

Summary Report on 2016 DM Community Survey

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What follows is a summary report of the DM Community Survey which was open roughly from May 2016 to November 2016. The primary data for each question is summarized and where possible conclusions have been put forward. Too many questions were open field, making quantitative analysis somewhat difficult and beyond the skills of this reporter. The full results are available in the attached .csv file and in the Google Forms page here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Ydq5S9yM23n9Cd25zPlCVTx_DFFDyJf0hx4oGrs_l3Q/edit#responses

Opening Questions

1. *How do you follow DM activities?* (105 responses)

Respondents were asked to select all that applied from the following options: the <dm> website, the <dm> RSS feed, the <dm> mailing list, Facebook, Twitter, and “Other”

Of all the available options, the mailing list was the most popular (70.5%), followed by Facebook (33.3%), the website (23.8%), and Twitter (15.2%). The RSS feed came in at only 3.8%. Six respondents wrote in “Other.” Of note, this included 3 other lists: mediev-l, med-l, and “another list”.

Conclusion: The mailing list appears to be the most effective form of communication. My guess is that of the other lists mentioned, messages are being forwarded to them.

2. *Please indicated which DM activities interest you with a brief explanation of why* (77 responses)

Respondents were asked to identify in long answer form all that applied from the following: Publication of scholarly journal, conference sponsorship, conference list, list of tools, news server (which I took to include mailing list, social media, and rss), and community support. Of these, the journal and the news server received the most mentions, 26 and 29 respectively, but there was fairly even distribution among the rest: list of tools was mentioned 18 times; community support, 16 times; conference list, 12 times; and conference sponsorship 8 times.

Others mentioned general interest in DH methodologies and practices and teaching support (both graduate and undergraduate).

- “actually working on similarities related to the multilingual project ALIENTO, we are interested in the type of research and development that and also in whatever research in computational sciences and the Humanities”
- “conference list, list of tools --> because it is difficult to keep up with the development in a field so diverse as digital humanities. Publication of scholarly journal --> since there are not many places to publish on digital history.”
- “The scholarly journal is very important in my opinion as it provides a great opportunity for open source publishing in our field. I'd like to see more conference sponsorships (maybe this is already happening but could be better publicized?) as they are ways to connect the online DM community with our face to face activities. Overall, I value the DM as a whole and its listserv as well for providing a space that fits my interests.”
- “journal, mailing list, general networking opportunities, if there is interest in a conference, I would suggest looking into creating a sub-meeting within another large meeting (e.g. Kalamazoo)”
- “Primarily knowing there is a community out there with experience. I am still feeling my way towards a critical edition online, with tools of analysis such as phylogeny, but also concordance and phraseology.”
- “As a librarian and former medievalist I use the DM community's activities to track trends in research methods in DH generally”
- “As an independent scholar, digital technologies are critical for my work. I need access to other scholars for advice and aid. I benefit from access to tools, research materials, databases. Furthermore, it is the primary conduit for me to receive cfp's and the like.”
- “We most need to reach out to graduate students, who face dismal prospects for employment unless they can present themselves as personnel badly needed by our academic institutions: experts not only in cultural studies, as medieval studies certainly is, and the marvelous opportunities to improve technology through the exercise of imagination.”

Conclusion: Currently, the two most important roles that DM plays are 1) the advancement of dh scholarship associated with the Middle Ages and 2) community support by means of news distribution and information sharing.

3. *What do you expect from the DM community?* (102 responses)

Respondents were asked to choose all that applied from the following options: Information about scientific events, technical support, publishing in a scholarly journal, social events and gatherings, news about digital resources online, the opportunity to publish in a scholarly journal, and “other”.

96% of respondents identified “News about digital resources online” as the greatest expectation. After that, publishing in a scholarly journal/the opportunity to publish in a scholarly journal (unintended duplication?) was identified by 53%. Social events and gatherings (presumably this

includes conferences?) was less infrequently selected. Surprisingly, technical support was selected by only 29.4%. Respondents who chose other described essentially variants of the provided choices.

Conclusion: Once again, these results show that the journal and distribution of news rank among the most important significant of <dm>.

