Repository Initiatives

Abstract

This resource paper offers introduces the National Digital Learning Repository and offers an explanatory note to purpose and function and provides links to a number of repository initiatives in the education sector.

What is the purpose of a learning repository?

The concept behind any repository is to facilitate the ease of access to materials. In so doing one can rely on those materials being retrieved (through a dedicated search tool), stored appropriately (in terms of interoperability and accessibility) and having dedicated descriptions of the materials themselves and their potential usage (in the form of metadata; identifying author, content and context).

Although one may freely ‘locate’ material in the Internet (using Google), multiple issues arise; the quality may be questionable, it may be far removed from an Irish context, the copyright is unintelligible, and finally the extraneous advertising (found in many search engines) is often confused with the search data itself.

What is the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR)?

The NDLR is a national online service for Irish Universities and Institutes of Technology supporting the collaboration and sharing of learning and teaching resources. It is funded by the HEA, and hosted by HEAnet.

Project goal:
- Produce a repository service for “Teaching and Learning Resources”
- Developing and supporting communities of academics in different academic disciplines

And what can it do for me..?

“If collections (of learning material) on which individuals have worked hard are forgotten or neglected, as some already seem to be, we will end up re-creating, re-discovering and re-describing materials many times over”

Holden 2003
Each of us have realised the inefficiencies of time, energy and money spent on the production of many online materials used in our teaching. The main ethos behind learning repositories is in the creation of reusable learning resources... these may be created by academic peers, they may evolve collaboratively and in response to a particular demand, the authors maintain their copyright on the resources and the ability to control how it may be used/reused in the future. The use of authored content requires due and appropriate citation and highlights the teaching and learning endeavours of the creator, this in turn may be used to enhance one’s own teaching portfolio with the additional potential of commentaries being returned by other users.

The collaborative construction of resources that derives from community led initiatives has the added benefit of engaging academic peers in a discussion around their combined teaching practices and leads to the integration of research foci on these practices.

*Repository Initiatives*

With increased activity online many organisations and (educational) institutions are collecting and cataloguing resources based on ‘community needs’. Managed by individuals or collaboratively these resources may be accessible locally (often only by authentication) or as many are now doing via an open access model (often using the Creative Commons Licence structure).

Examples include:

- **NDLR** – National Irish Learning Repository
- **POOL** (The Portal for Online Objects in Learning)
- **BELLE** (Broadband Enabled Lifelong Learning Environment)
- **CLOE** (The Co-operative Learning Object Exchange)
- **BCCAMPUS**
- **Wisconsin Online Resource Center**
- **EducaNext**
- **EdNA Online**
- **Connexions**
- **DLearn**
- **eduSource Canada** (Canadian Network of Learning Object Repositories)
- **MIT OpenCourseWare**
- **MERLOT**
- **The Learning Matrix**
- **ARIADNE** (European Knowledge Pool System)
- **AEShareNet**
- **LoLa**
- **Maricopa Learning Exchange**
- **CAREO** (Campus Alberta Repository of Educational Materials)
- **GEM** (Gateway to Educational Materials)
- **JORUM**
Useful Online Resources for Video Content

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/

Video and audio files from the BBC archives from the 1950s onwards viewable with RealPlayer.

www.creativeclub.co.uk

This commercial site provides an archive of several years' worth of adverts that can be searched by brand or company and includes produced for television, radio, cinema as well as print.

http://www.bufvc.ac.uk/gateway/

The Moving Image Gateway (MIG) is a new service that collects together websites that relate to moving images and sound and their use in higher and further education.

http://tinyurl.com/aolxv

Television and Radio Index for Learning and Teaching (TRILT) is a comprehensive online listing of UK television and radio including terrestrial, cable and satellite television (with regional variations), all national and many local radio stations, Asian-language, Irish, Scottish Gaelic and Welsh channels and programmes.