

Overcoming Impediments to Effective Health and Biomedical Digital Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Digital libraries have great promise in the health and biomedical domains. Yet a variety of impediments exist to their more effective use. A series of panelists from a variety of backgrounds in health and biomedicine will explore these impediments and describe how they might be overcome.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

J.3 [Computer Applications]: Life and medical sciences.

General Terms

Design, Human Factors.

Keywords

Health and biomedical digital libraries.

PANEL

One of the major impediments to health and biomedical information in digital libraries is gaining access to the information. Biomedical journals have been among the slowest to adopt open publishing models. The first panelist will address open publishing initiatives and describe one initiative in particular, Biomed Central, which is a commercially-based approach to providing barrier-free access to information.

(Panelist 1: Jan Velterop, Publisher, Biomed Central)

Another challenge to accessing health and biomedical information is finding information once it is there. One approach

that could make information easier to access is the semantic Web. The second panelist will describe the concept and how it could lead to improved information retrieval for the heterogeneous kinds of information on the Web.

(Panelist 2: Alexa McCray, Director, Lister Hill Center, National Library of Medicine)

A third problem for health and biomedical digital libraries is the blurring of peer-reviewed and other information on the Web, with naive users in particular unable to discern the quality of different information resources on the Web. The third panelist will describe an initiative to use metadata to help those seeking health and biomedical information find information from trustworthy sources.

(Panelist 3: Gunther Eynsenbach, Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto)

One community within health and biomedicine has managed to use the Web for capture and dissemination quite effectively, the genomics community. The final panelist will describe how the Web has been used in this community to improve dissemination of scientific information.

(Panelist 4: Mark Boguski, Senior Vice President of Research and Development, Rosetta Inpharmatics, formerly of National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine)