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Title: Disseminating your research

Creators: Pickton, M.

Example citation: Pickton, M. (2013) Disseminating your research. Invited Presentation presented to: *Academic and Research Libraries Group (ARLG) Yorkshire and Humberside: 'The Librarian as Researcher', York St John University, 25 January 2013.*

Version: Presented version

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Disseminating your research

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ARLG Yorkshire and Humberside
'The Librarian as Researcher' event
York St John University
25th January 2013





Outline

- Why disseminate?
- The dissemination plan (who, what, how, when?)
- Worked example
- Preparing to disseminate
 - ‘Traditional’ outlets
 - New social media
- Case study: the LLS research conference





Why disseminate?

- Why is it important to disseminate your research?
- What do you (and others) gain from it?
- What would be lost if dissemination didn't take place?





Reasons to disseminate

- Share findings / contribute to professional knowledge base
- Raise awareness / increase impact of your work
- Establish track record / gain recognition
- Raise personal or organisational profile
- Demonstrate value
- Derive sense of achievement / personal satisfaction
- Enhance personal CV
- ...





The dissemination plan

- Why plan your dissemination?
 - Forces you to **think** - about your outcomes, about how, when and with whom you are going to share them;
 - May highlight areas in your research that need addressing
 - Set milestones/deadlines
 - Give yourself time - some dissemination options have a long lead time e.g. journal publication, conferences
 - Some funders require dissemination plans to ensure the research outputs reach a wide audience
- Start planning your dissemination at the start of your project





Planning dissemination - things to think about

- **Who** are your audience(s)?
- **What** are their interests?
- **How** will you reach them?
- **When** is the best time?





Who are your audience(s)?

- Who are you seeking to influence?
- Internal audiences – departmental colleagues; service users (students, academic staff, professional services); senior managers (budget holders!)
- External audiences – professional colleagues; funders; policy makers; local community
- Your intended audience(s) and your purpose in targeting them will underpin all your subsequent dissemination decisions





What is your audience interested in?

- What does each audience need or want to know?
- Are you able to provide this?
 - Does your research meet these needs?
 - What might you do to ensure it does meet these needs?
 - How will you get the message across?
- How can you make the most **impact**? (If it doesn't have impact should you be doing it at all?)





How can you reach your audience(s)?

- Which communication channel is most appropriate or effective (for both your project and your audience)?
 - Traditional scholarly routes (journal articles, conference papers, books, book chapters, monographs etc)
 - Other publications (practitioner press, flyers, posters, fact sheets, policy briefs, newsletters, press releases)
 - Presentations at community events, forums and meetings ('community' can be professional, special interest, service user etc.)
 - Online and electronic communication e.g. electronic mailing lists, project website
 - Social media (blogs, social networking, microblogs)





When is the best time?

- When is dissemination most effective?
 - At the beginning of the project - to raise awareness, get feedback, engage with other researchers in this area
 - Mid way through the project – to describe the work in progress, share early findings
 - At the end of the project – to disseminate final results, outcomes, conclusions, recommendations for change
- Consider different audiences at different times



An example – Reading lists project

Kate is concerned that undergraduate students are not able to make the most of the reading lists provided by their course tutors. In some cases these are very lengthy and have little by way of supporting annotation. This means that the students are often uncertain about how many or which items to read. It is affecting their confidence in using the library and ultimately impacting on NSS scores.

Kate is therefore planning a small research project to address the problem. She would like to apply for some external funding to support this work and the funder requires a dissemination plan.

Who are Kate's audience? What will they want to know? How will Kate reach them and when?

Discuss.





Reading lists project – who?

- Potential audiences include:
 - Undergraduate students – reading list users
 - Academic staff – reading list creators
 - Library staff (internal) – support reading list creation and purchase resources
 - Senior managers – provide budget for service
 - Professional colleagues (external) – apply research findings in other institutions
 - Funders – provide support for project





Reading lists project – what?

- Audiences have different but overlapping interests

Audience	What do they want?
Undergraduate students	Reading lists that they understand and can use effectively
Academic staff	As above, plus support for reading list creation
Library staff	As above, plus reading lists that are accurate and up to date and include items available in the library
Senior managers	Student satisfaction, high NSS scores, value for money
Professional colleagues	Evidence to support policy and practice in the use of reading lists
Funders	Value for money and demonstrable research impact





Reading lists project – how?

- Which are the best ways to reach each audience?

