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Temperature Data from Around the World Attracts Web Visitors to University of Dayton Site

University of Dayton

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UNIVERSITY of DAYTON

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NEWS RELEASE

TEMPERATURE DATA FROM AROUND THE WORLD ATTRACTS WEB VISITORS TO UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON SITE

DAYTON, Ohio — Want to know what the temperature was in Tokyo last year on your birthday? Or four years ago in Dublin or Denver?

From financial analysts trying to predict soft drink sales to tying deer movement to climate variables, folks are using a Web site in ways not envisioned by its creator, a University of Dayton professor who built and maintains the site to help the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency promote energy conservation in buildings.

The intent of the site is to provide data for the EPA's Energy Star program, designed to encourage building owners to conserve energy. The Web site, http://www.engr.udayton.edu/weather, provides an archive of the average daily temperature in 157 U.S. and 167 international cities from Jan. 1, 1995, to the present.

"One of the important points in sustaining these efforts is to be able to measure savings," Kissock said. "For some types of energy used in buildings, you don't need to know the weather. If you do a lighting retrofit, you just compare the before and after data. But if you install a more effective chiller during July and compare June energy use to August energy use, the difference may be due to the improved chiller or the fact that August was cooler."

Kissock has developed soon-to-be-released ETracker software that uses the site's weather data in conjunction with utility billing information to determine savings for building managers. The software will be available this fall through the EPA. Weather data on the site is from the Global Summary of the Day database archived by the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC).

But the site is attracting more than just building managers interested in saving energy.

"As soon as you put things on the Web, you get lots of people using the information in lots of different ways," said Kelly Kissock, associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering.

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"Agricultural people like it and use it, and I've gotten e-mails from overseas," Kissock said. "One said they were using it to track condensation of natural gas in above-ground pipelines, and somebody at Northwestern University was using it for a biomedical engineering project."

Energy Star was established by the EPA in 1992 to offer energy-saving and pollution-preventing solutions for consumers and businesses. Energy Star works with more than 7,000 partners to improve the energy efficiency of products, homes, and buildings.

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