ON THE DUBLIN CORE FRONT

by Norm Medeiros
Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services
Haverford College
Haverford, PA

A repository of our own: the E-LIS e-prints archive

{A published version of this article appears in the 20:2 (2004) issue of *OCLC Systems & Services*.}

"*The whole world is about three drinks behind*." -- Humphrey Bogart

ABSTRACT
This article reviews the E-Prints in Library and Information Science (E-LIS) open access archive. E-LIS is part of the Research in Computing, Library and Information Science (RCLIS) project, an international effort to organize and disseminate scholarly papers in librarianship and related fields. E-LIS uses open source applications, and joins a growing number of OAI-compliant services dedicated to providing free access to scholarly information.

KEYWORDS
E-Prints in Library and Information Science; E-LIS; e-prints; library science; information science; open access

By now, "On the Dublin Core Front" readers are familiar with the open access movement. Previous columns have described e-print repositories such as *arXiv.org*, open access journals such as *PLoS Biology*, and Project Romeo's copyright policies database. The impetus for many of these ventures is skyrocketing scholarly journal prices that severely limit the number of journals libraries can supply to their users, particularly journals within the fields of science, technology, and medicine (STM). Although I haven't yet seen an article devoted to freeing library and information science scholarship from the binds of expensive journal publishers, why should publication in our field operate any differently, especially now that a new e-print repository for our discipline has recently emerged?

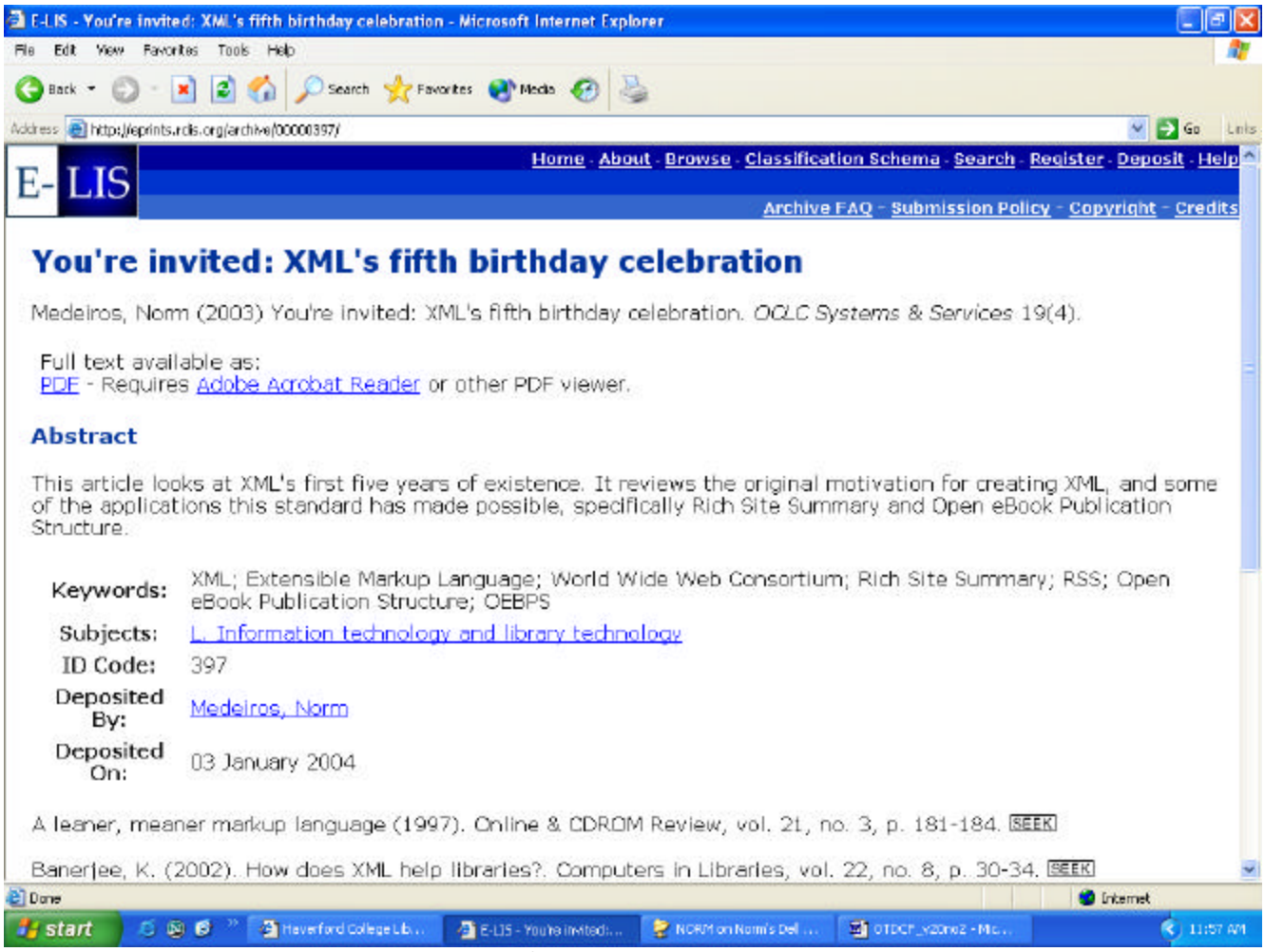
E-Prints in Library and Information Science (E-LIS) <http://eprints.rclis.org/> is a service of Research in Computing, Library and Information Science (RCLIS), a project to build an international author-driven repository of scholarly papers in librarianship and related fields. Created in 2003, E-LIS uses the University of Southampton's GNU EPrints <http://www.eprints.org/> application to store and provide access to archived papers. The system is OAI-compliant. I first heard about E-LIS at the ALA/CLA joint conference held in Toronto in June 2003, and since then have been eager to see this database in action. What I found was impressive. Let's look at some numbers (as of 17 December 2003):

