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ATG Interviews Keith Webster, Dean of University Libraries, Carnegie Mellon and Daniel Hook, Managing Director, Digital Science

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ATG: Carnegie Mellon University and Digital Science made some big news recently. You have entered a development partnership. Can you tell us about the specifics? How did the partnership come about?

KW: As we implement our strategic vision of creating a library of the 21st century, we recognize a number of needs associated with the information aspects of the research process: helping faculty and students secure funding, showcase their work, track their impact, share their outputs. Several solutions exist in the marketplace, but we saw an opportunity to work with **Digital Science** to build an integrated ecosystem. I've known **Daniel** for a number of years, and a conversation with him demonstrated that we had a similar vision. We're excited to partner — to bring top-notch infrastructure to a world-class university.

ATG: What's in it for Carnegie Mellon? How will Digital Science benefit? Can we expect to see any new products for the broader market evolve from this partnership?

KW: As mentioned above, this is all about building towards our vision. Many of the **Digital Science** tools have been implemented successfully in countries in which I have previously been a library director/dean (UK, New Zealand, Australia) and I'm excited to see how they will function in the U.S. context — where we don't have activities like national research assessment or centrally driven open access mandates. We'll need to work hard to win hearts and minds on campus!
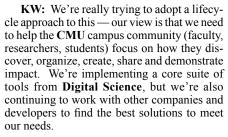
DH: Digital Science has always felt that it was close to the "coalface" of research as we have so many colleagues on the team who come from a background of either doing research or supporting researchers. Our relationship with **CMU** is a natural extension of our academic background, helping us to bridge the gap between our understanding of institutional and researcher needs with the practicalities of delivering that support in a world-class context. As **Keith's** vision shows, we live in a highly dynamic period for research support as the very way in which researchers carry out research is changing with new tools and an increased focus on in-

teraction with data in almost every field. I'm sure that our relationship with **CMU** will stimulate opportunities to develop **Digital Science's** products more quickly and will lead to ideas for new separate innovations, but nothing to announce yet...watch this space!

ATG: As we understand it, Carnegie Mellon will create several research platforms to provide opportunities for interactive research among the university's researchers. Can you give some specific examples? Where do Digital Science products fit into this effort? Which products?

KW: We're really trying to adopt a lifecycle approach to this — our view is that we need to help the **CMU** campus community (faculty, researchers, students) focus on how they discover, organize, create, share and demonstrate impact. We're implementing a core suite of tools from **Digital Science**, but we're also continuing to work with other companies and developers to find the best solutions to meet our needs.

ATG: Aside from supporting collaborative research, how will this partnership benefit researchers in their individual projects?

KW: In a university like **CMU** much research is collaborative and interdisciplinary. To find the best collaborators, our faculty need to showcase their research and its impact. We hope that our implementation of **Symplectic Elements** will make this easy — collating citation counts, and altmetrics (from our parallel implementation of **Altmetric**) make it easy to expose their record of past work and its success. Our use of **Dimensions** will also help people identify who is awarding research funding and who in other institutions, is working in related fields. And of course, **Figshare** helps

Keith Webster

Daniel Hook

a researcher to contribute to the open science community — sharing publications, data, code, and other output of the research process.

DH: The products on which **CMU** has chosen to work with **Digital Science** are really a first step into what we hope will be an opportunity to discover and meet the needs of researchers as their needs unfold. In the longer term, we hope that this collaboration will help us to find new ways to meet the evolving needs of researchers. In the immediate future, through **Symplectic Elements**, **CMU** academics will have improved ways to meet annual reporting requirements and to maintain their academic profiles without rekeying data so that they are more discoverable on the web. They will also have faster routes to make their work available through open access channels and be able to share, get credit for and track usage of the research data that they make available with **Figshare**. Using **Altmetric**, researchers will also be able to discover quickly whether their work is being engaged with outside academia — in blogs, policy documents, news, clinical trials and other places that aren't so easy to track as scholarly citations. By accessing **Dimensions**, researchers will be able to identify collaborators around the world by understanding which projects have recently received funding.

ATG: Does this partnership create a role for the library/librarians in researcher workflows? How will Digital Science products enable such workflow involvement?

KW: Until the mid-1990s, the scholarly record existed almost exclusively in print form, and researchers had to build their information workflows — keeping up to date, searching, reading and wiring — around the library. Today, the role is reversed; we in libraries have to build our services around the researcher workflow. To be successful we need to expand our traditional role of acquiring and distributing publications into services that have a more immediate impact on the researcher.

DH: From a **Digital Science** perspective, librarians are one of the key groups with whom we work. As **Keith** has noted, the

role of a librarian has changed significantly over the last few years. The center of the new role that is emerging seems to be as the information expert. Each academic has his or her own specialism, for example: solution of particular types of equation, understanding a particular experimental approach or deep understanding of the social interactions of a particular civilization. But, the common element in research across all fields is understanding the tools needed to find and access relevant content and being able to determine whether this content is accurate. This is more important than ever in a world deluged by information, much of it contradictory or conflicting. No academic can be expected to be a master of all the information and all the correct tools of their own area any longer. The librarian should be an embedded partner who is able to efficiently guide the academic through the maze of information and tools. I think that it's a little reductionist to think just in terms of particular points in the workflow. Although that is clearly appropriate from a practical perspective, Librarians should think big...their skills are in high demand and there is an opportunity to reshape the library and the role of the librarian. This is why working with **CMU** is so exciting for **Digital Science** — we know that **Keith** and his team understand this.

