

Selling your repository to academics – the open access message

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The Adaptable Repository

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What is open access?

- The author and right holder grants a free worldwide, right of access to, and a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly.
- A complete version of the work is deposited in at least one online repository.
- Berlin Declaration 2003:
<http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html>

Why open access?

- Basic argument: Why should the taxpayer who has already paid for the research have to pay again (in the form of subscriptions) to see the results of that work?

Open Access is all the rage

- The **NIH** Public Access Policy - May 2, 2005.
- **The Wellcome Trust**, Oct, 2005. – extended to all outstanding grants Oct 2006
- **Research Councils UK (RCUK)** -Open access mandates took effect at four of the eight, Oct 2006.
- **China** announced a mandate for open data, Oct 2006
- **Pending:**
 - **American Center for CURES Act of 2005**, to mandate open access to publicly-funded medical research sponsored by NIH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Agency for Healthcare Research. Dec 2005.
 - **Federal Research Public Access Act of 2006** introduced, to mandate open access to most federally funded research. May 2006.

Even in Australia

- **Statements of support:**

- The **Group of Eight** released a Statement on open access to scholarly information - May 2004
- The **Australian Research Information Infrastructure Committee (ARIIC)** issued its Open Access Statement - December 2004
- The **Australian Government Productivity Commission** released *Public Support for Science and Innovation* recommending open access to publicly-funded research. – March 2007

- **Actions:**

- **Research Quality Framework** report recommends open access to publicly-funded research - October 2006
- **ARC & NHMRC** “encourage access to research findings” - January 2007

Roads to open access

- **'Green' road:**
Depositing a copy of a pre-print or post-print into an Institutional or subject-based repository
- **'Gold' road:**
Publishing articles in an open access journal. (The Directory of Open Access Journals lists 2620 journals, with 789 searchable at article level, and 130089 articles) – note the **'hybrid option'**.
- <http://www.doaj.org/>

The hybrid option

- The 'hybrid' option is where the author pays an up-front fee by choice - allowing their paper to be published as open access by the journal. In theory the journal proportionally reduces the subscription fee. (Not a great deal of evidence to show whether this is actually happening.)
- 2 programs launched each in 2004 & 2005.
- 12 launched between May-Dec 2006

Building is easy – filling is hard

- It has been repeatedly shown that the difficult part of creating a repository is getting people to deposit
- OA can help the pitch

Publishers are generally OK with the Green road

- **Statistics for the 266 publishers on this list**

- Green can archive pre-print and post-print (99) 37%
- Blue can archive post-print (ie final draft) (68) 26%
- Yellow can archive pre-print (ie pre-refereeing) (28) 11%
- White archiving not formally supported (71) 27%
- Summary: **73%** of publishers on this list formally **allow** some form of self-archiving.
- <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php> (accessed 3 April 2007)

Profiling a self depositor

- Authors (particularly in the social science) tend to ignore publisher policies on self-depositing^{^^}
- People put up their best papers.
 - The probability that an article could be found online at a non-journal website correlated with the journal impact factor and the time since initial publication*
- ^{^^} K Antelman, **Self-archiving practice and the influence of publisher policies in the social sciences**, *Learned Publishing*, (2006) 19, 85-95
- * J Wren, **Open access and openly accessible: a study of scientific publications shared via the internet**, *BMJ* (2005) 330:1128

My PhD question

- “What are the barriers to the uptake of open access options in Australia?”

Radical!

- Interviewed 43 academics at UNSW and ANU about their interaction with the literature:
 - Academics as authors
 - Academics as readers
 - Academics as reviewers

Disciplines differ!

- There is no such thing as a generic 'academic'
- Researchers have strong links to their own research community
- Loyalty to their institution comes a very late second

Computer Science

- Computer scientists are already practising open access – through personal websites.
- They keep their own libraries and use Google with gay abandon.
- They report no barriers to the literature.
- They are cognizant with copyright requirements (which they often choose to ignore)
- They do NOT want to use a badly written computer interface.
- They are sick of having to explain they publish in conferences.

