BENEFITS AND PERSPECTIVES OF INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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Abstract

In this digital era, academic institutions which are universities and colleges have increasingly recognized the importance of institutional repository. An institutional repository in latest concept for collecting, managing, preserving and disseminating scholarly works created in a digital form by staff and students in individual universities and colleges. The repositories also serve as a comprehensive publications database of the parent organization, which in turn facilitate better management of research knowledge better visibility and wider access, rapid communication of research, long term preservation. In this article mainly discussed on definition, benefits, challenges, Open Source Software and the different types of institutional repositories.

Keywords: *Academic Libraries, Institutional Repository, Open Access Repositories, Open Access Software.*

Introduction

We are living in an information age where we can access information from any part of the world with a click of a mouse. Information explosion is having profound impact on library and information centers. Academic Libraries are heart of educational institutions and they help the parent organization in carrying out its academic program effectively. Libraries are benefited from the information communication technologies as the information with their traditional sources in print format is now being added to the electronic resources. The institutions are converting their assets into digital format for creating digital collection for the last few years. Institutional repository is a new concept for collecting, managing disseminating and preserving scholarly works created in digital form by users in individual academic institutions. In an academic institution, an IR is created from the research output of

the faculty, staff and students made available to the user can avail the service within the campus and outside the institution.

Definitions

Clifford Lynch (2003) "a set of services that a university/ institution offers to the member of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access of distribution".

According to **Mark Ware** an institutional repositories (IR) is defined to be a "web-based database (repository) of scholarly material which is institutionally defined (as opposed to a subject based repository); cumulative and perpetual (a collection of record); open and interoperable (e.g. using OAI- compliant software); and thus collects, stores and disseminates(is part of the process of scholarly communication). In addition, most would include long-term preservation of digital materials as a key functions of IRs".

According to **Barton and Walker** of MIT Libraries "Institutional Repositories designed to manage, host preserve and enable distribution of the scholarly output of an institution".

Concept

Institutional repositories as a means to manage and preserve effectively an institution's knowledge base and intellectual assets results in the content of institutional repositories expanding beyond e-prints to include research data e-learning materials and other forms of institutional intellectual outputs, which are generally not published or preserved elsewhere. It needs to be ensured that content within the repositories remains accessible and retains its authenticity, reliability and integrity for as it is needed.

Need & Relevance of Institutional Repositories

The building of a institutional repository for academic libraries is need in the present scenario of digital world because of the following changes and drawbacks

1. Technological change
2. Siginificant increase in the overall volume of research
3. Increasing need for archival and access to unpublished information
4. Increasing demand to access knowledge objects from anywhere at anytime
5. Increasing uncertainty over who will handle the preservation archiving of digital scholarly research materials.

Components for Creating Institutional Repositories

Creating and develop a institutional repositories are mainly based on hardware, software and staff requirements.

- **Hardware :** Hardware required can be a simple desktop computer workstation or a file server.

- **Software:** There are many open source software packages for running a institutional repository (i.e. DSpace, E-Prints, Fedora, Greenstone, Archimede etc), commercial software's are Berkeley Electronic Pressand Simple DL

- **Staff requirement:** The developments in ICTs as smartened library professionals in taking leadership roles in planning and building institutional repositories, fulfilling their role as experts in collecting, describing preserving and providing. However, staff requirements vary according to the institution's ambitions for repository. Some of the main jobs are involved in institution repository are formulating content policies, advocacy of software and hardware using, user training and a liaison with a wide range of institutional departments and external contacts, technical implementation, customization and management of repository software, manage metadata fields and quality, creates usage repots and tracks the preservation issues.

Objectives of Institutional Repositories

1. Institutional Repository is created to manage, preserve, and maintain the digital assets, intellectual output, and histories of academic institutions.