ATG: Keith, you've said that "the library must provide a reimagined 'intellectual commons' for a campus community." What does that mean? How does this partnership advance that goal? How will Digital Science products contribute in reimagining the intellectual commons?

KW: For me, the intellectual commons is a concept — a way of articulating our important role in building a sense of academic community — allowing everyone to see us simultaneously as a physical presence and digital hub that connects people across disciplines and fosters conversations that can lead to new insights into the challenges facing society. In part, our rollout of the **Digital Science** suite is enabling our librarians to have deeper conversations with the faculty and researchers they serve. It gives them an opportunity to reinforce our role on campus, and to identify and build connections between people in different disciplines who may be working in similar fields. And it also allows them to engage students more closely with the research enterprise. In many ways, our students — from freshman onwards — are early career researchers. We want them to use the same tools, and engage with the libraries through that lens.

ATG: A key element of this effort is the capture of data from multiple internal and external sources, including citation and altmetrics data, grant data, and research data. How will it differ from existing services like Plum Analytics that rely on similar data capture?

KW: We've been able to implement our **Digital Science** tools through connections with campus identifier systems — so an individual can have easy and personalized access to their records — of publications and impact measures, and their research outputs. A big challenge in this work is disambiguating researcher identities in external data sources. We've spent a lot of time verifying individual identities in the tools which we've implemented, but that doesn't flow through to other services.

DH: I think that we're talking about the wider **Digital Science** portfolio beyond **Altmetric** here. However, to start with **Altmetric**: I think that it's important to start by saying that **Altmetric** has been highly instrumental in establishing these metrics not only as of peripheral interest but as a mainstream indicator sitting alongside citations. Part of that work has lead **Altmetric** to develop an advanced approach to contextualizing altmetric data so that it makes sense to non-experts. **Dimensions** enhances the **Digital Science** offering further as it is the only database of awarded grant information (as opposed to funding opportunity information). The database now contains more than $1 trillion of global competitive grant funding from more than 200 funders. **Figshare** is integrated with **Altmetric** and views and shares on the **Figshare** platform flow back into **Altmetric** — so the **CMU Figshare** platform will have some great analytics to learn about their research data reuse. Elements combines a unique approach to data handling that allows data from **Altmetric**, **Dimensions** and **Figshare** to be centralized in a scalable way to allow even the largest institutions to report on their data across all these sources.

ATG: What is the timeline for the rollout and implementation of these research platforms? Will you have something to report, say by the time of the Charleston Conference in November?

KW: We are in the very final stages of pilot testing, and we will be competing our campus roll-out over the next few weeks. Our implementation of **Figshare** will begin next week — during National Library Week — when we announce the winner of the competition to name the service. We had many entries from faculty, staff, and students from campuses in Pittsburgh, Silicon Valley, and Qatar. 🌳

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*Postscript announcement: The winning entry to our repository naming context was **KiltHub** — simultaneously reflecting our Scottish heritage, and the role of the system as the hub of **CMU's** information infrastructure.*

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audience members to change their votes. Members of the audience had an opportunity to make comments and pose questions as well. I remember voting for **Alison** because I thought she did a great debating job! No hard feelings please, **Michael**! Plus, I think I was once again *against the grain* of the group.

www.against-the-grain.com

www.charlestonlibraryconference.com

Moving right along, we decided to take the debate online as a **Webinar** this year and we had a huge registration (363) on the debate topic of *Resolved: The Journal Impact Factor does more harm than good*. Debating were **Ann Beynon** (Clarivate Analytics) and **Sara Rouhi** (Altmetric). I have to give big kudos to **Ann**, **Sara**, and **Rick Anderson**. The debates are **Rick's** creation. He acts as the moderator for each debate. We are planning for more webinar debates this year. Please send suggestions of possible resolutions to me, **Leah** or **Rick**!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=567UeN-LKJx8

Several months ago, **Tom Gilson** and I were able to interview **Andrea Michalek**, Managing Director of **Plum Analytic**s, to discuss its acquisition by **Elsevier**. Recently we learned that **Elsevier** is integrating **PlumX Metrics** into its leading products, expanding access to these tools to the wider academic community. We are updating the interview even as we speak. Watch for it on the *ATG* NewsChannel and in the print issues of *ATG*.

Speaking of which, shocking us all, **Elsevier** has just acquired another U.S.-based business, **bepress**. WOW! Here is some of the press release. — **Elsevier** has acquired **bepress**, a Berkeley, California-based business that helps academic libraries showcase and share their institutions' research for maximum impact. Founded by three **University of California**, **Berkeley professors** in 1999, **bepress** allows institutions to collect, organize, preserve and disseminate their intellectual output, including pre-prints, working papers, journals or specific articles, dissertations, theses, conference proceedings and a wide variety of other data. The **bepress** CEO and employees will continue working with the company in Berkeley, California. The acquisition is effective immediately and terms of the agreement are not being disclosed.

Got a message the other day from one of my favorite people in the whole wide world — the amazing **Scott Plutchak**! **Scott** says that he is retiring from **UAB**, but not from the rest of his life. He and **Lynn** moved into **Lynn's** dreamhouse 17 years ago; it's stuffed with artwork and books, perched up above a pretty little lake with swans and great blue herons. **Scott** is still on the editorial boards of several journals. He will be able to spend more time on the **Open Scholarship Initiative** (**OSI**), a global collaborative effort between all major stakeholders in scholarly publishing to improve