Sociologists/Anthropologists

- Sociologists are concerned about IP.
- They don't have the access to the literature they would like because they use books.
 - *"I buy my own sources. The library ran out of money half way into the year"* – Sociology
- They are unaware of copyright restrictions.
- Publication times can take up to 9 years (3 is more usual).

Chemists

- Chemists will often have several early papers they did not help to write.
- They are well serviced by the library.
- Copyright is not an issue for them.
- They almost exclusively use SciFinder.
- They often keep their own libraries.
- They are annoyed they have to submit camera-ready papers.
 - *"We provide everything, the refereeing and content and they charge us for it."* - Chemistry

Problem: No-one is talking to the academics

- Government bureaucracy and university management consult each other and write rules
- Example: Publication expectations
 - Computer scientists publish in conferences – but try telling that to the promotions committees.
 - *“It’s the way your work is perceived. If published at conferences it carries a lot more weight.”* – Comp Science

Academics support OA principles

- *"I don't think knowledge should be owned. Once published its out there it has life of its own, it shouldn't have strings attached."* - Sociology
- *"I try to favour society journals over commercial journals. Because they put something back."* - Chemistry
- *"What's science for if you don't have things available?"* – Comp Sci

But they are confused about OA

- *"I wouldn't want to publish where I can't get an impact factor" – Chemistry*
- *"There are all sorts of copyright restrictions. In the US you sign a contract for sole publication rights. [Self depositing] is only for short term gain." - Sociology*
- *"There are a couple of chemistry journals that are OA but there is nothing of importance in them. I don't think we get any credit for it." – Chemistry*

Attitudes to IRs

- Apart from not knowing what they are or that they are available!
- Very few people (at UNSW or ANU) knew there was a repository at their university

Some think it's a good idea

- *"I would put my material into a repository – if doesn't prohibit from publishing in accepted journal"* – Chemistry
- *"I would put material into it – partly out of misplaced obligation and vanity"* - Sociology
- *"May put things in – provided it can be searched"* – Comp Sci
- *"I like the idea of being able to access everything in a repository"* – Chemistry
- *"It would be good to tie into the reporting"* – Chemistry
- *"I would put work online if [the repository was] available"* – Comp Sci

Some don't

- *"I have a concern about plagiarism" - Sociology*
- *"I don't see any harm in depositing in a IR, but don't see any use in it either" - Chemistry*
- *"It's easy for me to maintain a website. I make datasets available as well - they wouldn't know what to do with data. It will take 6 months for them to update it" - Comp Sci*
- *"I don't know what benefit it is for me, sounds like more work to do it. I wonder what incentive there is apart from counting articles" - Chemistry*

OA means increased hits & downloads

- Its not so much that its open access (OA), but that its early access (EA).
 - Papers offered as e-print are available sooner and therefore gain primacy and additional time in press, and therefore they get cited more often
- Others argue that it's the self-selection bias (SSB):
 - Authors preferentially tend to promote (in this case by posting to the internet) the most important, and thus most citable, articles

The potential problem

- The RQF was designed with the Accessibility Framework directly in its sights
- There is a danger that the logistics of the reporting process could work against the hoped-for accessibility outcomes
- Any plans for the RQF should take the following into account:

RQF – the double edged sword

- Conflict between loyalty to research community and loyalty to institution
- The need to provide the publisher's pdf means what is deposited won't be OA
- The academics are already fed up with reporting – so they will object to having to do things twice.
 - *“It is going to be worse because of the RQF. . . It is pushing mediocrity. . . .The reporting requirement its tedious – every paper you go through loops to prove you published it, with a letter from the editor to say it is refereed, its unnecessary if its in the journal that shows its refereed.” - Chemistry*

Take home message

- Go and talk to your academic staff
- The 'sales pitch' needs to be streamlined to the discipline
- Depositing has to be easy
- Tread carefully – they are fed up