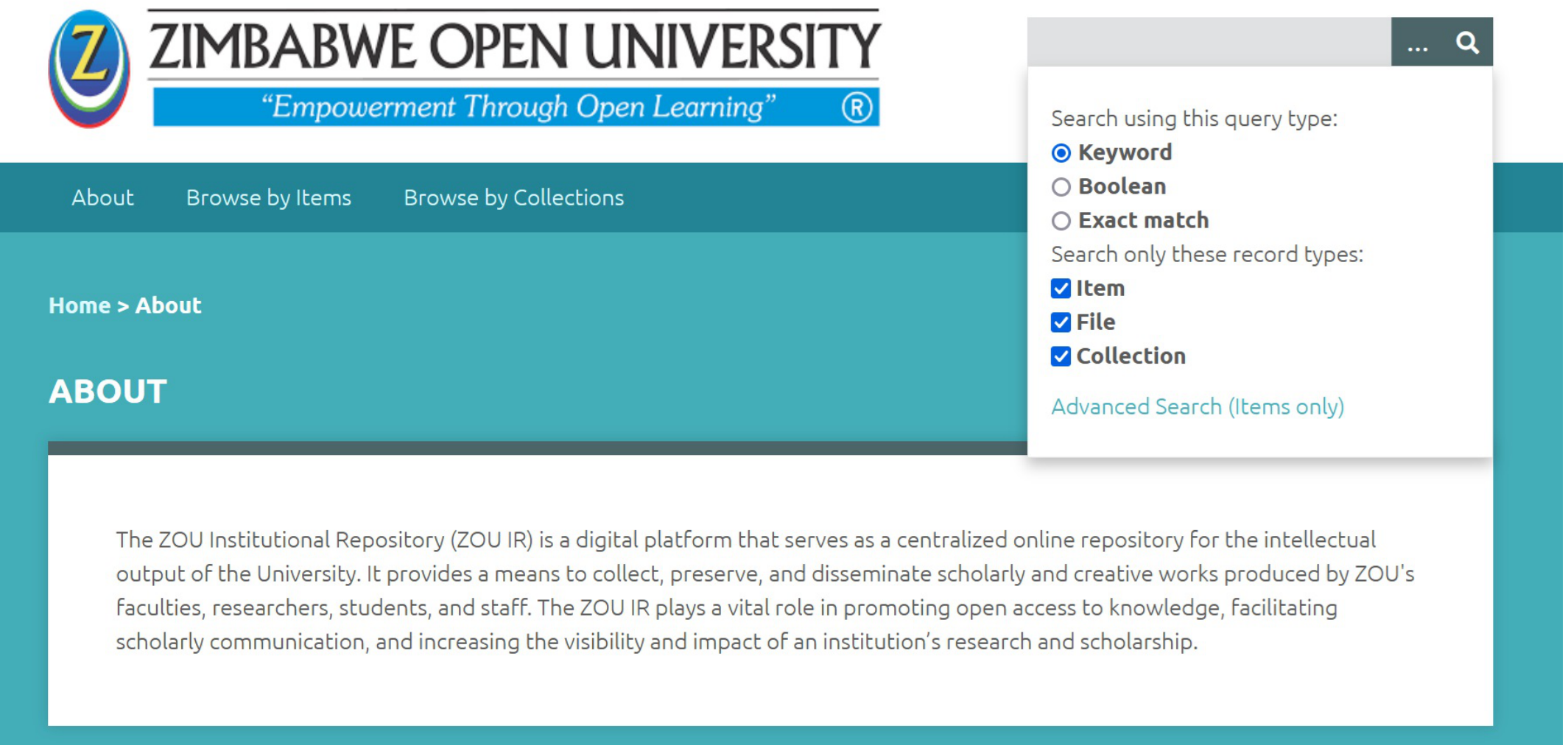


Creating an ETD Database using OMEKA: The Zimbabwe Open University experience.

Authors: Madziwo Edwin T madziwoe@zou.ac.zw & Kandira Nobbie kandiran@zou.ac.zw
(ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY)



3. Highlight the benefits accrued from establishing the new ETD database using OMEKA

Research Question

- (i) What benefits could be accrued by setting up the new ETD database using OMEKA

Methodology

The study was qualitative in nature and used the phenomenology paradigm which was descriptive in nature. The target population was all 31 librarians at the Zimbabwe Open University. Purposive sampling was used to collect data from fifteen librarians (15) (Four at the National Centre and 11 from the Regional Campus Libraries). The sample was drawn from librarians that contributed to the set-up and data capturing processes of the new repository. An interview guide was used to collect responses from the sample population. Data was analysed using Taguette: open-source qualitative data analysis

Findings

n = 15

3 (20%) of the librarians indicated that they were directly involved in the set up of the new ETD i.e the installation and customisation process. 12 (80%) were not involved with the set up of the repository using OMEKA. Indications were that they did not have the technical expertise to carryout the work.