364	Papers in repository
215	Papers in repository that have been previously published
104	Journal articles in E-LIS
92	Peer-reviewed papers in E-LIS
6	Book chapters in E-LIS

I jumped into E-LIS with the same enthusiasm undergraduates reserve for night-before-paper-is-due use of Google. The search interface was familiar to me, since my library uses the GNU EPrints application as a repository for electronic theses. I searched "metadata" in the default search interface, which indexes titles, abstracts, and keywords. Performing this search yielded an impressive 43 papers, from an international array of authors such as Juha Hakala, José Borbinha, and Thomas Krichel. Selecting one of the results yielded a bibliographic record for the item, and links to the document. The record for Borbinha's paper, "Authority Control in the World of Metadata," provided keywords, abstracts in both English and Italian, and full-text PDF documents, also both in English and Italian. The paper's 44 references are noted, with an experimental linking feature that attempts to search the Web for the full-text of these citations. The system is remarkably simple, free, and does not require registering to use.

AUTHOR-GENERATED METADATA

A challenge for this youthful project will be enticing authors to contribute to the archive. Submission requirements are lenient. Unpublished works may appear in the archive, as may published works, so long as the author holds the copyright. Submissions need not be refereed. Emerald, publisher of *OCLC Systems and Services*, allows authors to place their papers in non-profit e-print repositories, such as E-LIS, provided a note informs readers that the paper has been previously published by Emerald. In order to make a couple of my columns available to the scholarly community at large, I uploaded two "On the Dublin Core Front" columns to E-LIS.



An example of a bibliographic display in E-LIS

The process was straightforward, as one would expect, given the modest aspirations of author-generated metadata. Users must register in order to contribute to the archive. Submissions are placed into a buffer, where they are reviewed by an editorial board before being released into the public archive. Articles not within E-LIS' scope are rejected. Registered users may also receive email alerts based on criteria of their choice. For instance, I have instructed E-LIS to send me weekly alerts about papers in the areas of technical services and information technology. Each week I receive an email with citations to works satisfying these criteria. An example of such an alert follows:

This mail contains your weekly subscription to E-LIS.

Number of new (or changed) submissions: 2.

To cancel, temporarily disable or alter your subscription, visit the
following Web page:

http://eprints.rclis.org/perl/users/subscribe

Gorman, Michael (2003) Authority Control in the Context of Bibliographic Control in the Electronic Environment [English version presented at the International Conference] = L'authority control nel contesto del controllo bibliografico in ambiente elettronico [Versione italiana presentata alla Conferenza internazionale] . In *Proceedings International Conference Authority Control: Definition and International Experiences*, Florence.
http://eprints.rclis.org/archive/00000293/

Canali, Daniela (2000) Documentazione in Bioingegneria della Riabilitazione [Italian]. AIDAInformazioni : rivista di Scienze dell'informazione 18(3-4).
http://eprints.rclis.org/archive/00000752/

An example of an email alert to a registered user

WHY BOTHER?

Authors write to be read. They wish to make an impact on their audience, and therefore want that audience to be as large as possible. Maximizing the visibility of one's work via the Open Archives Initiative's Protocol for Metadata Harvesting is a robust way to accomplish this goal. Given the permissive copyright arrangements of many publishers, it seems logical to place a pre- or post-print in E-LIS, whether in lieu of, or as a complement to, a traditional journal outlet.

CONCLUSION

E-LIS is a timely supplement to traditional library and information science research tools such as *Library Literature* and *Library and Information Science Abstracts.* Its international scope is especially valuable, particularly in areas of library and information science where some the most innovative work is happening outside of the States.

POSTSCRIPT

In the eight weeks since searching E-LIS for this piece, the repository has grown to include 452 papers, nearly a 25% increase. E-LIS is now indexed by OAI metadata harvesting services, such as the University of Michigan's OAIster and the Consiglio Nationale delle Ricerche's SAIL-eprints archive.