Audience	Routes to dissemination
Undergraduate students	Presentations, workshops, posters, VLE, library website, social media
Academic staff	Presentations, workshops, School meetings, email communications, in house publications, library website
Library staff	Presentations, workshops, departmental meetings, email, library website
Senior managers	One-to-one meetings, formal committees, project report, email, in house publications
Professional colleagues	Practitioner journals, conferences, community events, project report, social media
Funders	As requested e.g. project report, presentation





Reading lists project – when?

Project stage	Audience(s)	Focus of dissemination
Start	Staff and students	Raise awareness of project; recruit participants
Start	Funders and senior managers	Gain support for project
Middle	Academic staff, library staff, professional colleagues, funders	Progress report, share early findings; solicit feedback
End	Academic staff, students, library staff	Launch revised reading lists; promote evidence based practice
End	Professional colleagues	Present evidence; disseminate final results, conclusions and recommendations
End	Senior managers	Summary of outcomes and recommendations
End	Funders	Final project report, including demonstration of successful project completion and fulfilment of deliverables





Preparing to disseminate

3 steps:

- Choose the most appropriate outlet for your project for the audience you wish to reach and the information you wish to disseminate
- Conform to any requirements for that outlet
- Write for the intended audience





Journals and conferences – things to think about

- **Generally:**
 - Will this outlet enable you to reach your desired audience (and within the timescale you need)?
 - Are the subject area and approach appropriate? Look at previous contributions to see how your work will fit in.
 - Look out for calls for papers – normal practice for conferences and special issues of journals
- **Journals**
 - Scholarly or practitioner? Peer reviewed or not?
 - Consider reputation and quality – is this a realistic choice?
 - What proportion of papers are accepted?
 - Don't submit to multiple journals at the same time
- **Conferences**
 - Does your work fit with the conference themes?
 - Are you likely to get permission/funding to attend?





Finding the right journal

- The [LIS publications wiki](#) has standardised information about all types of publication including, for journals, their submission guidelines and audience – well worth looking at
- If scholarly impact matters to you, check out Journal Citation Reports or [its alternatives](#)
- Which journals have been useful sources for your work? These may make appropriate dissemination outlets too.
- Ask your colleagues for recommendations – exploit their connections
- If open access is important to you (or your funder) then check the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#)



Finding the right conference or event

- Various listings of conferences exist e.g. [LIS Research Coalition list](#), [Library Conference Planner](#)
- There are a number of conference alerting sites e.g. [Lanyrd](#), [Conference Alerts](#) and [All Conferences](#)
- Many are advertised on community mailing lists e.g. [JISCmail](#)
- Your colleagues may be able to recommend a relevant conference or event (they may be involved in organising it)
- Once you have appeared at conferences and events, organisers will start to seek you out 😊



Finding a book

- Book publishers– who publishes in areas suitable for your work? e.g.
 - [ABC-CLIO](#)
 - [De Gruyter](#)
 - [Facet](#)
 - [IGI Global](#)
 - [Information Today](#)
 - [Scarecrow Press](#)
 - [Woodhouse Publishing](#)
([Chandos](#))
- Sometimes it is down to who you know – but if your dissemination has been effective elsewhere then they may come to you
- Publishers will support you with publicity and promotion
- Start small e.g. write up your research as a case study; produce a chapter
- Timing may be a problem (availability of suitable book, long lead time)





Write for that audience

- Who are they? Practitioner, researchers, academics, policy makers?
- What will they know already and what will you have to explain?
- Use language / jargon appropriately
- Adjust your writing and presentation style to the format and occasion (research article, conference paper, project report....)
- Writing a paper is like writing a CV for a job – basic content is the same but different bits get emphasised





Follow instructions

- Check the author or presenter guidelines and do as you're told!
For example:
- Before you start:
 - Is an abstract, summary or plan required in advance?
 - Can you meet the deadlines?
- When you are writing:
 - Can you match the word count?
 - Are your references in the right format? Are they accurate and are URLs still current?
 - Have you followed instructions on style and presentation (headings, font, margins etc)?