Out of the 3 (20%) that indicated that they had direct influence in the set-up of the repository, 1 out of the 3 highlighted that the choice of OMEKA came as a option after the DSpace server crushed and the installation of OMEKA was a bit easy as compared to Dspace.

There was indication from 1 (6.7%) librarian that over Dspace, Omeka had greater functionality and flexibility of using plugins to enhance the platform. The availability of a number of themes was also noted as another advantage.

15 (100%) of the librarians indicated that they got training on establishing an institutional repository. However, the training differed in that 2 (13.33%) had acquire training on programming thus they were the lead team in setting up the ETD database.

13 (86.67) of the librarians highlighted that they had got training on the use of the front end of

OMEKA. However, they highlighted the need for further training on meta data standards in order to ensure quality and standards are followed when capturing objects into the ETD database.

In setting up the ETD database all the librarians indicated that they faced challenges in implementing the new institutional repository. 2 (13.33%) indicated that they faced technical challenges during the initially stages of installing the software. After consultations, they managed to install the software without any other challenges.

13 (86.67%) of the Librarians pointed out that it took time for them to get used to the workflow processes in OMEKA as they were used to DSpace. However, they then highlight that OMEKA had simple workflow processes as compared to Dspace.

15 (100%) of the interviewed Librarians highlighted that the new repository would increase visibility and impact as more people would access the platform globally. It was also interesting to note that increased visibility was said to lead to more citations which would open up more networking opportunities for academics.

13 (86.67%) took note that publications that would be archived into the new repository would make contributions to the already existing bodies of knowledge. 2 (13,33%) librarians highlighted that OMEKA had robust features for preserving and organizing digital assets, combined with OAI-PMH harvesting would ensure long-term accessibility and discoverability of institutional resources of the new ETD database.

Conclusion

Librarians need to be technically proficient in using repository software and other tools to manage ETDs. They must have a broad understanding of metadata standards and be knowledgeable about copyright and licensing issues in order to manage institutional repositories effectively. In making sure that repositories satisfy the demands of all users, librarians must also be able to work well with other stakeholders, such as teachers, researchers, and IT experts. In general, the success of institutional repositories depends on librarians, whose knowledge and efforts are vital to the distribution and preservation of scholarly work.

Recommendations

Omeka, as an ETD software with the option to harvest OAI-PMH datasets, empowers institutions to create compelling digital collections while promoting openness, collaboration, and data interoperability. By curating and sharing their scholarly and cultural assets using Omeka, institutions can leave a lasting impact on the academic and cultural landscape, preserving our shared heritage for future generations and enabling researchers and enthusiasts worldwide to explore and engage with their valuable resources. However, there is need to capacitate librarians in setting up ETDs so as to ensure a smooth flow of the project's implementation.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to establish the implementation experiences of the Zimbabwe Open University librarians in creating an Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Database (ETD) using OMEKA over Dspace software. The study explored the successes and challenges that were faced when coming up with the new institutional repository. The objectives of the study were to: (i) Establish the benefits of using OMEKA over DSpace. (ii) Establish the challenges faced in implementing the new ETD database. (iii) Highlight the benefits accrued from establishing the ETD. The study was qualitative in nature and used the phenomenology paradigm. Data was collected from all Librarians and Library IT staff at the Zimbabwe Open University that were involved in the implementation of the new repository. An interview guide was drafted in order to collect responses from the target population. The study was significant in that it gave a comparison of DSpace and OMEKA as two open source software that were available on the market. Results of the study revealed that lack of trained staff was one of the major problems in creating the ETDs.

Introduction

An Electronic Theses and Dissertations database (ETD) is an archive of academic outputs of an institution that supports the research and development endeavors of the organization, safeguards creative works, and fosters scholarly exchanges among its users. In setting up institutional repositories different softwares are used and these include software such as Dspace, OMEKA and ePrints. Each of these softwares has its own strengths and challenges. The successful implementation of an ETD database depends on proper planning and training of the team involved inorder to reap the benefits that go along with establishing a repository.

Objectives

1. Establish the benefits of using OMEKA over Dspace.

Research questions

- (i) Were you involved in the set up / installation of OMEKA
- (ii) If your answer to question (i) was yes. Describe the installation process and a brief comparison of OMEKA over Dspace.

2. Establish the challenges faced in implementing the new ETD database

Research questions

- (i) Did you get any training when implementing the new ETD database.
- (ii) What challenges would you say you encountered when setting up of the new ETD database