

## OPEN ARCHIVES FORUM: PROJECT DELIVERABLE

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<b>Abstract</b>	This reports documents the exchange channel established with the OAI in US that permits a continuous monitoring of the progresses of the two initiatives.
<b>Keywords</b>	Open archives, Open Archives Forum, Open Archives Initiative, e-print archives.

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This is a continuously updated report that documents the liaison activity that is undertaken between the OA-Forum project and the Open Archives Initiative (OAI).

This version of the report is organised as follows: Section 1 documents the meetings held between the partners of the OA-Forum project and the members of the OAI steering committee for discussing synergic actions; Section 2 describes the common activities related to validation of the OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH); and Section 3 lists the information exchange channels that have been established between the OA-Forum project and the OAI.

## 1 MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A number of meetings were held between the OA-Forum partners and the members of the OAI Executive Committee (Carl Lagoze and Herbert Van de Sompel) in order to agree on synergic actions to be undertaken by the two initiatives. These meetings started during the negotiation phase before the official OA-Forum project commencement date. After a preliminary exchange of e-mails, a first meeting was organised with Carl Lagoze during the ECDL'01 Conference in Darmstadt on 4th-8th September 2001. At that meeting the OA-Forum partners presented a detailed description of the project proposal to Carl Lagoze. He, in turn, reported about the status of the OAI and about the expected future plans of this initiative. In particular, he announced the intension of submitting the OAI-PMH to a standardization process. The first step of this process would have been the collection of test results on Release 1 of the protocol and the next issuing of a new release (Release 2.0) at the end of March 2002. The OAI plan at that time was to organise two workshops afterwards, one in US, the other in Europe, to present the new protocol release. We agreed that the workshop in Europe would have been carried out jointly with the First OA-Forum Workshop in Pisa at the beginning of May 2002<sup>1</sup>.

OA-Forum members met with Herbert Van de Sompel at the University of Bath in November 2001. The main topic of discussion was the kind of organisational issues that he felt could usefully be addressed in the OA-Forum context, and were beyond the scope of OAI. He felt especially that there is a need for "best practice" guidance that is both community-based and based on implementation experience. Some of the most important topics are: intellectual property right (IPR), subject-based sets within institutional archives, and collection-level description (CLD). Another organisational issue discussed was the need for better understanding of the benefits of and motivation for the creation of open archives. Although there had been much discussion of the value of open archives within the e-print community, the discussion needed to be broadened beyond this community. Herbert Van de Sompel mentioned a number of European projects he knew were interested in the open archive approach, including LEAF, DELOS, CHLT, and TEL. As he was at that time also working at the British Library, he was able to inform us that the TEL project (aiming to offer a search and delivery service across European national libraries) has both Z39.50 and an XML testbeds, and that TEL partners seem keen to try a metadata-harvesting approach through OAI-PMH, in addition to supporting distributed searching via Z39.50.

Another meeting between the OA-Forum partners and Carl Lagoze was held in Rome in conjunction with the "EU-NSF All Digital Library Concertation Meeting" on March 2002. During this meeting we discussed the topics to be covered in the first Open Archives Forum workshop. Carl Lagoze suggested Michael Nelson as OAI keynote speaker. Moreover, we agreed to involve in our activities not only the e-print community but also "other communities". We felt that this is important for both disseminating the open archives approach and validating the OAI-PMH solution.

During the first quarter of 2002 there have been several e-mail and personal discussions with another member of the OAI steering Committee, Thomas Krichel about the impact of OAI PMH2.0 and the implications that the changes have for the usage of the OAI PMH within the

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<sup>1</sup> OAI decided to cancel the two presentation workshops in December 2001 as a consequence of "September 11th".

scientific community. In particular, Thomas Krichel was invited to give a talk about OAI at the Computing Centre of Humboldt-University Berlin, on March.2002. This talk has had visitors from the region Berlin/Brandenburg and even from more German cities, such as Dresden or Hamburg. It led to a discussion about OAI, it's impact and the stability of the movement and therefore of the reliability of the developed OAI-PMH standard.

The results of the First Workshop were communicated and discussed with to Carl Lagoze by e-mail.

Several exchanges of e-mails with Carl Lagoze, Herbert Van de Sompel and Simeon Warner took place in order to prepare the program of the second OA-Forum Workshop held in Lisbon on December 2002. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen events, no one of them could participate to this workshop.

