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Coming late to the game: how to create a totally integrated (!) repository system

Conference presentation

Original citation:

This version available at: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/56827/

Available in LSE Research Online: May 2014

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Coming late to the game: how to create a totally integrated (!) repository system

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Introduction: We’re not really perfect!

- City had the curse/ blessing of developing a repository relatively recently.
- This meant we could start from a blank slate.
- Also meant we could apply lessons learnt from elsewhere.
- While this means we have achieved some level of integration, we could be doing better.
City Research Online (CRO): the basics

Our set-up
- Symplectic Elements Current Research Information System (CRIS), contains c. 17,000 publication records.
- Eprints open access full text repository, contains c. 800 papers.

Developments to date
- Establishing a presence on City’s main website.
- Using data held in the open access repository to feed web services.
- Developing use of the CRIS to support REF 2014.
- Storing and serving City’s electronic PhD theses.
- Social media usage.
Lessons learnt (1): general lessons

Automating metadata harvest and transfer is good. It saves on cataloguing time, and means you can concentrate on doing more interesting things.

Using hosted services is also good, since they tend to be secure and stable, and allow for nimble development.

Branding is important. We quickly learnt that our users get confused when we used brand names - using the service’s name in a thoroughgoing way is very important. Only refer to software names in the context of technical explanations!
Lessons learnt (2): managing 2 systems

Having two systems doing similar things can be difficult:
• Managing systems integration.
• Managing a tripartite relationship.
• Explaining the way in which systems interact to users.

But it also has its advantages:
• Allows for the automated metadata transfer.
• Different systems can be used for different purposes—differentiation!
• As a result of this differentiation, separate development of the two systems can be engaged upon.
• Though Eprints now has CRIS-like functionality, Symplectic Elements has been designed from the ground up as a CRIS.
The “I” word

Two pieces of work on this that caused me to think about integration:
• William Nixon’s idea of the “Invisible repository”
• The RSP “Embedding Repositories” toolkit

Three ways of thinking about integration (or are there?):
• “Integration” as a matter of systems development
• “Integration” as a matter of policy
• “Integration” as a matter of cultural change

• How integrated is CRO?
CRO’s integrated future?

• Perhaps integration is really about service delivery?

• If so, we’re in a pretty good place, since CRO now has a steering committee and four major work packages:
  • Research data management
  • Open access journal publishing
  • Archiving and serving working paper series
  • Author profiling services

• Integration more than just getting systems to talk to one another!
Thanks! Questions?

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