

Grisemine, a digital library of grey university literature

Marie-France CLAEREBOUT
Université des sciences et technologies de Lille

ABSTRACT

The progressive change from printed to digital support, induced by the policy of the commercial publishers, is likely to reduce little by little our university library to being a passive relay, and consequently to question our existence in the circuit of the dissemination of scientific information.

Our survival depends on our capacity of adaptation. That is why we chose to create without delay our own digital library of grey literature, *Grisemine*, and to transpose our know-how as information specialists in the necessary tasks, which are indexing, cataloguing and organization of the access to documents.

Created at the end of 2001, *Grisemine* has gradually grown richer by a selection of teaching or research documents: theses and dissertations, courses, communications, scientific reports... in the various disciplines, which our university library covers.

The favorable reaction of the contacted authors, as well as the increasing frequentation of our site, (<http://bibliotheques.univ-lille1.fr/grisemine>), confirm the relevance of our step.

It still needs to reach a critical size, a principal guarantee of credibility. We hope to reach that point while developing the co-operation with other actors engaged in the production and/or dissemination of grey university literature.

THE CONTEXT

For years, our university library has been used to collecting printed grey literature and communicating it to her readers. Most of those papers (about 60,000) are theses and come from national or international exchange among libraries. The others are given by institutions or by authors themselves: working papers, conference proceedings, official reports, duplicated lecture notes, exam subjects...

In a moving world, ...

But, in the same time, dissemination of grey literature has become a stake for researchers, in reaction to the prices inflation of commercial publications.

That is why we can witness an evolution of the scholarly information dissemination, initiated by the authors themselves and helped by the development of the World Wide Web. Before being accepted by well-known journals, articles are quickly proposed to the community on their author's home page, on the institution's pages or in some specialized preprint open archives. Indeed, the increasing possibilities brought about by electronics allow a new way of dissemination for knowledge, the Net. That is the way chosen by commercial publishers; subscribers of most scientific journals can directly read them from their laboratories, on their computer screens.

Does it mean that while knowledge used to be disseminated by means of libraries within the context of printed publications, it will be disseminated by means of network in the world of electronic information? Are new technologies going to replace libraries and librarians?

...we have to transpose our skills

We, academic libraries, have to worry about that: are we becoming less involved in the scholarly publishing process?

The response depends on us. Librarians have to show that taking in account their know-how will help the whole community.