

Editorial

Introduction

I commented in the last editorial that submissions to the journal appeared to be rising and this issue is some kind of testimony to that fact. In fact, things got a little out of hand, which is why we are late in "going to press" - all my own fault, of course, but the task of getting sixteen papers ready was, shall we say, taxing!

For those who wonder why it's taxing: well, first, the papers have to be read for sense, to make sure that they will be intelligible to the reader. My intention is that the papers should not be simply technically adequate, but that they are written in a way that aids understanding. This means that an author is quite likely to get a message from me, which says, What do you mean by this paragraph? In the course of this checking, I also have to check the reference list, which causes me more problems than anything else: for some reason IR's authors are particularly bad in not reading, or reading but ignoring, the Instructions for Authors and, as a result, the reference list may pass back and forth until it is in order.

Then the coding has to be edited to the point at which it will pass the [W3C XHTML validation test](#). This is non-trivial: even when I have prepared a paper myself, I generally find that, on the first pass, the validator identifies more than 100 errors. Actually, a single error generally generates two error messages, so it is really more than 50 genuine problems. When anyone else has done the coding, there may be more than 300 genuine errors to deal with. Even those with evident computing skills produce code that is far from perfect and, on average, it takes me about one day of work to correct the coding for any one paper.

Once the papers are ready, the author and subject indexes have to be updated, and the counter service has to be contacted to get a counter code for each paper. Then the papers are converted to .pdf files for ISI, so that they can be indexed for the citation indexes.

Given the workload, it is good to have some help and I'd like to thank Alastair G. Smith for his work on the papers from Victoria University Wellington, Reijo Savolainen and Sinikka Koskiala for their work in relation to the remaining papers from DigiLib 2003, Elias Sanz Casado for his liaison with the authors of the papers in Spanish, Pedro Diaz and Jose Vicente Rodriquez for the Abstracts in Spanish, Elena Maceviciute for her work on the book reviews, and Rae-Ann Hughes for the proof-reading - not yet completed as we publish, but the advantage of electronic journals is that you can correct things after publication without having to issue errata notes!

This issue

As I may have intimated already, this is a rather complex issue. The first set of papers is from the School of Information Management, Victoria University Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand, and Alastair G. Smith has [an issue editorial](#) that tells you all about that. I visited the School a few years ago when it had just been created out of three separate departments and it is good to see things coming together.

The next two papers are those remaining from the DigLib 2003 conference: Brinley Franklin and Terry Plum explore "Library usage patterns in the electronic information environment" in a major survey of electronic information use, involving 15,000 users. The authors discover use of electronic sources shifting from in-library to remote use. No doubt that phenomenon is going to increase rapidly.

Annaïg Mahé, of the Ecole Nationale des Sciences de l'Information et des Bibliothèques, Lyon, uses the concept of "information activity analysis" to explore the use of electronic journals. "Three main information activity types are outlined—marginal, parallel, and integrated. Each of these types corresponds to a particular attitude towards scientific information and to different levels of electronic journal use."

Once again, let me remind organizers of conferences in 2005 who are looking for an open source outlet for the papers are invited [to contact me](#).

I had forgotten that I had also suggested this issue for papers from the Luso-Hispanic world, so we also have two papers in Spanish and one in English from Spain, and another in Spanish from Peru - our first from that country. The papers represent a very similar range of interests to those from other parts of the world: two deal with bibliometric approaches to the analysis of scientific output; one with digital resources; and one with censorship and pornography in the age of the Internet.

These papers appear with another five refereed papers which deal with the same common themes: information seeking behaviour, digital libraries, search engines, and, the odd one out, but still relevant to the journal, the impact of technology spending on student achievement.

The papers show that *Information Research* deserves the 'international' tag: we have, in this issue, papers from Finland (1), France (1), Germany (1), Israel (1), New Zealand (5), Peru (1), Spain (3), the UK (1) and the USA (2).

Use of the journal

Not only do we have an increasing number of submissions, we also have increased usage, with a forecast of more than 43,000 'hits' on the top page this year - 1,000 more than 2003. We also have more than 3,000 'registered readers' and I'm not sure how much longer I can keep that database going. Pegasus makes mass e-mails pretty easy, but maintaining the currency of the database is work that I can do without. It may be that users will have to rely on my announcements to the general mailing lists in the information management, information science, information systems fields.

The world was agog recently with the news that the market share of Internet Explorer is beginning to slip - down a full two percentage points. Well, [the counter service for the journal](#) currently reveals more slippage:

1.	Internet Explorer 6.x	74.2%
2.	Mozilla 1.x	12.9%
3.	Internet Explorer 5.x	8.9%
4.	Safari 1.x	1.6%
5.	Netscape 7.x	1.6 %
6.	Netscape 3.x	0.8 %

This reduces to: Internet Explorer versions 83.1%; Netscape/Mozilla versions 15.3%; and Safari 1.x 1.6%. Very different from the reported share for IE of something in the order of 94%. Perhaps the more sophisticated users of *Information Research* are leading the way - away from Microsoft. I now use the Mozilla browser, [Firefox](#), which I find much superior to IE.

Failed experiments

When an experiment in electronic community building doesn't work, the best thing to do is to stop it. Readers will recall that I started a discussion list and a Weblog, so that readers of *Information Research* could interact with authors and with each others. What happened? Well, the discussion list was initially quite active - mainly on the topic of knowledge management, but posts tailed off to the point at which the list mirrored others in the field. Just about any list you look at is devoted to practically nothing but conference announcements and appeals for help with student projects. So I've abandoned it.

And [the Weblog](#)? Very much the same story. It has only 139 members, but I think that only three or four have ever contributed anything. I'm keeping it going, but it will become just a personal Weblog, with occasional postings from me about things I find interesting.

There's scope for a paper on the non-existence of the 'virtual community' in this sector - for publication in *Information Research* of course!



Professor Tom Wilson, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief
July 2004

How to cite this editorial:

Wilson, T.D. (2004) "Editorial." *Information Research*, **9**(4), editorial E94 [Available at:
<http://informationr.net/ir/9-4/editor94.html>]

© the author, 2004. Updated 21st July, 2004

[Contents](#)



[Home](#)
