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Acquiring Minds Want to Know — Institutional Repositories

by **Ann Lally** (University of Washington Libraries) <alally@u.washington.edu>

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Column Editor's Note: *The interest in institutional and digital repositories is heating up. Ann Lally, Head of the Digital Initiatives Program at the University of Washington Libraries, has crafted a great up-to-date summary of the definitions, origins, software, content, and metadata support. You may be hearing that there is little interest on the part of faculty in contributing to local digital repositories — here at the University of Washington the interest is growing, so don't believe everything you hear in the news! — JLO*

Institutional Digital Repositories and Your Library

With the publicity surrounding the development of the **DSpace Institutional Repository** software and its subsequent release as open source software in March of 2002, institutional repository services have been thrust into the forefront of academic library issues. This column will define institutional repositories, discuss some of the current developments in institutional repository software, and the purposes for which they are being used by academic and national libraries around the world.

As librarians began their advocacy for the use of institutional repositories, a couple of definitions have arisen. For example, in his *Digital Libraries* column, **Roy Tenant** of the **California Digital Library** refers to an institutional

repository as a system that facilitates the discovery, management and preservation of the research output of an institution.¹ Published some six months later, a lengthy article in the *ARL Bimonthly Report* article by **Clifford Lynch** of the **Coalition for Networked Information** amplifies this definition by writing “a university-based institutional repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution. ...an effective institutional repository represents a collaboration among librarians, information technologists, archives and records managers, faculty, and university administrators and policy makers.”²

The genesis for the idea of institutional repositories grew out of the phenomenal success of e-print repositories such as the high energy physics e-print repository **arXiv**, and the need by libraries to develop alternative publishing mechanisms as a response to the increasing costs of serials subscriptions by publishers and aggregators such as **Elsevier**. As **Raym Crow** says in *The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper*, “Institutional repositories represent the logical convergence of faculty-driven self-archiving initiatives, library dis-

satisfaction with the monopolistic effects of the traditional and still-pervasive journal publishing system, and availability of digital networks and publishing technologies.”³

It is also possible that in the near future, institutions which receive funding from the **National Institutes of Health** will be required by law to provide public access to articles published as a result of the research conducted with this funding. While Congress is still debating this measure as this issue goes to print, if it becomes law, then the institutional repository movement may have an additional high-profile initiative to drive further development.

Software Options

There are a growing number of software options available for those who wish to use an institutional repository. These can be divided into two types: those that are supported by a vendor and those that require local institutional support.

BEPress is a repository software system currently being supported by a vendor. **BEPress** was developed by the **Berkeley Electronic Press** in cooperation with the **eScholarship Initiative** at the **California Digital Library**, and is currently the software platform of the **ProQuest Digital Commons Service**. The **ProQuest** service offers to host an institutional repository and take responsibility for migration and preservation of the data contained within the repository as well. They also provide around the clock support for the hardware and software should the need arise. As opposed to most repository systems that are installed locally, the **Digital Commons** repository is managed centrally by **ProQuest**.

Other systems, such as **DSpace** and **Fedora** are open source and require a greater level of institutional resource allocation than a vendor supplied service. Someone within the institution needs to install and troubleshoot the software, and hardware must be purchased. Each repository system is designed to handle ingest, presentation and preservation differently. It is essential for those who wish to install a system to carefully analyze the different systems available and to choose the one most relevant to your institutional needs.

The need for an institutional infrastructure to support the service component of such a system should not be overlooked either. In order for a repository system to be effective it is necessary to develop a robust service to market the use of the repository. In addition, policies need to be developed, preferably in

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it true that every Saturday the library offers “story hour” to the local children?

HB: We do. Saturday mornings from ten 'til eleven, we welcome all the local children. Parents should feel free to...

SA: And you do the reading yourself, **Helen**?

HB: That's right, and....

SA: I can imagine that with your mellifluous voice, your poise, and your... stirring presence, it must be quite hypnotic. The children must leave the reading nearly intoxicated.

HB: Well, I can't say that....

SA: Can adults actually sit in on the read-



ings, **Helen**? Would that be against library rules?

HB: Yes, of course, I mean....

SA: Because if one could sit in on such a... tableau, one would I'm certain, be forever transformed, enriched both intellectually and....

HB: **Stratford**, my, my. You're embarrassing me. The Saturday readings are just simple....

SA: Simply astonishing, I'm sure. Have I mentioned how much I admire your taste in clothing, **Helen**?

HB: Yes, you did.

SA: And am I right in remembering that “**Helen**” is the Latin word for spectacular?

