

## Software Firm puts Searchable Film Archive on Web

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### Find film faster than a speeding super hero

Film and television buffs can now access information on millions of films, actors, directors and producers thanks to the sterling efforts of a Brighton software developer.

Sigmer Technologies, based at the Sussex Innovation Centre in Falmer, was chosen by the British Film Institute to transfer its massive database on to the internet.

The company, founded in 1999, was asked to turn one of the largest film and television archives in the world into a searchable and user-friendly website.

The information comprised more than 810,000 British and international film and television titles, details of 1.2 million industry professionals, including actors and directors, 23,000 festivals and event listings and 210,000 organisations.

Sigmer was told to create a search engine that would generate results for different types of users, such as members of the public, film fans or academics.

Matthew Dean, development manager at Sigmer, said: "We have a real sense of accomplishment from his project and are proud to have worked with such a well-respected and interesting organisation. There were so many different and challenging specifications from the BFI, so we made sure that we engaged with them from the earliest stages possible and kept in close contact at every stage of the development."

The BFI launched the Film and TV database - which can be found at [www.bfi.org](http://www.bfi.org) – as part of its online initiative to make the archive more widely available.

Margaret Luck, BFI database project manager, said the BFI started collecting information in 1933 but until now it was only available to BFI staff and library users.

She said: "It has been an enormous achievement to transfer all this disparate data on to a single platform. Whether a serious film researcher or a member of the public with a general interest in film is visiting the site, Sigmer's solution means that they will not only be able to



**ACHIEVEMENT:** Matthew Dean of Sigmer

find the relevant information on their subject of choice but also view the search results according to their particular area of interest.”

Sigmer separated the kind of data held for each “article” into three categories: A party (eg. An individual such as Oliver Stone); a work (eg. A film such as Superman Returns or a TV series such as Blackadder); and an event (eg. An awards ceremony such as the Academy Awards). Users can search further to generate results as detailed as the Academy Awards of 1997 or an individual episode of Dr Who.