

Toward the Future with Retrospective Hindsight

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Abstract

The 10th anniversary of the NDLTD, it is an appropriate time to use the wisdom of past experience to improve the future of ETDs. Since 1997 Virginia Tech's ETD stratagem has guided many universities to allow, then encourage, and finally require graduate students to submit dissertations and theses online. This is true in part because VT made the submission and management software, ETD-db, freely available [<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ETD-db/>], providing the impetus many institutions needed to establish their ETD initiatives. In 2007 ETD-db is being redesigned to meet evolving needs. As part of a larger approach called "ETD-in-a-Box," the redesigned software will encompass all aspects of an ETD stratagem including expanded Graduate School recordkeeping, online committee approval, institutional repository access, and more, including preservation in an NDLTD dark archive. ETD-db will continue to be packaged to serve the needs of nascent initiatives but it will also better meet the needs of graduate schools and libraries, as well as student authors. Learn about the background and prospects of ETD-db but also use this session to give your input and to influence the future of ETDs before the redesigned software is wrapped for August testing.