
Open Archiving of a Ceased Indian Journal - Inspired by Third Law

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ABSTRACT

Before the commercial and impact factor journals ruled the publications industry, many institutes were showcasing their scholarly research output in the journals owned by them or by other institutes/societies. The National Institute of Oceanography, CSIR, Goa also had one such publication called 'Mahasagar' which ceased its publication in 1995. Here the article describes the online archival of this ceased journal using Open Journal System (OJS). It also explains briefly the implementation processes & issues which were handled to make the journal archive system operational. The usage statistics of the journal shows that the scientific publications have value irrespective of its age.

Keywords: Open Archiving; Open Access; Oceanography Journal; Ceased Journal; Open Journal System

1. INTRODUCTION

There are thousands of research journals exist worldwide, across many disciplines and languages, publishing about millions of articles per year. Different studies show that over the years there is decrease in non-commercial (academic or society) journal publications and increase in commercial publications¹. The increase in cost of publications is attributed as the major cause for the decrease in non-commercial publications². But in many cases the pressure of publishing in impact factor journals & accrue citations due to their visibility as well as poor peer reviewing also have played a role in discontinuation of the non-commercial journal publications. There are

many cases where the journals have ceased publication in India for one of the above reasons.

In last couple of decades, the shift in print journals to online journals has a visible effect on the approach of users towards the information need³. To exploit such changes in the needs of users, commercial publishers have converted their back issues of the journals in print to online archives. Some non-commercial publishers who are still in business of journal publications also succeeded in converting the old journals from print to electronic format. Whereas there are many non-commercial bodies which could not foresee the profitability behind the retrospective conversion of the ceased journals from print to electronic. As per the fundamental law⁴, "Every documents its reader" there is a need to make available such publications to its aspiring users. In last few years, Open Archive Initiative (OAI - <http://www.openarchives.org/>) movement has provided solutions to archive such publications.

Inspired by the OAI movement, CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography decided to archive the old volumes of its ceased journal – Mahasagar. Here we describe the process involved and issues came across in archiving the volumes of the journal using Open Journal System (OJS) of Public Knowledge Project (<http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs>).

2. OVERVIEW OF MAHASAGAR

Mahasagar - Bulletin of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa, India (<http://ijs.nio.org/>) was the successor to the International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE) Newsletter. The first volume was published in

the year 1968. The aim of Mahasagar was to present Oceanography from a wide perspective and to compile the information in a well-organized format. From volume-7, it started including research papers and notes on different disciplines of marine sciences besides sections on news & comments and book reviews. In 1990 the ownership was transferred to the Indian Association for Limnology and Oceanography and therefore the scope was expanded to include the research papers on limnology. The frequency of the publication was also changed from quarterly to half yearly. The journal ceased to publish after volume 28 (1995). NIO library archived these published volumes online on OJS platform.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Open Journal System (OJS) provides the technical infrastructure for the online presentation and management of journal articles in a structured way. It can handle complete range of editorial management process, including article submission, multiple rounds of peer-review and indexing, which had limited application to us.

The basic installation of the OJS software along with prerequisite software can provide only the default features & functionalities. We brief here the implementation processes & issues which were handled to make the journal archive system operational.

3.1. Basic Configuration and Administration

As per the requirement of software, basic configuration was carried out at the beginning itself for smooth administration process. The journal system provides facility for multi-journal hosting option though our requirement was restricted to single journal. The journal banner, description, copyright statement and etc were included subsequently from the journal manager interface.

3.2. Content Organization

Organizing the content helps the users to distinguish the content and retrieve their relevant documents. In the

journals there are different document types which are published. In 'Mahasagar' mostly five document types of publication are noticed and accordingly sections were created viz Editorial, Articles, Book Reviews, Obituary and Informative Stuff. Most of the scholarly communications were published under 'Articles'.

