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Institutional Repository Access Patterns of Nontraditionally Published Academic Content: What Types of Content are Accessed the Most?

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OBJECTIVE

To determine the value of posting nontraditionally published academic content, such as materials supplementary to peer-reviewed publications, poster images, graduate course research papers, and presentation slides to an institutional repository (IR).

SETTING

The University of New Mexico's IR *DSpaceUNM* that has been operational since 2005 and that is actively supported by the institution's library.

METHODS

Using the "Statistics" functionality of the open-source IR software, DSpace, the monthly access rates were collected and analyzed for the following academic content types:

1) Materials supplementary to journal articles published in traditional peer-reviewed journals

2) Research papers from a graduate student course in biomedical informatics in a Master of Science in Clinical Research program

3) Slide images from presentations given at national or regional meetings

4) Poster images with or without the associated abstracts that were accepted for presentation at national or regional professional meetings.

The analysis focused on both the access rates over time as well as comparing overall access rates between content types.

RESULTS

Table 1 lists the total numbers for the content types.

Table 1. Content Type with Average Year 1 Hits / Item

Content Type:	Number Found:	Avg 1-yr:
Supplementary Materials	3	25.69
Slide Images	16	21.48043
Papers from CTSC BMI Course	6	22.30556
Poster Images	24	17.30061

Figures 1-4 represent the time courses for monthly hit rates for the combined four content types:
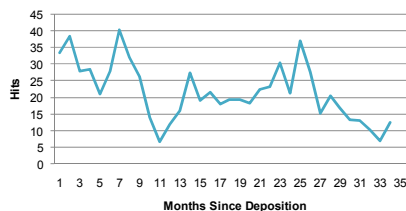

Figure 1. Supplementary Materials to Published Articles
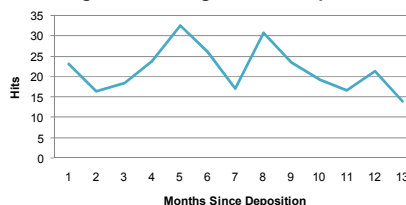

Figure 2. MS Program Class Papers
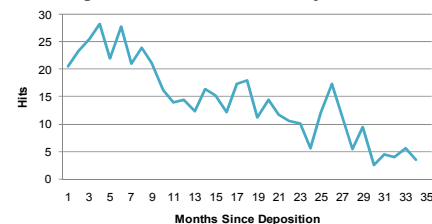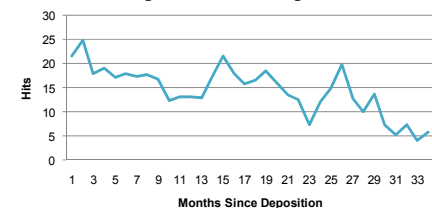

Figure 3. Presentations Hits by Month

Figure 4. Poster Images

CONCLUSIONS

• The average first year access rates were similar across content types.

• Deposition of poster images seems to be the most popular of the defined content types.

• Access of content diminished over time but continued well into year three.

• This is academic output that would not likely be otherwise captured and made freely available were it not for publication in an IR.

• Authors should be encouraged to post nontraditional content to IRs because it will likely be accessed for years to come.