Chapter 1

NET-BASED DISSEMINATION OF e-RESEARCH RESULTS

The dissemination phase of e-research is the climax of the research cycle, and it occurs when research share the results of their important research studeies with the world. Unfortunately, it is this stage that is fraught with indecision and unhealthy bouts of procrasting. in some cases,the funders of the e-researchset deadlines that serve to motivate and pace the researcher through this final sprint. However, all-too-often in academic research, the dissemination phase comes afterthe defense of a formal thesis or major project,when the grant money has been spent, and in both case, energy may be low. the result is that too often the outcomes of significant research studies remain hidden in a bound theise resting on a dusty library shelf or filed as a completed research report in a bureaucrats office. We begin this chapter with an overview of the reasons why the dissemination process is important and worth putting forth the extra energe that is involved. We then provide an overview on the selection of the networked tools best suited for this task and end with tips for effectively and efficiently disseminating the finding of a research project. worth saying and your research efforts will make a contributon (however major or minor) to improving education and opportunities for learning. there are also more mundane and practial reasons for disseminating the results of authors sponsored by MCB University Press, provides a listing of four compolling reasons to publish.

Beacuse I Have To

begin a professor (or undertaking any of the roles associated in the long apprentieeship tail from graduate student through assistant and associate professor) means that one is obliged to profess.Webster's Reuised UNabridges Dictionary (1998) defines perofess as "to make open deelaration of, as of one's

knowledge, belief, action."Thus, you are asked, as a member of the research community, to publicy declare what you know and what your research has revealed. This declaration is a form of accountability in which you show that the time and effort spent on your study is justified and worthy of your per- sonal as well as societal support. Disseminating your materials also repays your debt to those whose ideas and efforts have assisted the work. the research process that you are now completing has been aided by many other professors who have publicly given their insights into related problem, methodologies, and solutions. publishing also helps repay those participants who have given their time and insights to you throughout the research process. it is mow your turn to repay this social debt and add to the accumulated public knowledge and wisdom. this is not only a great responsibility, but it is also a great honor. the dis- semination process, like all components of the e-research cycle , is marked by hard work and attention to detail. however , it is also nearest to the pay-off stage and thus can be the most rewarding component of the e-research process.

Beacuse I Want to Get Ahead

Public dissemination of resultes often resultes in a flurry of contacts and connections with other researchers.Gaining a reoutation as a competent research who creates valuable knowledge and who knows how to communicate these results provides a focus to which additional opportunities gravitate. these may include offers to collaborate on future work, invitations to speak at conferenees or other gatherings,, invitations to travel and visit with other researchers, requests for advice or offers of further research or related employment. in academic circles, publishings, invitations to travel and visit eith other researchers , requests for advise or offers of further research or related employment. in academic circles, publishing, especially in peer-reviewed journal articles and books , is one of the few quantifiable contributions to schplarly life and yhus the count of publications often takes inordinate importance in promotion, tenure, and salary decisions. Graduate students who have the beginnings of a publishing record on their resumes are inevitably more sought after than those who can show competence only through successful completion of courses. there are a variety of personal and institutional ego-related reasons for disseminating as well. in sum there are many com- pelling reasons why dissemination of results is a very reliable indicator of future success.

Beacuse I Need Learn from Others

the public nature of dissemination means that others will critically read and reflect on your work. this review may be highly formalized and undertaken by peers whose identities are hidden from you.Alternativly, the review may take the from of a thorough proofreading by a skilled editor. ULtimately, countless members of the general public review your results. Each of these reviewers will have suggestions, concers, and even major problem with your research. Rarther thsn viewing this feedback as deterrents to dissemination, these reviews provide

opportunity to hone the results and present them in ways that clearly and succinctly reval the knowledge that you have created. good research is a dialogue between the researcher and the many potential consumers of the results. this dialogue often continues with ideas you choose to pursue, identification of new insights, and applications of the results–as well ass opportunities for building on your prior research bu identifying new qusetions and new opportunities to pursue these questions.

Beacuse I Need to Clarify My Own Thoughts

the final reason provided by the literati club is to meet the specific needs of many different audiences.E-researchers, as authors , need to focus on particular audiences as they present the results of their work. By asking themeselves what these results mean to different groups of knowledge consumers, additional clarity and insight often arises. this insight is then honed through successive rewrites and precention formats until the research is packaged in such a way that the results are perceived ad both accessible and of value to the imtended auduence(s).normally this revision and focusing exercise brings additinal insights into the work that enhance its usefulence, not only to the audience but even more so to the researcher.

Beacuse It Can Be Satisfying

We add a fifth reason to publish , which may not always be attested to by struggling e-researcher. The dissemination stage is one of expencion. the development and teseing of ideas is often a shrinking and focusing activity an which meaning as created by tightly focusing research tools on carefully defined and cricumscribed events, ideas, or activities. in the dissemination phase , researchers are able to expand thier thinking by creating and sharing not only the direct results but also the amp;ications for practice and for further research, this opprtunity to reveal the significance of your research is often the most satisfying component of the research process.

the dissemination proccess can provide entertaining , creative, and interactive learning experiences when you publish your results using the multimedia capacity of the Net. the development of engaging Web sites that use Webs multimedia capacities can facilitate new learning as one masters graphics, Web creation, discussion forums, and other interactive tools. this learning and playimg with the presentation of your results is usually enjoyable work and can be a most satisfying component of the e-research process.

CREATING QUALITY CONTENT

tere are many guidws to academic writing that describe the process and format of disseminating your fimdings. rather than focus on these more generic skills, we look at the dicerse ways in which writing for the Net is unique and the multitude of ways iin which the Net can be used to diseminate the resultes of your work. research has shown that we process information from the screen in ways that are different from the way we read texts or paper content (Kanuka

Szaboo, 1999). Net readers are more likely to skim rather than read meticulously through screen presented content. Thus, e-researchers should use the techniques of the newspaper editor, rather than the novelist to present their finding an a Web document. for example, the style of screen formatted materials should make extensive use of white space. these formatting techniques allow the reader to focus on items of particular interest and skim through that which is not of interest. for these same resons , the content should be concise and to the point. some expert suggest using the inverted pyramid style of presentation that was developed by newspaper editors and reportes. Unlike traditinal research papers that begin with an unresolved problem, then present all the relevant past research and methodology, and finally conclude with resultes and applications, an inverted pyramid style begins with the most important and relevant content. less relevant and more detailed content is placed at, or near, the end of the article. includentally, this style not only allows busy readers the capacity to stop reading at any time knowing they have already coverded the most relevant material, but it also provides the writer or editor the capacity to omit content from the end of the article when space problem arise. while the space element does not apply to the wev (with the exception of server space), the psychological benefits of brevity remain as relevant as ever.

Despite the large number of prescriptive guidelines and articles for web writing (for example see introduction to hypertext writing style at http://www.bu.edu/cdaly/hyper.html),we are also aware that the nature of the web,and readers appproach to screen reading, is changing. New technologies (includeing electronic paper and very high resolution screens) as well as evidence of successful Net publication using a variety of writing formats and styles, remind us that the Net thrives on diversity and that there is no single formula for all forms of effective research results dissemination(Bresler,2000).

the e-researcher's goal is to work the content into a form that is clearly and easily understood by the intended audience. this will include detailing the study and for whom the resultes will b of interest.it should also provide enough.