4. Summary of Journal-related questions:

1. *Do you read DM-Journal?* (102 responses)
42% replied yes, whereas only 12.7% replied no. Of note is that 28.4% reported that they were “unfamiliar” with it.
2. *Are you willing to serve as a peer reviewer?* (100 responses)
62% replied yes; 27% replied no.
3. *Would you consider writing a review of a digital or printed resource for the DM Journal?* (99 responses)
61% replied yes; 30% replied no.

5. Beyond DM: do you follow/are you active in other communities? (70 responses).

In short, this open field question showed that the overwhelming majority of respondents follow a wide range of other communities. While these communities are largely related to various areas of medieval studies, many respondents also reported following non-academic communities associated with DH in general, data curation, TEI, conservation, and library-interest groups, such as the ALA and Code4Lib.

Conclusion: DM serves as a centralizing hub for a number of academic, professional, and DH communities.

<DM-L> Mailing List Section

For some reason, no responses were recorded for this section. The questions were:

1. *Have you ever posted on the list?*
2. *Have you ever voted to elect the members of the Executive Board?*

Medievalist and Digital Section

1. Please indicate which of the following areas are of particular interest to you: (104 responses)

Respondents were asked to choose from all that apply from a list of disciplines. Not surprisingly, 76.9% of respondents identified as Digital Humanists. Of note, 71.2% of respondents identified “Manuscript Studies, Paleography, and Diplomatics” as a main interest. Otherwise, all disciplines provided as options were selected by up to 42% of respondents. Central European Studies, Drama,

Government and Institutions, Jewish Studies, Languages and Literatures-Germanic, Scandinavian Studies were selected by 10% or less of respondents. Syriac Studies, Armenian, Prosopography, Agricultural History, Ancient and Medieval Medicine, South Asian Studies, and Libraries were added by one respondent each.

Conclusion: DM serves traditional interests of medieval studies well where Western European interests dominate. There is certainly room for improvement in expanding our outreach beyond traditional boundaries of medieval studies.

2. What is your primary research interest? (99 responses)

This open field question is difficult to analyze in a systematic way as there are nearly as many different answers as there are respondents, and it is somewhat redundant after the above question.

3. In what ways does the "digital" dimension of your work impact your research? (87 respondents)

Another open field question. Suggested responses were "change the questions you ask," "speed up work," "change the ways you do your work," "change the ways you organize your team". Respondents supplied free text variations on all of the above, but respondents could enter anything. Some representative statements include:

- "Again, another open field question that is proving difficult to analyze succinctly. Respondents' answers circled around all of the above suggested answers with much variation on wording. Here are some notable examples."
- "The digital has completely changed my work. It prompted me to shift in my area of research from social and economic history in medieval Belgium (which of course I still find interesting) to studying medievalists online on its own. I study digital engagement through digital tools. My side research is studying manuscript history by analyzing & visualizing the Roman de la Rose via its digital library website."
- "most texts in my field have never been edited; MS digitization projects mean direct access to materials and creation of "from the ground up" history, including intellectual networks, transmission, vernacularization, etc."
- "it's an option."

Conclusion: The responses were what one might expect in an eye-ball analysis.

4. Networks and Projects (57 responses)

There are practically as many different projects as respondents. Please refer to the appendix for list.

Conclusion: This list is worth noting for future collaborations, sponsorships, or some other kind of outreach that DM could take advantage of to make connections.

“Digital” as technical environment Section

Presented below are the responses, recorded as percentages, to the questions in this section. I have not attempted to draw any conclusions, though a deeper analysis that compared responses at the individual level would probably produce some interesting conclusions.