HB: I think it's actually from the Greek, **Stratford**.

SA: I... I... We're out of time. Thanks everyone for tuning in to Two Minutes in....

Scroll: Two Minutes in the Library.

[Music with montage of happy readers, young and old]

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consultation with faculty from across campus, and reviewed as the repository grows.

Submission of items to an institutional repository is often more than simply pressing a button that says "Submit," and can add a significant additional piece to faculty workload. In order to address this issue, institutions may want to provide a deeper level of service that would handle all aspects of repository creation and maintenance including uploading materials and metadata application services for faculty; some universities are looking at ways to provide digitization of paper-based documents as well. In addition, libraries may also need to support faculty as they struggle with the issue of rights. Often times, after careers spanning decades of publishing, many faculty have no idea what rights they have to their materials nor have they kept records as to the agreements they have signed.

Regardless of the level of service an institution determines it will provide, such an effort requires targeted marketing and extensive faculty contact. Even a well publicized system such as **DSpace** suffered to some degree by inertia on the part of faculty once the initial interest wore off.

What Types of Content are being Included in Repositories

Institutions are including a variety of materials in these repositories. Some institutions are recognizing that research and teaching materials produced at a university are part of its intellectual capital and are therefore archiving working papers and preprints; while some are also including learning objects. In addition to faculty teaching and research, some institutions are also capturing the work of students in many formats; in addition to providing archiving for these materials, they can then be used for recruiting purposes. University electronic records are also being stored in institutional repositories along with data sets, images and digital scholarship items.


There are a variety of types of content that repository systems can handle and the nature of the documents an institution wishes to house will to some degree drive what type of system should be chosen. Those who wish to implement a repository system are directed to version 3.0 of the **Open Society Institute's A Guide to Institutional Repository Software**. Of particular note is the Feature and Functionality Table, which compares a variety of features of each of the repository systems reviewed: **Archimede**, **ARNO**, **CDSware**, **DSpace**, **Eprints**, **Fedora**, **i-Tor**, **MyCore**, and **Opus**.

Metadata Support

Because repositories are designed to provide access and preservation functions to digital items, it is important for them to also provide adequate mechanisms to describe all types of metadata including preservation and technical metadata. Most repositories systems support basic **Dublin Core**, while some go so far as to support qualified **Dublin Core**. The **CDSware** system from **CERN** supports **Standard Marc21**, while **i-Tor of Netherlands Institute for Scientific Information Services** will support any metadata schema. For libraries who choose to have faculty or students upload documents and metadata, many systems have mechanisms that allow for metadata review by the appropriate persons in the library.

Most systems also support metadata export and **OAI** harvesting to provide opportunities for extended discoverability across the Internet.

Conclusion

Setting the technical and service infrastructure to support an institutional repository is no easy task and requires a significant institutional commitment to make such a service a success. Broad adoption of institutional repositories seems most strengthened when the faculty and scholars, along with the university administration, have a hand in promoting the necessity of its use, and libraries put a sustained marketing campaign in place to support its development. 

Institutional Repository Resources

A Guide to Institutional Repository Software v 3.0

<http://www.soros.org/openaccess/software/>

Institutional Repositories: Essential Infrastructure for Scholarship in the Digital Age

<http://www.arl.org/newsltr/226/ir.html>

The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper

<http://www.arl.org/sparc/IR/ir.html>

Endnotes

1. Tennant, Roy. "Digital Libraries: Institutional Repositories." *Library Journal* September 15, 2002, pages 28, 30.
2. Lynch, Clifford A. "Institutional Repositories: Essential Infrastructure for Scholarship in the Digital Age." *ARL Bimonthly Report* 226, February 2003.
3. Crow, Raym. "The Case for Institutional Repositories: A SPARC Position Paper." Washington, DC. The Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition.

Biz of Acq — Human Resources Management in Libraries: Issues and Trends

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Column Editor's Note: *The personnel function in libraries is often undervalued for its impact on effectiveness and productivity. This article is divided into two sections — issues and trends. The first section discusses the issues affecting library human resources: social (internal and external), technological, and organizational. The second section is concerned with trends in recruitment and retention, personnel policy, evaluation and measurement, human resource management and planning. — AF*

Note to the Reader: "Human Resources" will be capitalized when a Human Resources Department is indicated; when "human re-

sources" is not capitalized, the general and broader use of the term is indicated.

Introduction: Issues in Managing Human Resources

Four levels of human resource issues concern library managers:

1. Issues that affect human resources within the different, individual sub-functions of Human Resources (e.g., compensation and benefits, health and safety).
2. Issues that affect human resources across the entire Human

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