Fostering Connections: Creating an IR Managers Forum

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Pamela Andrews, Erin Jerome, Christy Shorey and Anna Dabrowski
Who Are We?

Pamela Andrews - Repository Librarian for Scholarly Works
University of North Texas; locally developed, utilizing a combination of curation microservices

Erin Jerome - Open Access and Institutional Repository Librarian
University of Massachusetts Amherst; Digital Commons

Christy Shorey – Institutional Repository Manager
University of Florida; SobekCM

Anna Dabrowski – Digital Repositories Librarian
Texas A&M University; DSpace
Identifying a need

We met at USETDA 2016 and...

• Discussed common problems and local solutions
• Found many similar issues and questions, with interesting local approaches
• Sought to continue our discussions and involve other IR managers

However, we couldn’t identify a broad community of IR managers within existing venues for discussion...
The problem: Where to go?

The Scholcomm list-serv:

- A general forum for the Scholarly Communication community
- Many diverse subjects for conversation
- A focus on Open Access initiatives

Too big
The problem: Where to go?

IR platform-based forums:

- Siloed in small communities, limited cross-platform dialogue
- Often technical rather than management-oriented
- Focus on platform specific solutions, no place for homegrown platforms

Other forums:

- List-serv involving one part of IR work, but not all

Too small
The Solution: Making our own bed

A forum designed for IR Managers:

• Platform agnostic
• Open to IR Managers around the world
• Not tied to existing community/organization
• Build community of peers for professional networking

Just right
The process

- Choosing the venue
  - #slack vs. Google group
- Creating policies/code of conduct
  - ScholComm
  - DH Slack
- Spreading the word
  - Email other existing list-servs
  - Presentations at conferences
- Managing the forum
  - Shared duties at first,
  - After 6 months set up formalized rotation
Early Stats (as of June 2017)

- 306 members
- 256 distinct institutions:
  - Unknown = inaccessible or impossible to determine
  - N/A = Institution does not have an IR
  - Other = platforms used by fewer than 4 institutions
    - CONTENTdm, ContentPro, DigiTool, OpenRepository, SobekCM, Vital, Zenodo
Early Stats (as of June 2017)
Example conversations

- Author Consent Agreements
- Removing/Missing ETD pages?
- Do you have a right to refuse deposit policy?
- Dealing with incomplete items
- Tasks for student assistants
- Blog posts in the IR
- Tools/workflows for depositing items
- DOIs
- Scanner Recommendations
- Accessibility
How to join

Speak to any of us, or visit the group at:
https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/irmanagers