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UNL Digital Commons -- An Introduction

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A convergence of factors has created “a perfect storm” in the library-information world:

1. The crisis in scholarly publishing
2. The crisis in library budgets
3. The challenge of digital preservation
4. The costs of disseminating research
The crisis in scholarly publishing:

- The consolidation of commercial publishers
- Decline of library market for monographs
- Scholarly publishers issuing fewer books
- University subsidies are flat or decreasing
- No market for new journals
Scholarly publishers’ business model is outdated and outmoded

- the more books you publish the more money you lose
- average fixed costs to develop and publish a book is about $25,000
- average income from a published book is about $15,000
- You do the math: “We lose money on every item, but we make it up in volume.”
The crisis in library acquisitions budgets

- Acquisition budgets are flat, at best
- Prices for subscriptions and electronic databases are approaching the limit of what the market will bear
- Annual subscriptions to many journals in science and medicine are in the five figures (i.e. > $10,000)
- Libraries are now leasing rather than buying content
- 1990: 70% of library acquisition budget was for new monographs
- 2005: 70% of library acquisition budget was for online database access
The challenge of digital preservation

- Electronic materials disappear when they go off-line
- Superceded software and file formats are not supported
- Magnetic storage media have a limited life span (10 years or less)
- Materials are being created at an expanding rate
- When libraries do not continue their subscription to electronic resources, they lose access to materials
- Many places on the World Wide Web are here today, gone tomorrow: “Error 404, file not found”
The costs of research

The public (or the university) pays for research multiple times by paying for

- salary and benefits of researchers & support staff
- labs, equipment, materials, and overhead
- the research funding and grants
- (sometimes) publication fees to publish the research
- subsidies to university presses
- buying (or leasing) the publication
The open-access movement, digital archives, and “Cyberinfrastructure”

Goals / Values

- long-term preservation of electronic resources
- widest possible access to research and scholarship
- respect for intellectual property rights
Digital Commons is:

- a new program started by the Libraries in June 2005
- an “Institutional Repository” (IR) = an digital archive for UNL-related documents
- an opportunity for electronic publishing
The “Institutional Repository” (IR)

- receives and archives one electronic copy
- preserves this copy permanently in the UNL Libraries collections
- creates a stable URL with a unl.edu address
- provides and controls electronic access
- migrates the data as formats evolve
Electronic Publishing

• places scholarly publication tools directly in the hands of the faculty: publishing online requires 1) MS Word, 2) a browser, 3) an email address

• each publication series is controlled by its own editorial board

• no limits on article length or number, size, or colors of illustrations

• “Freedom of the press is limited to those who own one.” -- A. J. Liebling
What does it contain? (8/23/07)

- 10,505 UNL dissertations
- 8,540 articles, ebooks, & presentations
- 1 electronic journal
- 161 “communities”
- 367 series
- Works from more than 500 UNL faculty & researchers
An “Open Access” archive

- “Open Access” means anyone can browse, read, and download full-text
- Not limited to specific institutions or domains; not limited to subscribers
- Dissertations in UNL’s IR are open-access on campus, but not free to outsiders.
- Access to all other materials is free.
- Access to other materials can be restricted at depositor’s request.
Who goes there? (or how many?)

- 1,060,000 "hits" in first 2 years
- 580,000 downloads in 2 years
- 36,862 downloads in July 2007

Most downloaded work:

"Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology"
> 150,000 downloads last year
Benefits: online work is

- accessible immediately, 24/7, worldwide
- visible to common search engines (such as Google and Google Scholar)
- viewed and cited more frequently, especially by students
- identified with the author’s name and date of submission
- collected together in one place
- permanently housed, even after author retires or moves to another institution or to a different “plane of existence”
Who controls the copyright?