Herbert Van de Sompel participated actively to the third OA-Forum Workshop held in Berlin on March 2003. Here an intense discussion about open multimedia institutional archives was initiated and the future applicability of the OAI-PMH in the framework of National initiatives, e.g. the Dutch DARE project, was evaluated. Herbert Van de Sompel reported to the project members also the latest news about OAI both from the organisational and technical point of view. In particular, he presented the on-going innovative research on the new OAI Static Repository and the different applications of the OAI-PMH for supporting access to digital library usage logs and conformant OpenURL Registry.

The project members participated to the OAI Workshop organised by Simeon Warner in Houston on May 2003. Here a number of synergic activities between OAI and OA-Forum were discussed. In particular, it was evaluated the possibility that the OA-Forum project could set up a registry of OAI resources by extending the database created by the project. It was agreed to postpone this decision to a next meeting when sustainability strategies for the OA-Forum would have been clearer. The OAI community was strongly interested in the on-line tutorial that the OA-Forum project was preparing. It was agree that key members of the OAI community, like Simeon Warner, Michael Nelson and Ed Fox would have evaluated the possibility of enriching and maintaining the tutorial also after the end of the OA-Forum project. During the workshop it was also decided to disseminate more widely within the OAI community the domain expert reports commissioned by the OA-Forum project. In particular, it was established to advertise them through the OAI mailing lists and to publish summarised versions of them on the D-Lib Magazine.

Exchange of e-mails with Carl Lagoze, and Tim Cole are currently underway to prepare the program of the fourth OA-Forum Workshop that will be held in Bath on September 2003. They will participate to this workshop as invited speakers. Carl Lagoze will make a general presentation about the current status of OAI and its next steps. Tim Cole will make a more specific talk about the OAI-based metadata repository that his team is building for their (US) Institute of Museum and Library Services project. He will also mention some of the results achieved by his team during the Mellon-funded cultural-heritage OAI grant and those of a couple of other Mellon OAI projects carried out at the University of Michigan and Emory University. As far as the culture-heritage issue, it would be interested to compare the results presented at this workshop with those that were discussed during the second OA-Forum Workshop and published in the expert report on the application of the open archives approach

in the archival world. This last expert report has been mailed to Tim Cole to inform him about the previous discussions held within the OA-Forum community.

## **2 EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES ON TECHNICAL VALIDATION**

The project partners of Humboldt-University participated in the OAI2.0 alpha test (as data provider). During this time the partners came into contact with the OAI Technical Committee by becoming member of the oai-technical committee mailing list. So it was possible to participate within the discussions about Version 2.0 of the OAI technical framework.

Later at another project at the Computing Centre of Humboldt-University a Service Provider supporting version 2.0 of the OAI PMH was set up. The experiences could be used within the OA-Forum project.

The Computing Centre of Humboldt-University started to test different available OAI software, e.g. Virginia Tech, ETD-DB and eprints.org-software. As a result of this test, OA-Forum has been able to inform people about advantages and disadvantages of different solutions and to give advice which tool would suit into which technical infrastructure.

The technical validation questionnaire has been an important instrument for exchanging information on technical issues. It has made it possible to understand which are the problems that are encountered by European implementers and to provide an updated situation of the current developments. The outcomes of the questionnaire have been reported and discussed with the OAI representatives during the workshops. The questionnaire has thus provided a useful feedback to the both the OAI and OA-Forum communities.

## **3 INFORMATION EXCHANGE CHANNEL**

Information exchange channels have been established between the OAI and the OA-Forum, which permits the communication of news and results between the two.

In particular:

- The OAI provided an interface that allows to select and copy all database entries that are being held within the OAI database at Cornell, covering base name of a repository, its base URL, contact persons and institution, to a local database. This interface was used to create the first version of the OA-Forum database.
- The news section on the OA-Forum project Web site publishes selected OAI news. In particular, it publishes those that are explicitly e-mailed by the OAI steering committee members to the OA-Forum partners.
- The information OA-Forum database on the activity related to open archives in Europe has been made available to OAI.
- The OA-Forum most important activities, e.g. workshops, are advertised on the OAI mailing lists
- Members of the OAI committees are invited to participate in OA-Forum workshops

- With key-note presentations up-dating OAI progress and future plans
- With other presentations
- Participating in breakout sessions and informal discussions