

Aim

To examine how researchers communicate their research findings to the wider research community and to understand how researchers discover relevant information resources with the view of cultivating and sustaining a productive engagement between researchers and librarians.

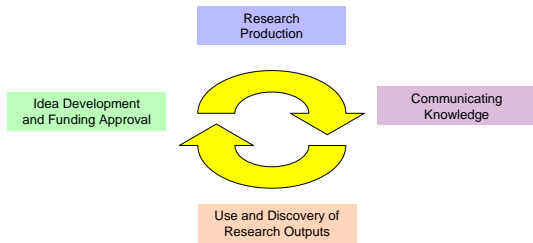
Introduction

The global research community thrives on the sharing and discussion of research findings. In the UK, and elsewhere, an increasing emphasis is being placed on maximising and demonstrating the social and economic returns from that investment. Thus research outputs are becoming an increasingly important commodity.

"the journal article is the currency of research..."

New digital technologies and policy developments are changing the research environment. In order to better understand the changing role of research libraries it is important to have an accurate picture of how researchers are currently producing, disseminating and using information as well as the issues the encounter during the process.

The Research Life Cycle



Communicating Knowledge

How researchers publish and disseminate their work

Through a variety of formal and informal means, related to disciplinary norms, including: monographs, journals, conference proceedings, and social media resources.

Why do researchers publish?

They have a desire to maximize dissemination to the target audience, gain peer esteem and rewards. This has led to a raise the importance of journal articles as these are easily monitored and measured (Figure 1).

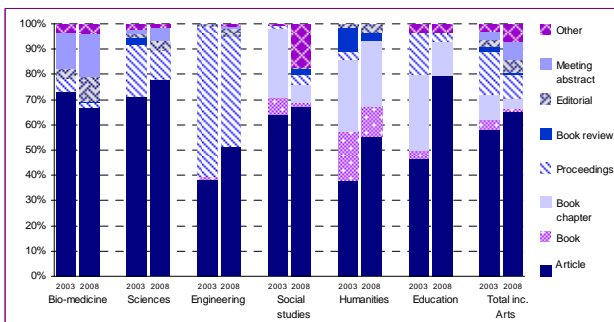


Figure 1. Increase in the production of journal articles

The use of Web 2.0 based tools and resources

Web 2.0: web based tools and resources which encourage wide scale informal dissemination, collaboration, sharing and re-purposing of content and innovative ways to interact with and use these web based platforms (Ware 2003).

Information-Sharing

	Never		Occasionally		Frequently		BASE
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Write a blog	1087	84%	155	12%	51	4%	1293
Comment on other peoples' blogs	978	77%	273	21%	28	2%	1279
Contribute to a private wiki	1066	81%	191	15%	58	4%	1315
Contribute to a public wiki (e.g. Wikipedia)	1072	82%	215	17%	15	1%	1302
Add comments to online journal articles	1023	78%	267	20%	16	1%	1306
Post slides, texts, videos etc. publicly	820	64%	382	30%	80	6%	1282

Table 1: Use of web 2.0 tools associated with producing, commenting on, and sharing scholarly content

Data sharing and open science activities

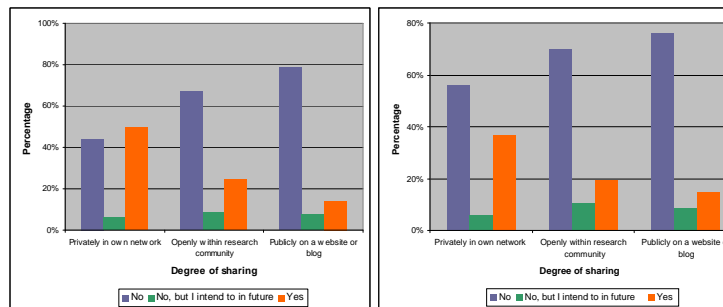


Figure 2. Percentage of respondents publishing work in progress

Figure 3. Percentages of respondents making data available online

Advantages

- enhanced visibility
- ease of answering research question
- more opportunities to collaborate
- more journal articles published

Concerns

- being 'scooped'
- misinterpretation of data
- copyright and IP
- lack of recognition and reward

Discovery of research outputs

The majority of articles are discovered by via simple searching using generic services such as Google or Google Scholar (Figure 4).

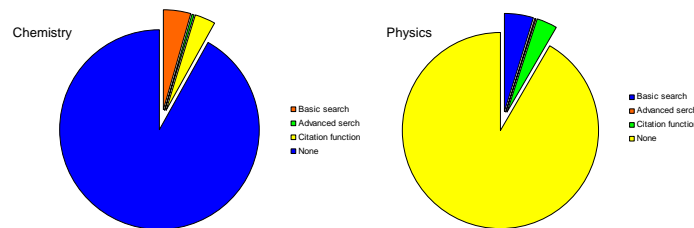


Figure 4. Use of publishers' search facilities

Barriers to access

- lack of subscription payment required for download, and being asked for a password they do not have.

severe implications depending on the discipline

"...if it's not available it is assumed not worth reading and there are always substitutions."

Use of research outputs

Relationship between e-journal expenditure, use and research outcome (Figures 5 and 6).

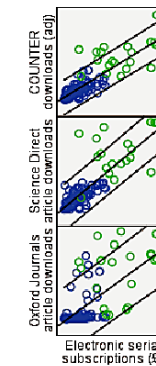


Figure 5. Journal spend VS. Journal article download

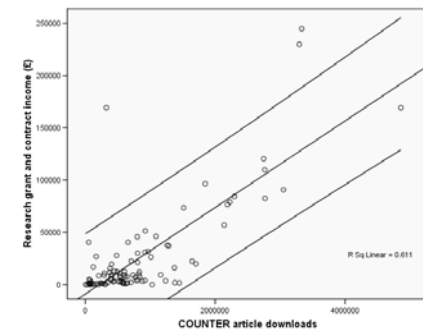


Figure 6. Research grants and contract income vs. journal article download

Conclusions

- Confusion over the mixed messages they receive as to how best to communicate their findings.
- Compromise between speedy dissemination to a target audience and a less rapid publication in a high-status journal.
- A clear association between collaboration and use of web 2.0 tools.
- The support and encouragement of the local environment has a positive impact on the uptake and use of web 2.0 tools.
- A lot of e-journal usage occurs outside of normal working hours.
- Lack of understanding of copyright and IP skills.

Recommendations

- Provide guidance and advice on the different communication channels.
- Provide advice, training and encourage the use of web 2.0 tools and resources
- Provide data management, preservation and curation skills training along with IP and copyright.
- Maintain and improve access to e-content.
- Ensure easy access to e-content for those not working on site.

References

A full reference list is available at <http://www.rin.ac.uk/news/events/39th-liber-annual-conference-re-inventing-library>

All RIN publications are available at www.rin.ac.uk/our-work