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VERSIONS Project: **an update**

VERSIONS: Versions of Eprints: user Requirements Study and Investigation Of the Need for Standards
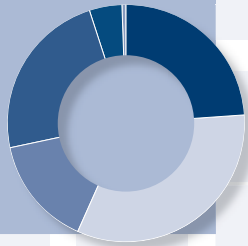
VERSIONS survey of researchers

The results presented on this poster are based on a survey of researchers conducted by the VERSIONS Project in May-July 2006

- **464 respondents from 42 countries**
- **75 per cent economics researchers**
- **Research active – 50 per cent produce two or more papers per year**

Roles of survey respondents:

- Not an active researcher
- Contract / freelance researcher
- Student (PhD or other research degree)
- Post doctoral research staff
- Lecturer / Associate Professor
- Professor

59 per cent of researchers produce four or more different types of research output from a typical research project

Conference Paper · Conference Paper · Conference Paper · Conference/ · Conference/ · Conference/ Workshop Presentation · Working Paper · Working Paper · Working Paper · Report · Report · Report · Book Chapter · Book Chapter · Book Chapter · Journal Article · Journal Article · Journal Article

Authors produce and store many versions of their research outputs

For each type of research output produced, authors go through many iterations. The number of revisions is increased when working with co-authors. In the production of a journal article, versions can run to as many as 60. Of these multiple versions authors consider a handful to be milestone versions.

UNIVERSITY 1 · lead author · co-author
UNIVERSITY 2 · co-author · FAX & EMAIL · PUBLISHER · www
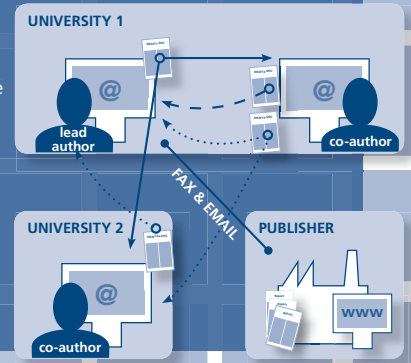
Almost all authors keep versions suitable for Open Access deposit permanently – but over one third of authors do not have all of these easily accessible

91 per cent keep final author versions of their journal articles permanently.

58 per cent have all and 36 per cent have most of these final author versions easily accessible – therefore 41 per cent do not have all. The passage of time increases the likelihood that the paper will become inaccessible for a variety of reasons.

Half of researchers are satisfied with the way in which they organise revisions and different versions of their work, but half are not...

Those who were satisfied with their personal information management had given careful thought to file naming, to directory structure and to a weeding policy. Some reported using a version control system such as CVS or Subversion. Those who were not satisfied reported not having time to think about this issue and therefore lacking a systematic approach, difficulties with co-authors and with multiple storage locations.

I save each new version with the version date in the name

I give the paper a name, and then number all versions: i.e. paper1,paper2,paper3. When a paper is submitted to a journal, I rename it, adding the title of the journal, i.e. paper_res1,paper_res2. Final author versions get the suffix _final and proofs get the suffix _proofs.

I get easily confused as to which papers are the latest versions due to poor labelling of files.
Sometimes I make alternative versions of the same paper (horizontal versions) and find difficult to acknowledge which specific changes I have made in each version.
Difficulties with tracking the most recent version, especially when working with co-author (ie. always!)

First I have a folder for each topic of research I am interested in. In each topic folder, I have a folder for each project. In each project folder, I use several folders for: (a) bibliography, (b) data, tables and graphs, (c) econometric output, (d) PowerPoint presentations, and (e) drafts. All drafts have dates printed on the cover page so I am able to order them chronologically.

Most authors are willing to deposit their final accepted versions in OA repositories if invited to do so

81 per cent stated that they would provide a final author version to their Institutional Repository if invited to do so.

However, evidence presented by OA experts indicates that spontaneous open access deposit runs at about **15 per cent**, while a mandatory deposit policy will quickly work to move open access deposit towards 100 per cent. [1]

[1] Carr, L., Swan, A., Sale, A., Oppenheim, C., Brody, T., Hitchcock, S., Hajjem, C. and Harnad, S (2006) Repositories for Institutional Open Access: Mandated Deposit Policies. http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/13099/ . [Accessed 20 March 2007]

What attitudes did researchers express about depositing their final author versions?

91 per cent are willing to provide to provide an author final version to a fellow researcher if requested by email

73 per cent place the publisher PDF on their personal website as their first priority, if permitted

68 per cent are unsure whether the publisher copyright agreement permits them to provide an author final version

50 per cent said they consider the author final version inferior to the publisher PDF version

42 per cent said they are concerned that they might lose citations to the published version if they provide the author final version (of which only 8.8 per cent felt this strongly)

Only **12 per cent** said it would take too much time to provide the final author version

To help identify versions and ensure that these can be deposited in OA archives:

Authors should:

- develop a personal information management strategy, including file organisation and file naming convention; make time for a weeding strategy which retains and clearly identifies key versions
- retain final author versions of journal articles – accessible and in useful formats (not just in PDF)
- add date of completion of manuscript to document
- obtain final author versions from lead co-authors
- be informed about copyright transfer agreements; when negotiating/signing, consider how they wish to re-use and disseminate their own work

Repository managers and universities should:

- inform authors about publisher self-archiving policies and about options regarding agreements with publishers
- adopt metadata standards which can support version information: version number, versioning notes, date of manuscript completion, linking of related records
- educate authors to add date and version information to manuscripts and about personal information management strategies
- implement mandates, policies or workflows which result in deposit of appropriate versions in a timely fashion before the files become inaccessible to their authors

Repository software developers should:

- make provision for version identification in metadata, for example by supporting the Eprints Application Profile [2]
- implement support for linking of records (eg FRBR approach)
- implement version control

Readers find multiple versions or copies of papers on the Internet and have to spend time looking through them

As readers, **93 per cent** of researchers find multiple versions or copies of papers on the Internet.

41 per cent of readers do not find it generally quick and easy to establish which version(s) they want to read.

www

The top three requirements when looking through multiple versions were the ability to:

- identify the latest version
- identify the published version if any
- discover the date of completion of the manuscript

Authors have some concerns about loss of citations but readers show a strong preference to cite the published version

42 per cent of authors say they are concerned that they might lose citations to the published version if they provide their final author version to an OA repository.

80 per cent of readers using earlier open access versions say they will cite the published version of journal articles. 73 per cent say they prefer to cite the published version only, even when they have read an earlier version online. A further 7 per cent would cite both published and earlier versions. Many researchers explain that they will check the published version to ensure that what they cite was not cut out at refereeing stage.

"If there is a published version, I check what changed compared to the earlier version and – if appropriate – I cite only the published version."

"I prefer to cite the published version, but I may want to cite material in the working version that was excluded from the published version."

"The standard is to cite the published version, but it might make sense to cite both."

[2] Eprints Application Profile. www.ukoln.ac.uk/repositories/digirep/index/ Eprints_Application_Profile. [Accessed 20 March 2007]

www.lse.ac.uk/versions