

IN FOCUS: **OXFORD JOURNALS: PERMANENT ACCESS FOR DIGITAL CONTENT BACKFILES**

Richard Gedye, Oxford Journals

The thermal pools in Iceland provide a warm environment for bathing amid the glaciers. Oxford Journals are launching electronic archives to thaw the content which is 'frozen' in print form, and help the information springs flow to customers.

In July, Oxford Journals launched its Humanities Archive, the first of five subject-based digital backfile archives. With the remaining four due to go live between now and the New Year, **Richard Gedye**, Sales and Marketing Director, Oxford Journals, reflects on the need to safeguard scholarly research for the future.

THE CRITICAL ISSUES

The future for electronic content remains a critical issue for publishers and librarians alike: librarians constantly tell us that online journals usage continues to increase, and that the demand for print journals remains in decline. Increasingly, many libraries are taking online-only subscriptions, and for us, the big concerns are how to make this electronic information as permanent and safeguarded as possible to ensure long term accessibility for the future.

Oxford Journals took steps to reinforce permanent access to its journal content in 2004, signing an agreement with the National Library of the Netherlands, Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB), that would provide electronic archiving of all current and back collections of Oxford Journals content. Such action was, in our view, critical: with electronic journals, the publisher is responsible for ensuring sufficient redundant electronic storage so that research remains available to both current and future readers.

Readers themselves have also changed significantly, causing publishers like Oxford to reassess what we offer with our online content. With increasing amounts of content now available online, readers want easy access to cutting-edge content that can be searched, retrieved, and downloaded instantly. They also want access to older content, previously not available online, and want the same functionality and ease of use as they have with current online content. With the Oxford Journals digital backfile archives, we've set out to meet the needs of both our librarians and our readers.

OXFORD JOURNALS ONLINE ARCHIVES

The Oxford Journals digital backfile archives will contain over four million article pages, including research dating back as far as 1829. Each archive includes all journal content from volume 1 issue 1 of each title to the end of 1995. Readers will find a wealth of previously hard to find content at their fingertips, all easily accessible without the need to search the library shelves.

The first archive, the Humanities Archive, was launched on 1 July 2005, and includes over 300,000 articles with major papers from history, music, religion, philosophy, literary studies, and

linguistics. Journals included in the project include *Essays in Criticism*, *Mind*, *English Historical Review*, *Past & Present*, and the *Journal of Theological Studies*.

This archive will be followed by the Law, Medicine, Science, and Social Science Archives, all of which will be available by early 2006.

EASY ACCESS TO MORE INFORMATION

The online archives offer a solution to some of the concerns facing publishers and librarians: more information, available to readers far more easily. Each archive can be accessed via the same interface as recent content, and searching is seamless across both – that's over 175 years of high quality research. Articles are in PDF format with HTML headers and abstracts, and all original graphics and images are included. There are also links to 'similar articles in this journal'. It's never been easier for readers to explore and track the foundations and advances of scholarly thought published by Oxford Journals over the years.

The digital backfiles give librarians the opportunity to fill gaps in their collection without using up valuable shelf space or staff time. It's a great opportunity for libraries to offer their facilities to a much wider cache of readers, who no longer need to fight over the same print copy!

With a variety of pricing and access options, including individual subject archives, or the Complete Archive, for either subscription or full purchase, we're able to work with librarians on providing the best package for them.

LAUNCHING THE COMPLETE ARCHIVE

The Humanities Archive is already live, launched on 1 July 2005. The remaining collections will all be available by early 2006. We'll also be demonstrating some of the features at the Online Information 2005 exhibition in London – visit us on stand 25. To register for more information about the archive, or to see full details of the journals included and the options available to librarians, visit the Oxford Journals web site at www.oxfordjournals.org/collections/archives.



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