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OPEN ACCESS, OPEN ARCHIVES AND LEARNING CONTENT

Gino Roncaglia
Università della Toscana

Open Archives and Learning Content

- Open Archives provide a model for institutional repositories of research content
 - ▣ institutional = universities, research centers...
 - ▣ many of such institutions have as their mission research **and teaching**
- But... do Open Archives provide an effective model for institutional repositories **of learning content**?
 - ▣ may be they should (and they are often used this way)
 - ▣ but they don't (it is not easy to implement non-DC metadata such as LOM; OA are not 'learning content oriented'; no tool for *using* learning content within OA)

Learning Content Repositories

- Learning content repositories are often LCMS, i.e. active part of a learning environment
 - ▣ but LCMS are usually built for ‘well-formed’ LO, distributed within on-line learning courses
 - it is not easy to fit there all our courseware
 - ▣ moreover: should we really implement two (almost) completely different models of institutional repositories?
 - it is often not easy to implement even just one of them!
 - and... should we really split apart so harshly research and teaching content?

Learning Content and Learning Objects

- A preliminary question: *what is learning content?*
 - ▣ Learning Objects (LO): small, focused, self-contained, easily reusable, well-described (LOM), aptly packaged (SCORM), discrete chunks of information
 - ready to be used in Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS)
 - ▣ ...but also a plurality of disparate, incomplete, not self-contained, badly described, **but potentially useful** learning and teaching resources
 - sometimes connected with informal learning

Case Study: Unitus MasterEL

- DSpace as institutional repository
- Learning Content arranged in SCORM packages
 - ▣ the need for easy-to-use SCORM packages
- LOM description within SCORM packages
 - ▣ specific LO metadata are in imsmanifest.xml
- separate eXist database for imsmanifest files
 - ▣ used for queries on LO metadata
 - ▣ might be automated (by harvesting imsmanifest files)
 - thanks to Federico Meschini, Francesco Leonetti, CASPUR

Toward Integrated Repositories

- We need integrated repositories
 - ▣ with the ability to handle both research content and learning content
 - ▣ with the ability to easily implement LOM metadata alongside with DC metadata
 - and allowing harvesting for both metadata sets
 - ▣ designed for easy integration within research environments *and* within learning environments
 - ▣ capable of automatic production and distribution of SCORM packages

Open Learning Content



- Added benefit: extending open content models to learning contents
 - ▣ there is a need for open learning content
 - MIT OpenCourseware
 - Open University OpenLearn
 - ...
 - ▣ but the available tools are poor, not standardized, and non-naive solutions require specific, high-level skills
 - ▣ ...they need our help!