

Comment on Mass Digitization

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As a manager of a large institutional repository, I am responsible for acquiring digital copies of documents to post legally online. The majority of items that we handle are articles that have been published in academic journals. However, there are some other formats that we work with regularly, including book chapters, entries in newsletters, and papers in conference proceedings.

It is this last item—papers in conference proceedings—that are the most difficult to locate. Fairly often, we do not ever find a copy of items published in proceedings. My colleagues and I ask the authors for copies, we have our libraries' interlibrary loan office try to get a copy, and we ask on listservs if colleagues may know of a copy in their institutions. Often, we come up short. This is unfortunate because the items published thusly are often quite unique and useful. In addition, once we do get a copy of papers in proceedings, finding who the rightful copyright holder is and what permissions are attached are a challenge.

To rectify this problem, as copyright limitations allow, I propose that efforts be undertaken to systematically acquire and digitize items *en masse* that have been published in academic conference proceedings.

Here are some examples of titles of items that may be difficult to acquire:

Kollet, S.J., V.A. Zlotnik, and D. Woodward. 2002. A field and theoretical study on stream-aquifer interactions under pumping conditions in the Great Plains, Nebraska. *Proceedings of AWRA 2002 Summer Specialty Conference "Ground Water/Surface Water Interactions"*, July 1-3, Keystone, Colorado, p. 29-34.

Lewis, R.M., J.C. Emenheiser, W.S. Swecker, Jr., B.F. Tracy, A.E. Tanner, D. Fiske, and J.P. Fontenot. 2013. The pasture-based beef systems for Appalachia Project. *Field Day Proceedings*, Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Raphine, VA, August 7, 2013.

Tomkins, A.J., L.M. Pytlik-Zillig, M.N. Herian, T. Abdel-Monem, & J.A. Hamm. 2012. Public input for municipal policymaking: Engagement methods and their impact on trust and confidence. *The Proceedings of the 8th Annual International Digital Government Research Conference: Public Administration Online*.

Wilhite, D.A., N.J. Rosenberg, and D.A. Wood. 1984. Improving governmental response to drought: Lessons from the mid-1970s. *Proceedings of the Symposium on Regional and State Water Resources Planning*, Amer. Res. Assoc. p. 171-178.

This is just a smattering of examples to indicate the breadth of topics that are contained in such works.

To paraphrase from the Notice of Inquiry on mass digitization, extended collective licensing (ECL) for certain collections of conference proceedings would help to facilitate digitization and

provide full access to them for nonprofit educational or research purposes. The ECL framework could facilitate lawful uses that would not otherwise be possible. Among the Qualifying Items, these would be classified as Literary Works.

As for the scope of the collections to be considered, perhaps a rolling window of 15 years prior would be reasonable. So, in 2016, works published in or before 2001 would be eligible to be considered. This would give any copyright holder ample time to recoup expenses, and it would give the public access to information that would not otherwise be available to them at any time.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue.