Using JCR and SHERPA RoMEO to Facilitate Conversations on Institutional Repositories

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Abstract

This article describes a technique using the Journal Citation Reports and SHERPA RoMEO to identify a set of core journals in a discipline and determine whether or not they allow pre- or post-print archiving in their copyright transfer agreements.

Introduction

At Oregon State University, like many other colleges and universities, the librarians are active in discussions on scholarly communication issues such as author's rights and open access. This article describes one technique we are using to encourage these conversations.

One topic of discussion is the institutional repository set up by OSU Libraries. This repository, created in DSpace and called Scholar's Archive@OSU (http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/index.jsp), has a number of communities and collections. While we are pleased with the success to date (In July 2008, Scholar's Archive@OSU was ranked 19th internationally and 9th in the United States by the Webometrics Ranking of Repositories (http://repositories.webometrics.info/), we are continuing to work with faculty to expand our collections in the repository. Many faculty have questions about the value of such deposits and are unsure or unaware of their options regarding depositing peer-reviewed articles in such repositories.

"Mashing Up" JCR and SHERPA RoMEO

In order to facilitate these discussions, we have wanted to pull together customized information for departments on the journals in their fields. In the Web 2.0 world, this kind of combination of data from multiple sources is called a mash-up. This is a manual version of such a mash-up.

For this technique, we use Thomson Scientific Journal Citation Reports (JCR) subject lists to create a list of core journals in a subject that are then searched in RoMEO (http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/index.html).

RoMEO is a database of publisher copyright policies on self-archiving, based on the publisher's copyright transfer agreement. It is maintained by SHERPA with support by JISC and the Wellcome Trust. Individual journal titles, ISSNs or publishers can be searched, and each title is

identified as Green (can archive pre-print and post-print), Blue (can archive post-print (i.e. final draft post-refereeing), Yellow (can archive pre-print (i.e. pre-refereeing), or White (archiving not formally supported).

Our first attempt with this technique was with forestry journals. While forestry has 20 OA journals listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=subject&cpid=119), only one of these journals is indexed in Web of Science and included in the JCR. Including information on these OA journals could be one part of a discussion, additional information was needed as many titles used by faculty in their research and publishing would be excluded on a list based solely on OA journals. So we decided to create a list based on core journals in forestry.

The JCR was used to create the list of journals to be reviewed. Faculty are familiar with the Web of Science and JCR and the titles they cover – faculty use them to evaluate potential journals to publish in and they are also often used in the tenure review process as part of the evaluation of articles published by faculty.

For this project a library assistant was given the following instructions:

1. Go to the Science Journal Citation Report and get the list of Forestry journals.
2. Check each title in the RoMEO database - get the publisher, pre- and post-print archiving status, and any conditions.
3. Compile the information into a spreadsheet with these columns: Title, ISSN, Publisher, Pre-print, Post-print, Conditions

This was done, and the assistant had problems with only 2 titles – one where the publisher had two copyright transfer agreements with different archiving policies and one where an ISSN brought up multiple publishers (title had changed publishers).

The resulting spreadsheet was completed within a few days and had archiving information for half of the titles (18 of the 35 titles were not in RoMEO). 17 of the titles allowed post-print archiving (usually of the author's final version; 3 with embargoes of 6-24 months).

This list was shared with the College of Forestry faculty by the Forestry Librarian. In a meeting another librarian had with one of the Forestry department chairs several months later, the chair remembered the list in the context of a broader discussion of faculty awareness of author's rights.

Pros and Cons of this Technique

- Using subject categories in the JCR is a quick-and-dirty way to develop a core list of journals for a subject. Drawbacks to using the JCR include the cost of the online version of the JCR, the fact the JCR only covers around 7,000 journals in the sciences and social sciences and key journals our faculty publish in may be missed, the subject categories may not be a good match for a department's research areas, and some subject categories in the JCR have a long list of journal titles.

- Not all journals or publishers are included RoMEO database. A complete review of a journal list would require visiting the web sites of the titles not covered in RoMEO to see if they have their copyright transfer agreement available. This would greatly expand the amount of time necessary to complete a project.
- The compilation of the data can be done by a paraprofessional or possibly an experienced student employee, but there may be RoMEO entries that are confusing (e.g., publishers with multiple copyright transfer agreements), that would require someone more familiar with publishing history or copyright transfer agreements to interpret the entry.

Future Directions

- **Using Eigenfactors**: for future reports, we will explore using the Eigenfactor site (http://www.eigenfactor.org/advanced.php) as an alternative to the JCR. Eigenfactor scores are another measure of a journal's impact, using a different algorithm. The Eigenfactor site not only includes the 7,000 journals in the JCR, but a number of journals cited by those journals but not included in the JCR. Search can be done by either the JCR subject categories or Eigenfactor field categories, which are based on clusters of citation behavior. This information is freely available. We might also explore the usefulness of the Eigenfactor cost-effectiveness rankings, which are based on price per Eigenfactor.
- **Limiting review lists:** for some subject areas, the number of titles in the JCR is much larger than the 35 titles in Forestry. For example, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology has 263 titles. Upon review of a title list, a subject librarian may choose to do a subset of the full list, based on the impact factor or other elements.
- **Analyzing faculty publication patterns:** title lists could also be created by determining where our faculty are publishing. Affiliation information is available in a number of databases, such as Web of Science, MathSciNet, Compendex, and CAB Abstracts. The titles OSU faculty are already publishing in could be searched in RoMEO to see which are eligible for deposition in Scholar's Archive.
- **Exploring Web 2.0 tools:** determine whether it is possible to do a true mash-up and use technology to pull together the data from the different sources to simplify the process used to produce the report.