Chapter IV

Deposit Collections of Digital Publications: A Pragmatic Strategy for an Analysis

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This chapter presents an analysis and a recommended strategy to address the problem of the management of digital publications in deposit institutions. The perspective here assumed is of the national libraries, but part of the problem can be shared with archives and other similar institutions. In this chapter we will try to demonstrate that the problem raises new technical and formal issues to these institutions, with impact in multiple and not always clear dimensions, thus requiring a deep knowledge of the new emerging objects and also new and adjustable postures for management. To deal with the problem, we propose an approach based in a strategy taking in account three components: analysis of the structure of the problem, the concept of publication genre and the concept of scenarios. The work presented in this chapter is based on the results of the first phase of the project NEDLIB - Networked European Deposit Library, an international project promoted by a European consortium.

THE PROBLEM

National libraries and other similar institutions are usually mandated to maintain deposit collections of published documents for the purpose of preservation of cultural heritage. Through this mission, those institutions guarantee the long-term availability of those materials, especially for cultural and scientific purposes.
In some cases, the same system is also used for the registration of the copyright of the deposited materials. In those scenarios, the deposit institutions will register and preserve those works also as a proof, to guarantee to the authors the recognition of their intellectual ownership.

More recently, our society has been registering the affirmation of a new paradigm in the production and dissemination of publications. That new reality is digital publishing, and it has been forcing the deposit institutions to rethink their entire position. We have been assisting to an increasing growing in the publication of digital documents, and their preservation is a mission for deposit institutions. That raises new challenges to those institutions, requiring a thorough understanding of the new paradigm in order to deal with it in a proper way.

This chapter will proceed with an in-depth presentation of the problem and an introduction to the project NEDLIB, a project to address this problem and which context we will use to discuss it. In the next point we will focus our attention in an analysis of the problem, which will be followed by some reflections for a possible strategy to approach it in practice. After that we will refer a few examples of application that are going to be tested by the National Library of Portugal, and then we will finish with some considerations about open issues.

**Deposit collections**

To build their collections, the deposit institutions act usually in one or more of the following scenarios:

- **Legal deposit:** which corresponds to a system legally enforced, whereby authors, publishers or other agents must deliver one or more copies of every publication to the deposit institution (this is the usual scenario if the purpose of the deposit is not only preservation but also the copyright registration).
- **Voluntary deposit:** which corresponds to a system usually based on agreements between the deposit institution and the publishers or authors, under which those agents deliver one or more copies of each publication for preservation.
- **Proactive acquisitions:** which correspond to a system where the deposit institutions have to take the initiative to identify, select
An Introduction to Online Data Retrieval and Issues
www.igi-global.com/chapter/introduction-online-data-retrieval-issues/5441?camid=4v1a