

11-15-2004

# Accessibility of ARL Academic Libraries' Digital Library Projects

Chad M. Kahl

*Illinois State University*, [cmkahl@ilstu.edu](mailto:cmkahl@ilstu.edu)

Sarah Williams

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/fpml>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Kahl, Chad M. and Williams, Sarah, "Accessibility of ARL Academic Libraries' Digital Library Projects" (2004). *Faculty and Staff Publications – Milner Library*. 26.

<https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/fpml/26>

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Milner Library at ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty and Staff Publications – Milner Library by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact [ISUReD@ilstu.edu](mailto:ISUReD@ilstu.edu).

---

# Accessibility of ARL Academic Libraries' Digital Library Projects

---

Chad M. Kahl

Sarah C. Williams

Milner Library, Illinois State University



---

# Overview

- Project Background
- Survey
- Data Points
- Qualifications
- Results
- Recommendations
- Q & A

---

# Project Background

- In September 2003, Milner Library created a task force for managing digital resources.
- Before implementing a digitization program, the task force wanted to ensure efficient access and integrated searching capabilities.
- Very little literature was found concerning access to digital library projects.
- Preliminary findings presented at '04 ALA Annual Poster Session.

---

# Survey

- Criteria:
  - Association of Research Libraries (ARL) members
  - Academic
  - English-language websites
- Conducted in several phases from January-August 2004.
- Data stored in MS Access database.

---

# Institutional Level Data Points

- Number of digital library projects
- Digital library website URL(s)
- Terminology used
- Level of access from the library's homepage
- Notes

---

# Project Level Data Points

- Project name and URL
- Project type(s)
- Browse/Search accessibility
- OPAC access
- Federated searching
- Restricted access, and restriction explained
- Metadata included, and searchable
- Notes

---

# Other Data Points

- Data points surveyed, but not analyzed
  - Project partnerships, on campus
  - Project partnerships, off campus
  
- Planned data point, but not surveyed
  - Usability testing



---

# Selected Qualifications

- Institutions were not credited with projects if done in statewide consortia.
- If multiple ARL libraries collaborated on a project, the host site was credited.
- Evaluated:
  - Non-commercial sites
  - Electronic theses and dissertations projects
- Not Evaluated:
  - Commercial products
  - E-reserves
  - Text only finding aids
  - Pilot/experimental/“in progress” sites

---

# Data Summary

- ARL academic, English-language libraries: **111** (123 total)
- ARL academic, English-language libraries with projects: **89** (80.2%)
- Total number of projects: **1,123**
- Average number of projects per library: **12.6**
- Median number of projects: **8**
- Low: 22 libraries had **0** projects
- High: 1 library had **112** projects

---

# Library Website Access

- **43.8%** were accessible from homepage
- **36.0%** were accessible from secondary level
- **20.2%** were not accessible from the homepage or a secondary-level page

## Example

- University of Utah
  - <http://www.lib.utah.edu/>

---

# Project Types

- Image projects: **733**
- Text projects: **634**
- Exhibits: **213**
- Atlas/Map projects: **71**
- Finding Aid projects: **55**
- Audio projects: **43**
- Video projects: **35**
- Audio & Video projects: **9**
- Other projects: **14**
- Thesis/Dissertation projects: **13**
- *Projects with 2 or more types: 395*

---

# Browse/Search Accessibility

- **91.3%** were browsable
- **51.6%** were searchable
- **45.8%** had both browsing and searching options

## Example

- University of Toronto's *The Discovery and Early Development of Insulin*
  - <http://digital.library.utoronto.ca/insulin/>

---

# OPAC Access & Federated Searching

- **33.1%** had OPAC records
- **25.6%** allowed some form of federated searching

## Example

- University of Minnesota – Twin Cities' *Images*
  - <http://digital.lib.umn.edu/advancedsearch.phtml>

---

# Restricted Access

- **6.1%** were restricted access
- **72.7%** of restricted access projects explained the restriction

## Example

- University of Virginia's *Early American Fiction Collection (1789-1875)*
  - <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/eaf/>

---

# Metadata

- **72.6%** contained metadata
- **43.5%** allowed metadata to be searched

## Example

- Washington State University's *Early Washington Maps*
  - <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/xmaps.html>



---

# Recommendations – Library Website Access

- Make project access point available from the library homepage.
- Ensure projects are listed with more traditional online resources, such as OPACs and article databases.

---

# Recommendations – Project Access

- Make browsable and searchable.
- Offer searching in OPAC and/or federated search engine, in addition to digital management software.
- Make item records, in addition to collection or sub-collection level records, searchable from OPAC and/or federated search engine.
- Maintain active URLs in OPAC records.
- Explain who can access restricted items and why.

---

# Recommendations – Metadata

- Offer as much metadata as possible.
- Make all metadata searchable.

---

# Questions?

**Chad M. Kahl**

Coordinator for Library Instruction and  
Information Literacy

[cmkahl@ilstu.edu](mailto:cmkahl@ilstu.edu)

**Sarah C. Williams**

Science Librarian

[ssteini@ilstu.edu](mailto:ssteini@ilstu.edu)