

Kenning Arlitsch and Patrick S. OBrien.

Improving the Visibility and Use of Digital Repositories through SEO. Chicago: ALA TechSource, 2013. 128p. (ISBN 9781555709068). LCCN 2012-049197.

With the increasing creation and use of institutional repositories (IRs), Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is necessary to draw users to digital collections. Arlitsch and OBrien provide useful information in their book, *Improving the Visibility and Use of Digital Repositories through SEO*, part of the *LITA Guide* series. In the first chapter, the authors clearly define SEO and why it is important for libraries. As students, faculty, and even donors are using services such as Google and Google Scholar as research tools, IR content needs to be indexed. The authors conducted informal research on findability in regard to IRs and the results were eye-opening, as they found very low information retrieval percentages in harvesting IRs.

An important point mentioned in at least two chapters is that everyone in the library has a responsibility to users to make content openly available. For example, the second chapter is written from a management perspective and focuses on the responsibility of SEO as belonging to multiple parties. There is a focus on leadership using quantitative data from SEO analysis tools to communicate the value of IR services. A very good point made in chapter 3 is that, while a user may find the IR using a search engine, that user is not a "customer" of said IR until he or she actually accesses the IR site. Arlitsch and OBrien explore the IR as a marketable product that provides information access to users. Additionally, it is an open access service and has the potential to reach a worldwide audience. How search engines index content by means of crawling and indexing, difference between IRs and websites, the usefulness of sitemaps, and common problems that may impede crawlers' performance are also important topics covered.

Chapter 4 contains technical information, but the authors contend that there

are times when administrators need to be aware of SEO concepts and tools. Google Analytics and Webmaster Tools are just a few of the services available. It is also important for them to be aware that every decision made in implementing the tools will affect the organization's ability to identify problems and may also have an impact on reporting factors to stakeholders.

Arlitsch and OBrien discuss search engines' free webmaster tools, which aid in analyzing IR indexing, and identify where crawlers run into problems. There are additional tools that assist in gathering other site statistics including visitor counts, country of origin, frequency of visits, and more. Information on the proper setup of tools so that IR managers may pinpoint and fix problems was wisely included by the authors. Master accounts versus product accounts, defining domains, Google Analytics, and configuring baseline SEO products are explored. Admittedly, I had to read this chapter a few times before I fully understood the processes. The authors warn that the information in this chapter is highly technical.

Chapter 5 focuses on improving search engine index ratios and exploring what problems crawlers may run into while they attempt to scrape content from IRs. This can be a huge benefit to repository managers. Arlitsch and OBrien provide valuable information on solutions, such as customizing error pages and how this can benefit users (or not) depending on local configurations.

In chapter 6, the authors discuss using keywords and phrases, low- versus high-competition keywords, SEO-friendly web pages and how they can be examples to libraries, using social media to attract users, and ways to improve rankings using Wikipedia, Bing Business Patrol, and other sites. Metadata schemas and search engine compatibility are also discussed. Not surprisingly, many websites don't use metadata schema, especially the schemas that libraries use, so consistency is an issue.

The seventh chapter, focusing on Google Scholar and IRs, could be most useful to IR managers. An important reminder to the reader is that Google and Google Scholar are two separate indexes. While an IR may have a high indexing ratio in Google, it may not be true of Google Scholar. A major takeaway from this chapter is that IRs have the “potential” to be able to increase citation rates, which positively affects the rates for the university, but this cannot be done if sites like Google Scholar cannot reach the content of the IR because of metadata incompatibility and low indexing.

In the final chapter, the authors provide valuable information on creating good, useful reports for the various stakeholders, as well as helpful definitions for measuring success, which may seem easy on the surface but is fairly tricky if certain factors or parties are ignored. Stakeholders are divided into three categories: funders, content providers, and organizational/operational support, and further detail on these stakeholders and their needs is provided. Keeping up with trends and issues of IRs would help in

managing and maintaining IRs. Arlitsch and OBrien also discuss the increased demand for accountability, proving the worth of IRs, budget constraints, and the unknown demand for digitized collections. Aligning goals of the IR with the strategic plan of the institution is also a key issue. The authors provide a short list of library web metrics that would prove useful to adding value of the repository to a report, as well as key performance indicators.

Arlitsch and OBrien include a references section, as well as an index. In each chapter, they provide snippets of interesting and pertinent information separated from the main text in grey boxes. It is not just one department, say the authors, that should ensure the operation of the IR—it takes a library. The book has valuable information for IR staff, managers, administrators, and others who want to know more about this topic. The overall tone of the book is informal, which makes the presentation of the topic less intimidating and helps communicate technical issues more clearly. —Lizzie Walker, *Wichita State University*.

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