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Library Marketplace: Against the Grain and the Charleston Conference Free Digital Versions on Purdue e-Pubs

John Riley
jdriley@comcast.net

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Against the Grain and the Charleston Conference Free Digital Versions on Purdue e-Pubs

by **John D. Riley** (Column Editor, Library Marketplace) <jdriley@comcast.net>

I'm looking at my complete shelf run of *Against Grain* in one hundred and thirty-eight issues filling four shelves of a bookcase. I have written nearly twenty articles for *ATG* over the years, and I have always liked the look and feel of the publication and how **Toni Nix** has brought order out of chaos with her fine design and typesetting. Every issue must be like a jigsaw puzzle where articles and photographs have to all be brought into order along with myriad-shaped advertising. But now I can enjoy the same articles and tight design in the digital version of *ATG* on Purdue e-Pubs. All one hundred and twenty issues of *ATG* from 1989 to 2009 are now online at Purdue e-Pubs along with four years of the **Charleston Conference** Proceedings.

ATG: from v.1#1 (March 1989) through v.21#6 (Dec 09-Jan 10)
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg/>

Charleston Conference: 2009-2012 (2013 to be released in October)
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/charleston/>

What this means is that *ATG* now has a new worldwide audience of readers and, thanks to the DOIs assigned to each article, is much easier to cite when writing other work. Those of us

who have written for *ATG* are thrilled to have so many new readers. In the past we would only know if someone read our articles by receiving an email and more often than not most articles were received with deafening silence. Now, through e-Pubs we receive monthly reports on our readership, and it is thrilling to have so many hits, many coming from overseas. 75% of their readership is domestic with the remaining 25% coming from nearly ninety different countries. Before digital versions of the journal I remember once getting an email from a library student in England who enjoyed my article about coffee shops in libraries. He was planning on using my article to get his college library to open one. (Maybe he would have better luck with a tea shop in England, though). Another time I got a letter from a librarian commending me for writing an article that promoted the practice of displaying more books in the Learning Commons of libraries. Not exactly **Bieber's** fan mail bag, but it is rewarding to have personal contact with one's readership.

From the statistics provided monthly by **Purdue** I now see that I am getting around seventy hits a month, which puts me well down the line in popularity compared to some

who get hundreds each month, but it is pleasantly surprising for me. What is great about **Purdue** e-Pubs is that they share the **Bepress** Institutional Repository platform with over two hundred other libraries, so articles in the **Purdue** site can be searched on the other sites as well. They show up in **Google** and **Google Scholar** searches as well. To ensure accurate download counts **Bepress** and **Purdue** employ **COUNTER** (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources) to filter out multiple visits from the same user, Internet robots (bots), automated processes, crawlers/spiders, and spam-bots.

I have yet to receive any communications from online readers and maybe those elevated number of hits won't translate into actual communications from readers. As **Norman Desmarais**, author and emeritus librarian at **Providence College** notes:

"The Web makes it easier to communicate, but it's also more impersonal. It seems that people just want to read or access the information they're interested in without ever following up to see if the author has changed his mind or did further research on the topic."

continued on page 56

In 2002, **Bepress**, also known as the **Berkeley Electronic Press**, partnered with **California Digital Library** to create the eScholarship Repository. In June 2004, **Bepress** officially launched its Digital Commons institutional repository software. Digital Commons clients include over 200 academic libraries, public libraries, societies, and institutes.

“Digital Commons is a hosted open access institutional repository solution. Digital Commons supports OAI-PMH version 2.0. Metadata is exposed through the OAI. Content published to Digital Commons institutional repositories is optimized for fast and accurate indexing by Google, Google Scholar, and other major search engines.” (from the **Bepress** Website)

One of the features besides usage statistics for authors is a nifty color-coded interactive infographic that allows you to easily search across all the **Bepress** IRs based on subject matter. Another recently added feature is a world map showing downloads in real time correlated with the city and country of the search’s origin. One feature of the digitized edition that I particularly like is that the entire article is available in one place with all the pieces that get scattered in the print edition presented sequentially. It is much easier to read than flipping through the pages to follow an argument.

I asked **Katina Strauch** for her feelings about the digitized edition of *ATG* on **Purdue e-Pubs**:

Have you felt any effects from the digitization of the Conference Proceedings and ATG such as increased interest in the Conference or ATG? Have you gotten a feel for the wider reach you are getting through an e-edition?

