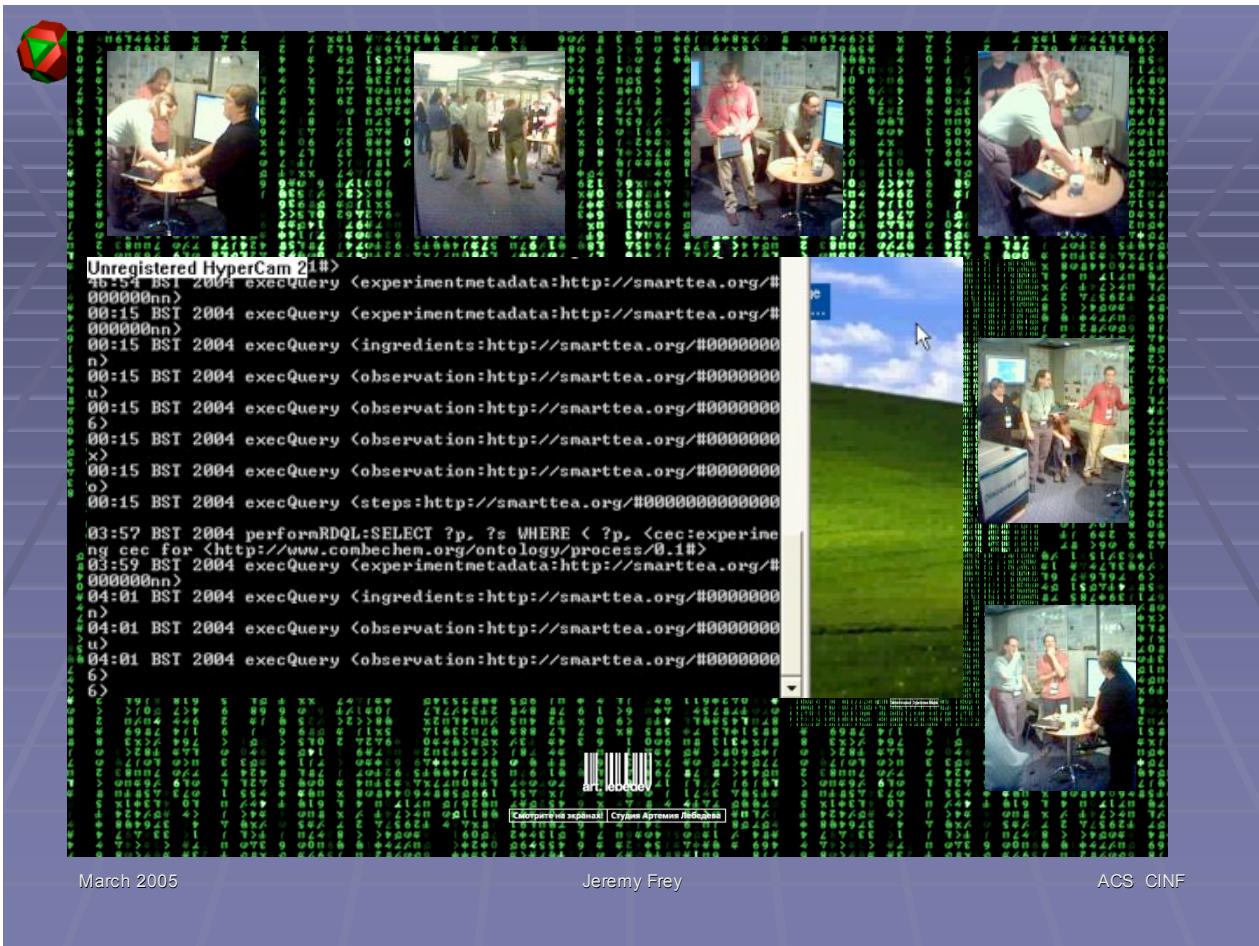
- That we need two related ontologies
  - Plan – that are going to be done
  - Record – what was done
- Not necessarily the same thing
  - Steps are added/repeated during the experiment
  - Different annotations required for each

# Architecture





# A digital lab book replacement that chemists were able to use, and liked.





# Design discussion

- Handling RDF both ends – tricky
- Structure to data:
  - good: clients can add what they want
    - Ontology extensions: Uncertainty to measurements
  - bad: clients can add what they want
    - Is the structure you're given navigable in the way you expect?
  - Use of libraries solves this to some degree

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# Design Discussion

- We have an ontology (shared understanding)
- But... experiment structure is a higher-level entity
  - Must be created and maintained by good programming, not simply by adherence to rules of the ontology

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# eBank publication

- Data sets stored for easy access via Web
- Metadata for experiment stored as RDF
- Representation of connections between data sets and concepts is RDF
- Domain specific structure

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# SmartLab system

- Data sets stored for easy access via Web
- Metadata for experiment stored as RDF
- Representation of connections between data sets and concepts is RDF
- Generic structure with domain-specific additions

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# Future...

- Understand the business process layer needed to keep the RDF under control

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## People

- Chemistry
  - Jamie Robinson, Sam Peppe, Hongchen Fu, Lefteris Danos, Kieron Taylor
- Electronics and Computer Science
  - Dave De Roure, Luck Moreau, Hugo Mills, Graham Smith, Simon Miles, Gareth Hughes, monica Schraefel
- IBM Hursley
  - Andy Stanford-Clark, Andrew Reynolds
- EPSRC for funding

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