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Three years on: TERMS

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Three years ago, we began publishing the rough drafts we had for TERMS: Techniques for Electronic Resource Management to a Tumblr blog and wiki space and soliciting feedback from the international library community. The response to the work was extremely positive from colleagues around the world and the feedback received really helped to develop the best practices into a cohesive reference tool.

During the second year, we published that iteration as an issue of Library Technology Reports and began a promotion schedule via library workshops that carried into this past year.

In year three we had news via our facebook page that we had inspired colleagues in Finland to create a TERMS-model seminar and also were presented with a mind-mapping exercise of services offered by Jisc that indicates which services support each TERMS section. In addition, working with colleagues at the University of Huddersfield, the TERMS wiki was migrated to a WordPress environment to allow for more flexible editing and the ability to add in segments such as presentations.

As we begin to look towards year four, we have used feedback from conference workshops on how to improve TERMS and suggestions from the mind-mapping exercise to plan for a revised version of TERMS to roll out in 2015.

In addition to the work on TERMS, we began an off-shoot project, OAWAL: Open Access Workflows for Academic Librarians, in late 2013. OAWAL was a reaction to questions regarding open access management which it was quickly apparent could be a project unto itself. During the first year of OAWAL, we were invited to contribute to an editorial in Serials Review and we will be hosting workshops at Charleston (November 2014) and UKSG (March 2015).

The initial idea behind TERMS was developed because on the yearly occasions when we met face to face prior to developing it, we realised that we had a number of ideas and concerns to share with one another regarding electronic resource management. We wanted to broaden this conversation out to other colleagues in the profession and devised the TERMS social media strategy and wiki as a way to accomplish that goal. It is now interesting to see projects like the IMLS Award to Dartmouth to develop a crowdsourcing consortium for cultural heritage institutions to develop these ideas with digital humanities projects, and the librarians in Finland co-opting this strategy to develop more coordinated workflow and processes.

Initially, we had hoped we could spin TERMS out into the world and have it become a self-sustaining edited document of best practices. We have realised through this past year that this idea may be a little premature and that we need to develop a quarterly update process and refine some of the sections we created originally. Secondly, we also recognise that it is best to capture the feedback gathered from in-person events in a more timely fashion in order to keep the content fresh and the concerns relevant to librarians working with electronic resources.

We will continue to accept workflows from librarians who would like to share them as part of a revamped TERMS at the beginning of 2015.

We are excited to have champions, like Susan Davis at SUNY-Buffalo, who promote TERMS on electronic discussion lists to early career librarians asking for best practices on certain aspects of electronic resource management. Galadriel Chilton used TERMS as the basis of her Library and Information Science course in 2013. As regards social media numbers, TERMS has 247 members at the facebook page, 69 followers on Tumblr and 184 followers via Twitter. These numbers have continued to grow steadily since the onset of the project. The last in-person event at the American Association for Law Librarians Annual Conference resulted in having 42 people registered for a whole day workshop on TERMS which was the largest audience to date and the feedback was quite in depth.

As to the future of TERMS, followers can look forward to numerous changes in early 2015. First and foremost, we will be changing the section headings to include a section on the preservation of electronic resource content whilst consolidating two of the existing sections, Ongoing Evaluation and Access with the Annual Review section. In addition, we will also be editing and publishing portions of the OAWAL crowdsourced feedback. At this juncture, we invite librarians, subscription managers, and publishers to provide comments both on TERMS and to OAWAL as these developments take place.