Altmetrics in Action:
Digital Libraries, Altmetrics, and Metadata

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Overview of Altmetrics:

Altmetrics defined: "In scholarly and scientific publishing, altmetrics are non-traditional metrics proposed as an alternative to more traditional citation impact metrics, such as impact factor and h-index. The term altmetrics was proposed in 2010, as a generalization of article level metrics, and has its roots in the #altmetrics hashtag. Although altmetrics are often thought of as metrics about articles, they can be applied to people, journals, books, data sets, presentations, videos, source code repositories, web pages, etc." - Wikipedia

Goal = Speed: Traditional metrics, like citations take years to accrue. Citation analysis is possible only after grant cycles have ended, tenure decisions have been made, and the state of research has moved on. Altmetrics includes uses and mentions that happen much sooner, and can predict long term value.

Altmetrics is about scholarly research, not cultural heritage materials. Not applicable to everything in a digital library.

Some kinds of altmetrics = viewed, discussed, saved, cited

How Digital Libraries can Participate:
Can either (1) contribute usage information to a provider, or (2) display usage information from a provider.

Where does the data come from? Providers tend to accept usage information from a few selected repositories. Digital libraries can share usage information. Repository software may have a plugin for sharing download counts and use. But altmetrics providers may not accept your statistics. Generally, providers accept usage information from large well established sources with large user populations.

Who gathers it together and where can I get it? Providers tend to provide a widget to display usage information. Easy to drop the widget into a digital library. The widgets tend to allow automatic configuration to not show for items with no altmetrics usage. Usually, there is a free-of-charge level of information, and subscriptions available for charge for more detailed information.

Metadata requirements for Digital Libraries:

Disambiguating Authors:

ORCID is emerging as a standard in the U.S.
- ORCID began in 2012.
- Can share information with other authority control systems.
- Uptake is still low among authors.
- Infrastructure has spread to the open source community.
- Free-of-charge for scholars to register; fee based for repositories to use the API.

Disambiguating Publications:

arXiv id

PubMed Identifier (PMID)

CrossRef DOIs:
- Repositories can register to mint DOIs.
- Nominal fees to mint; no fees to use them.

What is actually measured?

- No consensus… No standards exist. There is a NISO committee on developing a standard.
- Idea of gaming the system: If a standard can't change quickly, it will be easier to game. As is, the private companies collecting altmetrics can continually correct for gaming.
- Altmetrics are meant to be used to root out engagement, not to get counts.

Really? …