



Elena Sipria-Mironov, Liisi Lembinen
University of Tartu Library, Estonia

Keywords: Case study, repository

Case Study of Functionality of an Institutional Repository through the Eyes of the Subject Libraries Specialists

Introduction

The development of the repository collections is closely connected to the library's activities. Existing content, which can be presented to various authors shows the usefulness of the repository as well as the enthusiasm and dedication of librarians (Nabe, 2010). A well organized institutional repository is not just a sign of well-operating library but also displays an authors' research, creative works, and can be used as a marketing and recruitment tool. Participation in research publishing in a repository is not a survival tool for libraries, rather reaction to environmental and technological changes in the science of communication. According to Newton, Miller and Bracke (2011), subject libraries specialists are highly qualified workers also for collecting and preserving digital data due to the close relations with university departments. Librarians who collect data from researchers are most likely very successful in enriching repository collections because they improve, hold and use already existing relationships.

Nabe, Jonathan A. 2010. *Starting, strengthening, and managing institutional repositories : a how-to-do-it-manual*. New York ; London : Neal-Schuman.

Newton, Mark. P., Miller, C. C., Bracke, Marianne. S. 2011. *Librarian Roles in Institutional Repository Data Set Collecting: Outcomes of a Research Library Task Force*. - Collection Management, Vol. 36 Issue 1, pp 53-67.

Background

In 2006, the **University of Tartu Library** implemented an institutional repository on a **DSpace** platform. According to Webometrics, UT DSpace ranks in top 100 repositories in the world. However, the amount of data in respective collections differs largely among faculties and collecting files is unsystematic. This variance is attributable to the lack of knowledge and initiative. According to the University of Tartu (UT) *Procedure for Publication of Graduation*

Theses and Dissertations (Dec 2012) student thesis and dissertations are accessible through the digital archive.

Purpose of the case study

University subject libraries are the initial contact points for scientist, faculty members and students. In addition, through these mediums information about collecting data will reach the users. In order to more effectively develop the University's digital archive, there was a need to research subject library specialists' attitudes towards the repository, their evaluation of functionality of the DSpace and if the University's digital archive meets their needs.

Research method

- Semi-structured interviews
- The responders – UT subject libraries specialists from various faculties and colleges
- Reason for selection – subject libraries specialists know and use the University's digital archive at DSpace on daily basis
- Time – May 2012

Results

Analysis showed:

- The knowledge of the definition, opportunities and functionalities of the institutional repository is lacking
- General evaluation of the functionality of UT Digital Archive at DSpace was unsatisfactory
- Further training is needed
- Positive side – subject libraries specialists have a lot of initiative to guide and teach their users about the usage options of the DSpace platform
- Various problems and shortcomings are drawn into a table.



Librarians promoting University of Tartu Digital Archive at DSpace (Photo: Andres Tennus / University of Tartu)



Table. Subject libraries specialists' needs and expectations for the functionality of UT DSpace.

Users' Needs	Users' Expectations
User-friendlier structure of the UT DSpace website	Visually good-looking and great design Convenient to use Logical substructure Simple wording and clear terminology Possibility to change languages
Better search opportunities	Advanced search Possibility to choose category or document type
Access to university's study and research materials	Faculties' collections are equally presented Maximum full text Temporary embargoes Embargo explanations Clear agreements and rules for publishing research and other materials
Implementation of various user surfaces	Orientation on certain user groups Clear role definitions Consideration of needs of various user groups User manuals for various user groups
Wider marketing of UT DSpace in the university	Access to DSpace through faculty or department websites Effective cooperation between library and university faculties and departments Effective marketing of the repository

Value

The case study offers a different view for the usage and knowledge of the University's digital archive at DSpace. It gives **valuable feedback** and **guidance for improvements** of the functionality as well as popularisation of the institutional repository.

Conclusions

Development goals of an institutional repository must be clear, realistic and provide user satisfaction. The results of interviews show that the knowledge and functionalities of the institutional repository is lacking both among the respondents as well as the faculties and subdivisions of the University of Tartu. The general evaluation of the functionality of the UT DSpace was unsatisfactory. Various problems and shortcomings were identified during the interview process. Authors consider necessary to further analyse these shortcomings and to focus on specific tasks which would help to solve mentioned problems.

The librarians' highest expectations are connected to the **user-friendliness of the UT DSpace** – appearance, structure as well as functionality.

It can be concluded that according to librarians, the institutional repository must **organise, preserve, make available for access and distribution**, the university's electronic research and study materials. Their needs and expectations confirm Clifford Lynch's definition (2003, p. 328) which points out that these four main functions are the backbone of a repository.

Lynch, Clifford A. 2003. *Institutional Repositories: Essential Infrastructure for Scholarship in the Digital Age*. Libraries and the Academy. Vol 3, No. 2.

This table can be basis for the production of the development strategy of the UT digital archive in DSpace where users' needs can be considered development goals and expectations the development plan.