

Publisher-independent e-Journal archiving model for India – Approaches , strategies and a model.

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Abstract

Fuelled by the convenience of quick and easy access by Internet and the web technologies, online publishing is proliferating. Apart from the fact that more than 90% of the reputed publishers have gone electronic with their journals, there is a significant growth of online-only journals - estimated to have crossed 1,200. Each new medium for content access is creating new opportunities for publishers to recycle their past content forcing the libraries to involve in a repeated, often expensive exercise of replenishing both the content and the associated technology. Libraries are ending up paying repeatedly for the same content they bought years ago. While traditionally libraries did archiving as a social responsibility to ensure perpetual access to its patrons for the acquired material, the emerging technology-commerce equation has significantly shifted this role to publishers. This role reversal has given rise certain certainties in the minds of all stakeholders. The new publisher-dependent model for perpetual access does not have the innate institutional and social confidence that the publishers will honor this responsibility. Libraries are reluctant to relinquish their established institutional practice to protect their investment rights on and discharge the responsibility of perpetual access for journal literature as long as the expensive, subscription based purchase model is continued by the publishers. The fact that archiving copyrighted e-content has become a complex, expensive and, technology and infrastructure intensive activity has made it difficult and extremely redundant for individual libraries to get into this enterprise. This paper attempts to present an approach for libraries to develop local archiving models as an extension of their e-journal consortia. The approach gains its strength from the first-sale doctrine of copyright laws, which grants permanent physical retention and perpetual usage rights to the buyer of the content including the right to transfer the limited ownership of usage. The scope of this model is limited to the library-subscribed journals.