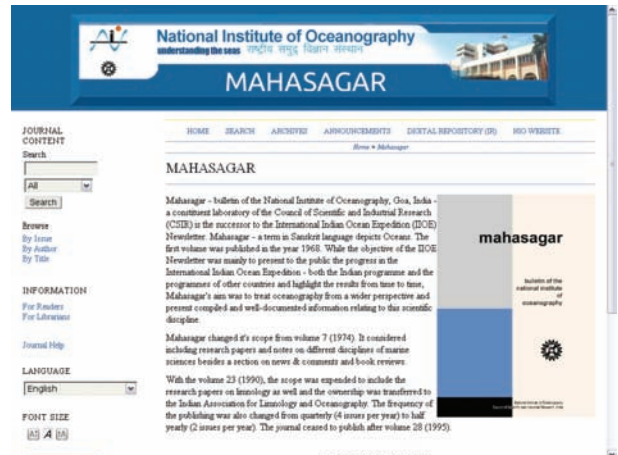


Fig. 1: Homepage of Mahasagar Archive

3.3. Content Policy & Collection

The journal 'Mahasagar' was a publication that had published Oceanographic literature mostly on Indian Ocean. NIO library maintains a database (CDS/ISIS) of the Indian Ocean publications where bibliographic information and link to full-text are readily available. Thus it helped in saving time for the migration of the content.

The record import plugins of OJS have batch import facility for journal articles & issues. XML plugin is one among them. Therefore records containing each item from 'Mahasagar' volumes were exported in XML format with specific DTD (Document Type Definition) from CDS/ISIS database using ISIS print option and imported into 'Mahasagar' journal management section of OJS. The DTD supports the following as root elements: <article>, <articles>, <issue> and <issues>. The complete DTD can be found in the OJS installation directory. The records for which readymade metadata were not available, XML files were prepared by typing the metadata and then converted with the help of the XML builder tool. (<http://www.infofacility.com/tools/xmlbuilder>)

Here it needs to be mentioned that the full-text PDF files get imported as the path given in the XML files which require during import process. The import process fails when there is mismatch in the PDF files path or field tags.

3.4. Copyright

The copyright is not a problem in archiving of the full-text of ceased journal for CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography as the publisher of 'Mahasagar'. But granting the rights for third party use and distribution was discussed and decided for Creative Commons Attribution 'CC-BY-NC-ND', i.e. Noncommercial-No Derivate Works (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0>).

4. IMPACT OF 'MAHASAGAR' ARCHIVE AMONG OCEANOGRAPHERS

There are 931 records with full-text in "Mahasagar". Approximate 2000 downloads per month are observed from more than 50 countries. Analysis of the download data of the journal system from the initiation to till January 2013 we find ~32% of downloads are by the users from India (Figure-2).

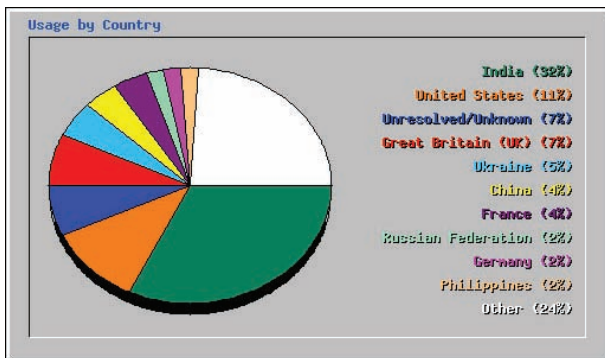


Fig. 2: Country wise usage statistics of Mahasagar Archives

Most of the archived articles are related to Indian Ocean and so the highest access by the users of India is obvious. In any disciplines of science, there are concepts and ideas which are useful to users irrespective of geographical location. And it is visible from the download statistics (Figure -2) which show access by users from other countries. The number of downloads establish the fact that the articles from this archive are still relevant.

5. CONCLUSION

Acceptance of journals in electronic format by the users has encouraged many publishers to shift from print to electronic media⁵. But ceased journals of yesteryears do have useful content which is not available at large. Every document has its value to the needy users. The value of such ceased publications cannot be determined in the present time of electronic publishing until they are made available online. Archiving of 'Mahasagar' journal is such an initiative by the CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography, Goa. The usage statistics of 'Mahasagar' proves that the scientific publications have value irrespective of their age.

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