Please comment on this abstract

I'm writing a paper that I hope to submit for the eResearch Australasia 2008 conference if I get it done in the next three days.

I'm putting the current draft of the abstract up here for comment. What do you think? It's due on Friday, but there's still time to change things around a bit. For those of you who are in the ICE research group, you can comment using the ICE-one server, everyone else please use the comments below.

Working title: eResearch for Word users

Abstract: This paper documents the plight of the 'average' modern researcher as they apply their academic writing skills in the new world of eResearch.

We might expect researchers to have mastered some of the basic generic writing tools; an office suite with a word processor, the ability to generate charts from tables of data; a reference manager that can insert citations; and tools of their discipline like statistics packages.

But the 'ordinary' researcher who tunes-in to the clamour about ideas and tools from a conference like eResearch Australia could be easily overwhelmed by the gap between the obvious potential and their own command of the technology they have to hand.

Nine things to which a tuned-in researcher might aspire: (a) to share data with colleagues, (b) to collaborate on semantically rich documents which include appropriate data visualizations, (c) to blog their research as it happens, (d) to annotate data and works in progress, (e) to submit to journals, (f) to deposit appropriate copies of papers into various discipline and institutional repositories, and not just in PDF format, (g) in HTML, with rich interactivity and links to their data. They might also aspire to (h) understand some of the services available to them on the World Wide Web; to become citizens of 'Web 2.0', but without compromising the (i) preservation of their data and their writing without accidentally infringing copyright or choosing a doomed data format.

The question is *how do we get there from here?* The starting point is using Microsoft Word with references in EndNote emailed around a workgroup then sent to a publisher. The goal is to collaborate on a document which has embedded rich semantics, such as say, geographical data points that can be displayed on maps and overlaid with data from other sources. The document needs to be viewed on the web with interactive maps, and annotated, tagged and commented upon, as well as being distributed as a traditional paper paper and stored in the dreaded PDF file. Finally it must be automatically deposited in appropriate repositories, one of which is a publisher's review queue.

Focussing on the writing process, this paper explores some of the aspirations listed above and suggests some practical advice for researchers and their support staff. There is a discussion at this point about the Integrated Content Environment – an academically focussed collaborative content management system, with integration into repository systems which can help with some of the aspirations of the modern eResearcher, but with a lot of work still to do. Other tools are also considered and found wanting.

The conclusion suggests some more areas for research and development, targeted both at

the Australasian context but also globally, to research funding bodies. How can our researchers get **there** from *here*?