The International Journal of Digital Curation

Editorial

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Welcome to a bumper issue of *IJDC*, with nine peer-reviewed papers and three general articles. There is a great deal to write about here.

But first, some comments on changes, now and in the near future, that are needed. One major change is that Richard Waller, our indefatigable Managing Editor, has decided to concentrate his energies on *Ariadne*. Richard has done a grand job for us over the past few years, in his supportive relationships with authors, his detailed and careful editing, and in commissioning general articles. To quote one author: "I note that the standard of Richard's reviewing is much better than Elsevier's; they let an article of mine through with very bad mistakes in the references without flagging them for review, and were not so careful about flagging where they had changed my text, not always for the better". The success of IJDC is in no small way a result of Richard's sterling efforts over the years. I am very grateful to him, and wish him well for the future: Ariadne authors are very lucky!

Looking to the future of *IJDC*, we will have Shirley Keane as Production Editor, working with Bridget Robinson who provides a vital link to the International Digital Curation Conference, and several other members of the DCC community. We are seeking to work more closely with the Editorial Board in the commissioning role and to draw on the significant expertise of this group.

In parallel, we have been reviewing how *IJDC* works, and are proposing some changes to enhance our business processes and I shall be writing to the Editorial Board shortly. For example, we expect to include articles in HTML- as well as PDF format, to introduce changes to reduce the publishing lead times, and a possible new section with particular practitioner orientation. As part of reduced publishing lead times, we are considering releasing articles once they have been edited after review, leading to a staggered issue which is "closed" once complete. I'm planning to repeat this part of the editorial in the Digital Curation Blog, perhaps with other suggestions, and comments there would be very welcome.

We are, of course, very interested in who is reading *IJDC*, and the level of impact it is having on the community. In order to find out, Alex Ball from UKOLN/DCC has been trying several different approaches in order to get as full a picture as possible.

One approach we have used is to examine the server log for the *IJDC* website. The statistics for the period December 2008 to June 2009 show that around 100 people visit the site each day, resulting in about 3,000 papers and articles being downloaded each month. It was pleasing to discover we have a truly global readership; while it is true that a third of our readers are in the US and the UK, our content is being seen in around 140 countries worldwide, from Finland to Australia and from Argentina to Zimbabwe. As one would expect, we principally attract readers from universities and colleges, but we also receive visits from government departments, the armed forces and people browsing at home.

The *Journal* is also having a noticeable impact on academic work. We have used Google Scholar to collect instances of journal papers, conference papers and reports citing the *IJDC*. In 2008, there were 44 citations to the 33 papers and articles published in the Journal in 2006 and 2007, excluding self-citations, giving an average of 1.33 citations per paper. Overall, three papers have citation counts in double figures. One of our papers ("Graduate Curriculum for Biological Information Specialists: A Key to Integration of Scale in Biology" by Palmer, Heidorn, Wright and Cragin, from Volume 2, Issue 2) has even been cited by a paper in *Nature*, which gives us hope that digital curation matters are coming to the attention of the academic mainstream.

Turning to this issue, we have broadened the submissions to include one peer-reviewed paper and three general articles originally given at iPres 2008, as well as seven peer-reviewed papers from the 2009 International Digital Curation Conference, and one independent submission. Since this issue will be published in the same week as IDCC09, we have clearly already made some progress in reducing publishing lead times, even if the iPres 2008 papers might give a contrary impression. The remainder of the IDCC09 papers will be published in the next issue, along with a selection of papers and articles originating from both iPres 2008 and iPres 2009. We have already agreed with the organisers of iPres 2010 (to be held in Vienna in September, 2010) that papers submitted there will be considered for the *IJDC*.

Looking at the peer-reviewed papers (presented as usual in alphabetical order of first author surname, but not discussed in that order here), there are some broad themes visible. The first grouping includes the organisation of data curation and sharing, from various viewpoints. Burton and Treloar describe some aspects of the most ambitious national curation effort, the Australian National Data Service, using "ANDS verbs" as their unifying metaphor. Walters uses Georgia Tech's endeavours as an example, and suggests a 4-component model for universities interested in establishing their data curation activities to follow. Witt, Carlson, Brandt and Cragin describe an IMLS-funded study establishing Data Curation Profiles in several subject areas, seen as "useful guides for exploring, learning about and interacting with data producers and collecting information about datasets and collections".

I was particularly pleased that the paper by Pryor was selected by reviewers as the best paper in IDCC09. The paper starts from a study conducted for the Research Information Network on data sharing practice in the Life Sciences, and shows how complex curation even in a single discipline area can be. Perhaps the most important conclusion is that policies in these areas need to be developed in

discussion with the researchers; imposing a top-down, one-size-fits-all model may hit major barriers in implementation. O'Donoghue and van Hemert discuss a more focused issue also in the Life Sciences, applying the DCC Curation Lifecycle Model in their planning to curate a gene expression database.

More in the science world, Albani and Giaretta discuss preservation of earth observation data (with an emphasis on the knowledge required to understand them) using their experiences applying the OAIS model in the major CASPAR Project. Brunsmann and Wilkes look at engineering, and specifically using Product Lifecycle Management approaches to preserve engineering knowledge.

Finally we have two papers at a more technical level. Buneman, Müller and Rusbridge describe the application of an archiver that preserves past states of a changing database, and its application to the World Factbook, while Wright, Miller and Addis consider the risk factors implicit in storage, with interesting implications for the question of compression.

We have in addition three general articles in this issue. Abrams, Morrisey and Cramer describe an updated architecture for JHOVE2, whose predecessor has been one of the most widely used tools in digital preservation. Next, von Suchodoletz and van der Hoeven address some of the issues that can arise when using emulation as part of a digital preservation strategy, based on their experiences at the KB in the Netherlands. Finally, Rieger and Kehoe address some of the difficulties that Cornell faced, when planning preservation services for their large-scale book digitization programmes.

We hope that you enjoy the contributions in this issue, and continue to get value from *IJDC*. We are very interested in readers' ideas on the future of this journal, and as always, we are keen to see more independent submissions to *IJDC*.