1. *Operating sytems* (103 responses)

Windows:	66%	Not sure:	1%
Apple OX:	54.4%	UNIX:	1%
Linux:	21.4%		
Android:	1%		

2. *Internet browsers* (105 responses)

Chrome:	75.2%		
Mozilla Firefox:	68.8%		
Safari:	37.1%	Boat:	1%
Internet Explore:	20%	Epiphany:	1%
Edge:	10.5%		
Opera	6.7%		

3. *Programming Languages* (52 Responses)

Java	17.3%	Python	38.5%
JavaScript	34.6%	R	7.7%
C++	5.8%		
XSLT	40.4%		
Other: (mentioned 1-3 times): Bash, PHP, SQL, Ruby, X-Query, PHP, C, Visual Basic, TEI, Dreamweaver, Unix, Haskell, PHP/VRA			

4. *Textual Scholarship: Are you ...* (97 responses)

Respondents were asked to check all that apply:

Not concerned?	20%
Editing and publishing medieval sources?	64.9%

Working in Computational Linguistics and related fields?	4.1%
Using XML?	38.1%
Using LaTeX	10.3%
Using TEI	36.1%
Using Oxygen	27.8%
Using XMLmind XML editor	2.1%
Using PhiloLogic	0%
Using TXM	1%
Other:	
Notetab Pro	1%
Xtf.cdlib.org	1%
Existdb	1%
Interested and teaching students about issues	1%

5. Are you developing or working within a team developing open source software?

39 respondents responded yes and 59 responded no to open source. 6 respondents are involved in developing proprietary software and 78 were not. The results aren't clear. The questions and responses could have been better presented.

The Human Behind the Machine Section

This section began with the following statement: "Within the broader community of Digital Humanities, it has been argued that male English native speakers are over-represented. We would like to address this issue and identify if our community represents the same demographic biases. That's why we are asking some questions about you. They all are optional."

1) Digital Medieval Studies and Human Resources: Some issues (93 responses)

Respondents were asked to select all that issues that were important to them. These included:

Gender equality	55.9%
Raising awareness of work done in non-English speaking countries	62.4%
Employment opportunity for early career researchers	66.7%
Development of digital humanities as autonomous departments	33.3%
Career patterns for mid-career digital humanities engineers	28%

2. Gender (shuffled order) (98 responses)

This question began with the following statement: "As stated above, a demographic bias has been shown in Digital Humanities communities. We would like to address this issue and identify if our community represents the same demographic biases. That's why we are asking this question and the following ones"

Male	45.9%
Female	45.9%
Don't want to answer	6.1%
Genderqueer	1%

3. Age (97 responses)

Under 18yo	1%
18-24 years old	3.1%
25-34 years old	15%
35-44 years old	43.3%
45-54 years old	22.7%
55-65 years old	7.2%
66 years old or older	8.2%

4. (Native) Language (101 responses)

Note: Numbers included with repeated responses

Arabic		French	5
De		German	2
English	50 (50%)	German, English	
English and Czech		German, French, English	
English and Dutch		German/English	
English and French	2	Irish	
English and German	2	Italian	4
English and Spanish		Italian / French / English	
English, Catalan		Italian, English	
English, French, Armenian		Latin	4
English, German, Chinese		Old English	
English, Spanish, French		Portuguese	2
English/Latin		Spanish	4
Español Latin English			

5. Main Working Language (100 responses)

Note: Numbers included with repeated responses

Arabic		Dutch	
Czech		English	44
Danish		English / Irish	

English, Armenian		Italian	7
English, Spanish		Malayalam	
Español		no native language	
Français	3	Portuguese	2
French/Spanish		Russian	3
German	9	Spanish	6
Greek	2	Swedish	
Hebrew		UK English	
hu			

6. Education: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received. (101 responses)

High School:	3%
Bachelor's Degree:	3%
Master's Degree	29.7%
Doctorate	69.3%

7. Employment Status: Are you currently ...?

Of the categories represented—Student, Employed in a research project <3yrs, Employed in a research project >3 yrs; Adjunct faculty (part-time), Adjunct faculty (full-time), Tenure track, Tenured, Self-Employed, Unemployed—there was fairly even distribution, from 4%-15%. 30% of respondents identified as “Other.”

Conclusions: The responses in Other are the most significant outcome of this question. These were respondents working in libraries, museums, K-12 education, administration, etc. DM should take note that 30% of its constituency does not identify as working in a traditional “academic” career.

Are you willing to be contacted Section:

See results in .csv file. Names and area of expertise not asked for, so the usefulness of this list is questionable.