

ETDs: Electronic Theses and Dissertations at ACRL 2003

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Goals of ETD Initiatives

- ⇒ **Students learn about electronic publishing and digital libraries**
 - ETDs more effectively and creatively present research.
 - Improve graduate education with technology skills and information literacy
 - Empower students to convey richer message through use of multimedia. Include colorful graphics (still or moving) and an ETD immediately surpasses the usual visual quality of a paper thesis or dissertation.
 - Less expensive to prepare
 - Student guidelines, training materials, FAQ's, multimedia <http://etd.vt.edu>
- ⇒ **Timely technology and knowledge sharing** as graduate research becomes more readily and more completely available. Bound theses and dissertations under utilized
- ⇒ **Unlock the potential of university intellectual property by publishing their scholarship.**
 - Research is more easily and widely available
- ⇒ **Improve library services:** Faster and better information transfer
 - Timely information: 24 x 7 web access
 - Serve more clients with fewer staff and consume virtually no shelf space
 - Information more easily found: Word-indexed, more extensive cataloging

The ETD Process

1. Graduate student creates ETD using word processor, standard multimedia software
2. Student's committee approves
3. Student submits online; authors/advisors prescribe Internet access
4. Completes web form (source of metadata and MARC) and gives formal permission to university library to store and provide access
5. Graduate School approves: Notification programmatically emailed to authors, advisors, UMI
6. Library stores and provides access

Digital Library Resources: not just ETDs

- Hardware: server: Started small; upgraded as needed
 - Library provides, maintains, secures (with other digital library resources)
- Software
 - Available for adaptation: VT software for ETD submission, availability management, notification (<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ETD-db/>)
 - Log files analyzed with Analog
 - Surveys online gather data from authors and readers
- Search engine: Started small (freeWAIS); upgraded as needed (ULTRASEEK)
 - Index every word (including from PDF files)
 - Browse any tagged field



Publishing Issues: Why ETD Authors Should NOT Restrict Access

- ✦ Surveys of Publishers
 - No specific policies for ETDs
 - Consider submissions individually
 - Chapter greatly rewritten for different audience, peer review
- ✦ Surveys of VT ETD Alumni: None had problems getting published
- ✦ Early controversies waning

Archiving

VT has digital format only because we didn't add staff or resources when we added the new format for TDs. We have the support of our Information Systems and frequent reassurances from computer scientists that migration will be doable. We know there will be costs.

Online all the time

Cooperative archiving: e.g., OhioLink. Why not: OCLC, NDLTD?

Commercial options--UMI: traditional microfilming, printing and electronic products

Concerns

PDF Reader: an open source program

Multimedia formats: students are using standard software

What about broken links? Quality of work remains. Similar to out-of-print articles

Procedures

Frequent programmed back ups

Multiple copies stored on-site and off-site

Lessons from ETDs

- Easy and inexpensive to implement and maintain: online access, security, archiving works
- Implementation of new formats
 - Standard multimedia formats
 - Innovative ETDs fewer than expected: text and book oriented
 - Not planning for online readers
- If you have them, they will get used.
 - Access far exceeded expectations: remarkable increase in exposure to research
 - Disappointing number are restricted. Don't make it too easy.

ETD Online Information Resources

Information about VT's ETD initiative

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses>

Customizable automated submission and management software

NETWORKED DIGITAL LIBRARY OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

<http://www.ndltd.org> No charge to join and in share the wealth of information.

148 member universities: 64 US institutions have projects

35 ARL; 17 Land Grant; 61 Council of Graduate Schools

Required at (43): Cal Tech, Drexel, Duquesne, ETSU, LSU, NCSU, UNT, UF, UGa, UNT, USF, UT Austin, UVA, VT, WVU, Western Kentucky, WPI, Yale; departments at UKentucky and UMaine, and 26 international institutions

>10,000 born digital ETDs; >4650 VT ETDs approved as of April 4, 2003



UNLOCKING ACCESS TO GRADUATE EDUCATION