Dissemination using social media

Social media offer a range of opportunities:

- Build a profile using a professional networking tool e.g. [ResearchGate](#); [Academia.edu](#); [MethodSpace](#); [LinkedIn](#); [Nature Network](#); [Facebook](#)
- Create a blog and update it regularly e.g. [MyPad](#); [Blogger](#); [WordPress](#); [Posterous](#)
- Share your latest news by microblogging e.g. [Twitter](#)
- Use a web service to share your outputs:
 - presentations (e.g. [SlideShare](#); [Scribd](#))
 - photographs (e.g. [Flickr](#); [Picasa](#))
 - videos (e.g. [Vimeo](#); [YouTube](#))





Advantages of social media

- Present the research profile that you want others to see
- Reach a wide audience – practitioner, academic, professional, business and public
- You choose what to say and when to say it – take control of your own dissemination
- Share all types of research output, not just text
- Give and receive feedback – through comments, discussion groups
- Make connections - belong to a research network or a community
- Measure your impact – track visits, downloads, followers, 'likes', re-tweets





Case study

Promoting and
disseminating the
work of a library
service:





LLS Conference – June 2012

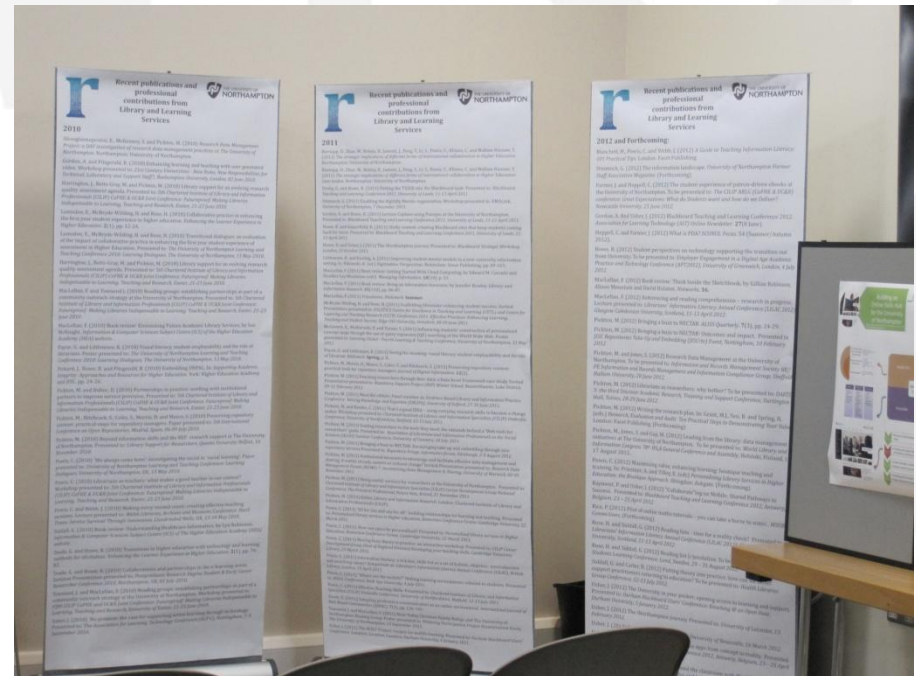
- Purpose/Audience:
 - To share research findings with LLS colleagues
 - To promote 'librarian as researcher' to academic colleagues
 - To showcase the work of the department to professional colleagues
 - To celebrate our research successes
- Supported by professionally designed publicity materials and a [conference blog](#)
- First ever practitioner research conference (for us, for the sector?)





LLS Conference – on the day

- Introductions from the Vice Chancellor (on video), Head of Library and Learning Services (LLS) and external speaker
- Four types of presentation: research papers (6), work in progress (2), posters (12) and 'minute madness' (12)
- Banners and posters emphasised range of LLS research outputs and professional contributions
- Presenters represented all parts of LLS
- Event supported by a large team of LLS volunteers





LLS Conference - impact

- Attended by 36 LLS staff, 27 academic and support staff from UoN and 23 librarians from across the UK (Yorkshire, Kent, Dublin ...) – many more than the 30 originally hoped for!
- Hugely successful:
 - Feedback overwhelmingly positive from all audiences
 - Tremendous 'buzz' on the day translated into huge amount of pride among LLS staff and enthusiasm for new research activity
 - Large number of hits on [conference blog](#)
 - Invitation for conference blog to archived in [UKWA](#)
 - Winner of [PPRG silver award](#) for marketing excellence





LLS research - impact

- 'Scaffolded' approach to teaching information skills – widespread interest from other universities; approach adopted elsewhere at UoN
- Reading lists – huge interest at LLS conference, VC now involved
- Learning spaces – informed refurbishment of library; library staff now recognised as knowledgeable in this area
- Research data – results underpinned institutional research data policy and subsequent RDM activity
- Mobile apps – colleague left soon after for an exciting new job with Blackboard ☹️
- Delivery of maths tutorials online – project demonstrated that these were not popular so not worth pursuing





Thank you

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