

Editor's notes

Avoiding disclosure, using data, and improving digital preservation

Welcome! The three papers of this second issue of Volume 39 of the IASSIST Quarterly (IQ 39:2, 2015) are about data. Matters of privacy, disclosure and surveillance have been, and will continue to be, hot topics in society. Within science we have obvious reasons to ensure that research cannot be accused of breaches, and therefore researchers need principles and guidance on how to avoid statistical disclosure. Staff of research data centers and universities demonstrates in the first paper their investigation of this sensitive area in ways that we all can learn from. The second paper brings insights in the use of data collections and research design in business master's theses at a Canadian university. Better insight of the use means better guidance for users. The third paper shows how modern data archives are continually improving their data procedures by applying standards and using measurement. All three papers will give you insight into these data areas and they are equally well furnished with references so you can explore the areas further.

The first paper 'Principles- versus rules-based output statistical disclosure control in remote access environments' is authored by Felix Ritchie from Bristol Business School, University of the West of England, and Mark Elliot, School of Social Sciences and Data Research Institute, University of Manchester. Delivering data for research requires measures against disclosure risk. The authors demonstrate the differences between the two approaches where 'rules-based' has been the traditional model. This is where a set of formulated rules are applied ahead of dissemination to researchers. A common example is 'A table may only be released if there are at least three observations for each cell'. The set of rules can be comprehensive and each rule has a trade-off between confidentiality and efficiency. The authors argue that disclosure control based on principles is to be preferred, but demands more training which will in turn build a culture of confidentiality expertise.

Linda D. Lowry is the liaison librarian at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. Her paper 'Bridging the business data divide: insights into primary and secondary data use by business researchers' is based on analysis of 32 master's theses within Management at Brock University. The applied content analysis is demonstrated and the coding of the theses is explained in informative appendices. The analysis describes the research designs and data collection methods found as well as the distribution of theses in business subfields: accounting, finance, operations and information systems management (O & ISM), marketing, and organization studies. It turns out that the distribution of master's theses shows nearly half are within the finance subfield. Furthermore, all of the finance theses are 'archival - quantitative' while nearly all marketing theses are 'questionnaire'-based. The conclusion is a recommendation of content analysis for examining data practices within social science disciplines.

Mari Kleemola is Information Services Manager at the Finnish Social Science Data Archive (FSD), and she outlines FSD's venture into digital preservation standards and assessments in the contribution 'Improving the Quality of Digital Preservation Using Metrics'. The paper demonstrates the journey through standards, checklists and assessments, such as: Open Archival Information System (OAIS), the Audit and Certification of Trustworthy Digital Repositories (TDR) Checklist, and finally the CESSDA Trust Process. The complete process is described with the key issues of measurements and requirements of each step in the process. What started as an internal handbook and a formation plan in 2003 has - especially during the last four years - been developed until the FSD received the Data Seal of Approval certification in September 2014.

Articles for the IASSIST Quarterly are always very welcome. They can be papers from IASSIST conferences or other conferences and workshops, from local presentations or papers especially written for the IQ. When you are preparing a presentation, give a thought to turning your one-time presentation into a lasting contribution to continuing development. As an author you are permitted 'deep links' where you link directly to your paper published in the IQ. Chairing a conference session with the purpose of aggregating and integrating papers for a special issue IQ is also much appreciated as the information reaches many more people than the session participants, and will be readily available on the IASSIST website at <http://www.iassistdata.org>.

Authors are very welcome to take a look at the instructions and layout: <http://iassistdata.org/iq/instructions-authors>

Authors can also contact me via e-mail: kbr@sam.sdu.dk. Should you be interested in compiling a special issue for the IQ as guest editor(s) I will also be delighted to hear from you.

Karsten Boye Rasmussen
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Editor