2. Create global visibility for an institution's scholarly research

3. To collect content in single location

4. To provide Open Access to the institution's research output

5. To provide self- archiving of institutional scholarly research output

Elements of Institutional Repositories

As the digital institutional repository can be any collection of digital material hosted, owned or controlled and disseminate by any institution irrespective of purpose of origin. Institutional repository can assume many forms and serve a variety of purposes as per the functions and objectives of parent organization. A digital archive of the intellectual product by the students, faculty and research students of an institution and it should be accessible to end user without boundaries. The content of an institutional repositories are:

1. Pre-prints of articles or research reports submitted for publication

2. The text of journal articles accepted for publication

3. Revised texts of published work with comments from academic readers

4. Conference papers

5. Teaching materials

6. Students projects

7. Datasets resulting from research projects

8. Committee reports and memoranda

9. Photographs and video recordings

10. Computer software

11. Technical documentation

12. Surveys etc..

Benefits of Institutional Repository

According to Pickton & Barwick (2006). The benefits of repositories to institutions and individuals are numerous and can be grouped into the following categories:

1. IR increases visibility and prestige. A high profile IR may be used to support marketing activities to attract high quality staff, students and funding.

2. IR helps in centralization and storage of all types of institutional output, including unpublished literature.

3. IR supports for learning and teaching. Links may be made with the virtual teaching environment and library catalogues.

4. IR assists in standardization of institutional records. The compilation of an ' Institutional CV' and individual online dossiers linked to the full text of articles become possible.

5. IR enables to keep track of and analyze research performance.

6. IR breaks down publisher's costs and permissions barrier, alleviation of requirement to trust publishers to maintain information in the log term, without any commercial benefit for the authors.

   Thus institutional repositories promote a wider communication.

Challenges of Institutional Repositories:

Although IR are relatively quick and expensive open access software, there should be proper infrastructure, such as software, hardware , staff who should be properly trained and proper rules and guidelines to maintain the various policies and to manage the system. According to

Pickton & Barwick (2006). The implications and potential barriers to its success are summarized below

- **Difficulties in Generating Content:** A successful IR depends on the willingness of authors to deposit their works volunterly and there may be local barriers and hindrances to overcome the. There are acknowledged difficulties in generating content, especially at the beginning. Unless the value of an IR can be demonstrated quickly, the organizations long-term commitment to the project may began to wane. The best way to prove the enduring value of the IR and to ensure its long- term survival is to quickly populate it (gibbons, 2004).

- **Right to Management Issues:** Sometimes researchers are apprehensive about infinfringing publishers copyright and lack adequate awareness about their own intellectual property rights. They may be uncertain about making their work available online before it is published by a traditional publisher.

- **Working Culture Issues:** Contributing content to user- generated or 'self-service' sites is time consuming and time is something which academics often lack. They may be willing to contribute content but reluctant to do it themselves. This calls for mediated deposits service for them.

- **Policy Issues:** Experiences suggest that an IR will only function to its capacity when a mandate is in place to populate it but clearly researchers can react negatively to any suggestion of compulsion. Lynch (2003) has cautioned that an IR should not become a tool for enforcing administrative control over academic work.

- **Lack of Incentives:** In the absence of any incentive academics feel reluctant to provide even bibliographic details of their scholarly output especially when they know that incentives are available in other institutions.

- **Cost:** Initial financial cost for an open source software adopted by most institutions for creating IRs is not high but the recurrent costs, especially staff costs (i.e time spent drafting policies , developing guidelines, publicizing , training, supporting users and creating metadata, specialists IT consultancy) may be significant.

Open Access Source Software for Institutional Repositories

Open access is free to access, use and store, with no purchase fees, or registration required and unrestricted online access to digital scholarly material. Open access to scholarly means that its free availability on the internet and any users can read, download, copy distribute, print, open access documents under creative commons license or similar licenses. There are

number of open access software available for creating institutional repositories, the brief some of the important open source software's are DSpace, e-Prints, Fedora, Greenstone, CDSware, Archimede, MyCoRe, Sobek CM etc.

Conclusion

Institutional repositories are essential tool for academic institutions. It fulfils number of roles in a academic institutions. Open access repositories would broaden the usage. Knowledge may be expensive to generate, but it should be inexpensive to use. Academic libraries need to take positive initiation in developing repositories in order to widely disseminate the intellectual output of academic institutions. In the competitive education market, institutional repositories provide a platform on which a college/university can showcase its higher education. Formulating collection policy, standardization of bibliographic details, checking copyright policy and persuading faculty members to deposit their publications were the major challenges focused in this paper. Success of institutional repository depends on the willingness of authors to deposit their work. Librarians need to continue to educate them about the importance of institutional repository. Its maintenance must be an institutional strategic goal.

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