



Online access and use of local material: challenges and opportunities for local knowledge organizations: the case of the Dutch Caribbean Digital Platform (DCDP), University of Curaçao.

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Abstract:

The paper will describe the opportunities that the development of a digital platform has given the Library and Research Services (LRS) of the University of Curaçao (UoC) and the challenges we have overcome during the development of the platform. I will conclude the presentation by addressing the challenges and goals the LRS has for the further development of the DCDP.

Online access and use of local material create great challenges but even greater opportunities for local knowledge organizations. The Library and Research Services of the University of Curaçao has created the Dutch Caribbean Digital Platform to provide online access to information concerning the Dutch Caribbean. The DCDP consists of a variety of collections with over 6.000 digital items that include books, journal- and newspaper articles, data, maps, photographs, oral history voice recordings and digital learning material in different formats. The importance of the digital learning material is not only to take advantage of digital and online education possibilities, but also to compensate the shortage of learning material based on local subjects. The learning materials are published under a Creative Commons (CC) license to be freely used and reused. The accessibility and use of the other resources depend on the legal status of the individual items, ranging from copyright free, CC licenses, tailor made licenses to fully restricted items.

Opportunities

With the development of the DCDP our library has been given the possibility to expand our service much further than the university community. Thanks to collaboration with other knowledge organizations the DCDP has become the most comprehensive online source for information regarding the Dutch Caribbean worldwide. By digitizing local publications with a high local information value but a low commercial value and publishing this in a free accessible manner, it is possible to evolve from a 'mere' passive information provider to an

active content publisher. 'All' that is needed is digitization, an online database and copyright clearance.

Challenges

The technical and financial challenges of creating a database and developing digitization capacity are substantial. Fortunately, the database part can be realized by joining the Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC). Another key necessity to set up and manage a digital collection is the legal expertise on copyright. Ample knowledge of the effective copyright law is crucial to be able to publish in a correct manner on the internet. This copyright expertise is also necessary to inform authors or other copyright holders on the possibilities of publishing their work in a way that profits both the copyright holder and the community. The LRS approaches copyright holders with the proposition to include their works into the DCDP. We provide the copyright holders with guidance to select a CC-license or we create a tailor made license for free online access.

Future development

In regard to the technical aspect we intend to develop the DCDP into a Trusted Digital Repository (TDR). To better advertise and enhance our competence in regard to copyright we will establish a Copyright Information Center within the LRS. In regard to collection expansion we will continue to collaborate with other organizations and individuals. An important starting goal has been to use information in local publications for the creation of free to use- and reusable learning materials on local subjects. To achieve this goal, we work in close cooperation with the Faculty of Arts that is responsible for teacher education.