Altmetrics: New Ways to Evaluate for a New Publishing Environment

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What is/are Altmetrics?

• From “alternative metrics”
• “Metrics” refers to ways to quantitatively and objectively measure the scholarly significance of publications.
• This measurement may be done at the level of the individual, the group, the department, the university or the journal.
Metrics...why?

- Many groups (hiring, tenure/promotion, funding agencies, immigration agencies) have a need to evaluate a scholar’s performance.
- Unless the evaluator is an expert in the field, they may not be able to evaluate published work directly.
- Reading and evaluating the content of a cv can be very time-consuming.
- So they want metrics to use as shorthand for the quality of scholarship.
Alternative...to what?

- In the beginning...there was the impact factor, measuring impact of scholarly journals. *(See Journal Citation Reports database, [http://isiknowledge.com/jcr](http://isiknowledge.com/jcr) )*  
- Later, modified ways of measuring impact were developed: SNIP, Eigenfactor  
- For individuals, h-index.
Alternative...why?

- Impact factors have flaws
  - Hard to compare across disciplines
  - