3-23-2011

Review of *The Survey of Institutional Digital Repositories, 2011 Edition* by Primary Research Group

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The Survey of Institutional Digital Repositories, 2011 Edition
Primary Research Group

This work reports the results of an online survey completed by respondants from 59 institutions, 24 of them being universities in the United States. This represents less than 3% of the 2099 open-access repositories listed in the Registry of Open Access Repositories; and less than 4.4% of the 1359 specifically identified as "Research Institutional or Departmental." The institutions responding ranged from the Library of Congress and the British Library at one end of the spectrum to Pakistan Petroleum Limited, Keene State College, and Amgen, Inc. at the other.

The survey instrument consisted of 43 questions, but with some having multiple parts, this is expanded to 84 sets of answers for which results are presented. These are analyzed in 380 tables, although the statistics are not particularly sophisticated, consisting only of mean, median, maximum, and minimum answers for each.

There is an 8-page "SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS," which is unsigned, but which offers comment and advice that one can only assume is intended to be definitive, or at least, authoritative. Some examples: "Unfortunately, few repositories send out press releases, a drastic oversight in our view"; or "higher education institutions are not well set up to become publishers. It's not their business. They have no true economies of scale. Moreover, academia is rife with internecine conflicts." Perhaps it is not strange that a commercial publisher would advise academic repositories to stay out of publishing, although the authors do note, "Already an astounding 15.79% of repositories have an E-publishing program through which they publish monographs or books in either a print or digital format that might not have been initially published elsewhere." The figure "15.79%" seems impressive, but given the scope of the survey, it must actually mean 9 repositories out of 57 responding. Further, anyone who is astounded by that number cannot have been very well informed of developments in the field.

I confess that I was a respondant for the survey, and so received a complimentary copy of the "results," with the proviso that I could only print out one copy or access it on one computer. To do otherwise would be a misuse of paper and drive space. I would be sorry if any resource-challenged library invested in this product believing that it would aid the development or evaluation of their institutional repository. A 30-minute (free) conversation with almost any repository manager would be much more helpful and pertinent.

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March 23, 2011