- the author/creator or the party to whom copyright has been sold or licensed by the author
- **not** the library; **not** the university (unless by separate agreement)

- Online publication does not affect the copyright of previously published works.
- Online publication **establishes** copyright for previously unpublished works.
Rights to published works

- 93% of journals allow pre-publication posting to an IR
- 60% of journal publishers have blanket policies allowing post-publication deposit
- most of the remaining 40% of publishers will give authors permission to deposit in their home institution’s repository
Publishers with policies permitting archiving:

- American Economics Association
- American Institute of Physics
- American Mathematical Society
- American Psychological Association
- Am. Soc. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- American Society of Plant Biologists
- Annual Reviews
- Arnold Publishers
- BioMed Central
- Biophysical Society
- Blackwell
- BMJ Publishing Group
- CAB International
- Cambridge University Press
- Ecological Society of America
- Elsevier
- Haworth Press
- John Wiley & Sons
- Johns Hopkins University Press
- Kluwer
- Marcel Dekker
- National Academy of Sciences
- Nature Publishing Group
- Oxford University Press
- Sage
- Springer Verlag
- Taylor & Francis
- University of California Press
- University of Chicago Press

Source: [http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/index.html](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/index.html)
The Library wants to publish:

- Previously published articles
- Presentations, talks, unpublished manuscripts
- Out-of-print books
- Hard-to-find texts & documents
- Teaching materials
- Research, scholarship, or creative activity of any kind
The Digital Commons offers:

1. Immediate electronic publication, with 24/7, worldwide, free access to materials
2. Design & typesetting services
3. Permissions & copyright clearance
4. Regular usage reports by email
5. Permanent URL for linking
Getting started: the D.I.Y. model

1. Find an existing series; or establish a new one (1-page questionnaire)

2. Log in to register and receive a password at http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/myaccount.cgi

3. Begin uploading your own Word or pdf files

Submitting an article takes less than 2 minutes.
Getting started: the **D.I.F.M.* model**

1. Email me your *vita* or list of publications: proyster@unl.edu

2. (There is no step 2.)

*D.I.F.M. = “Do it for me”*
To establish a new “series”

1. Decide its affiliation or sponsoring “community” (department, school, college, etc.)
2. Give it a name
3. Recruit or volunteer the series editor(s)
4. Email the information to proyster@unl.edu

You can publish your own work, plus work from colleagues at this or any other institution.
Site structure
Costs

- There are **no costs** to the publishing unit.
- Hardware, set-up, programming, maintenance, and support costs are paid by the UNL Libraries. Annual fee $< 35,000.
Why put work online?

- Widest possible access—delivered directly to the screen (and hard drive) of any Internet-connected computer, anywhere, anytime.

- Full text is linkable from any web page, email, vita, or hypertext document.

- Build and enhance an online presence, identity, and reputation.
“But my article is already online . . .”

Is it . . .

- Free? Or behind a wall—for paid users only?
- Available off-campus, in hotels, airports, internet cafes?
- Available in Delhi, Lagos, Beijing, or Bagdad?
- At its own linkable URL, or at the end of a Java search syntax?
- Indexed by Google?
- Contributing to the unl.edu domain?
- Accessible to your mother?
A cybernetic experiment:

- “Google” your article title and see what you get.
- Is there a free-access, full-text version listed in the top 10 results?
- If not, then the Digital Commons can possibly help put one there.
What if I change my mind?

- The depositor or editor can post a revised version or change the “metadata” at any time, from any connection.

- Any article can be withdrawn by the depositor or editor at any time; it will no longer show up on the site.
What does the Library get out of it?

- Access
- Dissemination
- Preservation
- Collection development
- Recruitment of faculty
- Enrollment of students
Contact

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Places to visit:

Front door: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/
Main directory: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/communities.html
ODIZ: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/onlinedictinvertzoology/
Music Performance: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicperform/
Podcasts: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podcast1/
Ornithology: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/biosciornithology/
Vert Pests: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/vpcthirteen/

Library Faculty Pubs:

Timoleon, Etc. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/16/
De bestiis marinis http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/17/
Pynchon chronology http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libraryscience/2/
Google searches

http://www.google.com/

Richard Wright Pagan Spain
Lyly Midas
Ultraviolet Birds of Nebraska
Joshua Scottow
primase structure and function
androsynhesmia (= “A group of males gathered together during mating season.”)