DSpace Development At Makerere University

An overview of the Uganda Science Digital Library (USDL) Pilot Project

A paper presented at the DSpace User-Group Meeting
31st January – 3rd February 2006, Sydney, Australia

Miriam Kakai
m5kakai@mulib.mak.ac.ug
USDL Background

- Developed at **Makerere University** in collaboration with the University of Bergen Library.
- Focused on **scientific research work nation-wide**.
- **Target institutions**: Institutions of higher learning, research institutions, NGO’s & Government ministries
- **Purpose**: To develop a mechanism for science information collection, storage, & preservation of all national documents.
USDL Problem

- Scientific information in Uganda is scattered, poorly organized, difficult to access, and many times duplicated.
- There is a very poor linkage between the institutions that carry out research, i.e. they are not well coordinated to enable the required free flow of scientific information.
- Usage of the existing research findings for developmental planning is limited because of the difficulties involved in tracing information.
USDL Objectives

• **Main objective**
  – To create a digital database of scientific information that can easily be accessed worldwide

• **Specific objectives**
  – To develop a mechanism of collecting, storing, disseminating, maintaining and preserving national scientific information resources
  – To establish institutional, regional, national and global linkages for information sharing
  – To create a network of scientific information databases in participating institutions
  – To make each institution’s scientific research more visible and accessible worldwide by strengthening their capacity to generate electronic information
  – To sensitise the public about the value of scientific information for study and research
USDL Project Design

• Designed in two phases: The Pilot and Final project phase. In both cases, the following are considered according to the scope covered:

  – Assessing the availability of scientific information materials for inclusion in the USDL,
  – Collecting the identified materials,
  – Building the digital library database,
  – Launching USDL and publicizing it.
USDL Project Implementation

• Intended to start off at institutional level, with the pilot in one institution. (This is the focus of this presentation, since the project is still at pilot phase).

• Full project implementation to be done in phases (as other institutions and organizations get involved). This will depend on the content collection arrangements made with individual participating institutions.
USDL Project Pilot Strategies

• Content collection level:
  – Identifying the information resources (and listing them)
  – Establishing the copyright issues
  – Document formats and metadata fields issues
  – developing a healthy faculty-library partnership in Dspace to promote e-publishing

• Uploading content onto DSpace:
  – Homepage and user-interface modifications
  – Responsibility allocation and advisory group formation
  – Submission procedures
  – Metadata standards
  – Copyright policies per item/collection/community

• Publicity:
  – Marketing & encouraging electronic file submissions, with defined standards.
USDL Project Pilot Challenges

- E-Publishing awareness building for easy content collection
- Limited IT staff within the DSpace implementing department (the library)
- Limited technical skills in customizing DSpace to suit institution needs
- Intellectual property & copyright concerns by authors
- Content collection set-backs (especially when dealing with busy authors)
- Content preservation fears (future plans)
USDL: Why Dspace was selected

- DSpace is quite flexible and can be customized to suit individual institution needs.
- DSpace promotes self-archiving, which reduces on the problems of collection development. It also promotes local e-publishing of the intellectual works of staff, researchers, and students, an avenue that promotes awareness of the existing literature as soon as it is available.
- Dspace provides a logical avenue of improving on the institutions collection development strategies, as individuals are in the long run encouraged to deposit publications in the system from wherever they are, with specified permissions.
- DSpace has a dependable active community of developers and users.
USDL Project Way Forward

• Implement the pilot to full scale as soon as DSpace installations at Makerere are successfully completed.
• Evaluate and revise the pilot strategies for final project implementation.
• Solicit for funds to support the final project.
• Design content preservation plans.