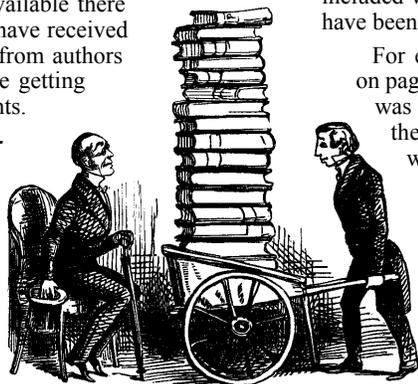
KS: Definitely. We are getting a lot more questions and requests for articles out of *ATG* and the proceedings as well as the entire volumes.

Have you gotten much feedback from authors and presenters re: e-Pubs?

KS: I haven’t heard much directly from authors or presenters but now that the information is freely available there are fewer questions. I have received a number of messages from authors who are delighted to be getting monthly download counts.

You have a three-year embargo on the print editions. How did you decide on that period of time?

KS: *Against the Grain* is supported largely by advertising. We did not want to lose those partners.



You mentioned that videos are starting to be offered in e-Pubs. What are your plans to take advantage of that?

KS: I like new and different approaches and I hope that we can incorporate videos as much as possible. Offering videos through **Purdue e-Pubs** allows those to also be allocated a DOI and made citable. A little bit hidden on each “article” page on **Purdue e-Pubs** where a DOI is present is an altmetric.com button. This is tracking on the open Web and will provide a sense of popular reception of particular publications, as well as scholarly citations.

Is advertising included in the e-Pub edition?

KS: Yes. I believe that advertisements are a part of history. They reveal information on many of the companies that were in operation at the time. Yes, they are all there.

I asked **Leah Hinds** for more background on how *ATG* handles ads in the e-pub format:

Leah, you and your sister, Caroline Goldsmith, did a lot of work digitizing and tagging articles and advertising. I was happy to see ads kept in the e-version of the Journal.

Nicholson Baker made a good point when he saved many print versions of American newspapers from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century in his American Newspaper Repository (<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/americannewspaperrepository/>). He wanted to save the illustrations and advertising that were left out in the microfilm editions. **Duke University** purchased his archive of six thousand volumes of newspapers, and they were particularly interested in the advertising as a window into the business world of the time and also from a graphic, advertising, and artistic perspective.

I think the ads in ATG will give us all a window into vendor and publishing history. How did you deal with digitizing the ads?

LH: All of the ads were digitized. We didn’t block any of the partial page ads when we pulled together the articles in separate PDF files. The only reason we included a separate file for the full page ads is that they were not included with the articles and would have been left out otherwise.

For example, if an article was on pages 24, 26, and 27, but there was a full page ad on page 25, the ad wouldn’t be included with in the article file. We just pulled all the full page ads separately.

For v.22#1, online at <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg/vol21/iss1/>, you can see the ads listed as a separate link in the “Front Matter”

subheading. Then in **Rick Anderson’s IMH-BCO** column “What’s Your Problem? (And What’s Mine?),” available for download at <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg/vol21/iss1/14/>, you can see a half page ad included on page 3 of 3.

All issues of *ATG* are available digitally to subscribers. They are not in the same format, but are included in full text on our Website linked to the Table of Contents at <http://www.against-the-grain.com/toc/>. If you are logged in with a username and password you can click on the article title to see the full text.

Finally, Katina, could you tell us more about the issues of the Charleston Conference Proceedings that are available now? Are they available as eBooks?

KS: YES, all the books are published simultaneously as both consumer eBooks (Kindle, Nook, Kobo, Apple) and in library collections. They are available to libraries in **Project Muse**, **ebrary** collections, and soon also in **JSTOR**. We produce native formats for each mobile reading device, e.g., Kindle, Apple, Kobo. The library collections are all DRM-free PDFs.

Accentuate the Positive: 2012 Charleston Conference Proceedings. **Purdue University Press**, 2012.

Something’s Gotta Give: 2011 Charleston Conference Proceedings. **Purdue University Press**, 2011.

Anything Goes: 2010 Charleston Conference Proceedings. **Purdue University Press**, 2010.

Necessity is the Mother of Invention: 2009 Charleston Conference Proceedings. **Purdue University Press**, 2009.

With the fine job of digitizing that *Against the Grain* has done in conjunction with **Purdue e-Pubs** I won’t feel so bad now when I donate my collection to the American Newspaper Repository at **Duke**. 🐼

*A special thanks to **Katina Strauch, Leah Hinds, Tom Gilson, and Charles Watkinson** (Director, **Purdue University Press** and Head of **Scholarly Publishing Services** and newly appointed **Associate University Librarian for Publishing** and **Director of the University of Michigan Press**) for their input on this article. — **JDR***

Service Defined

ful·fill·ment

noun \fŭ(l)-'fil-mənt *also* fə(l)-\

- : the act or process of fulfilling
- : the act or process of delivering a product (as a publication) to a customer

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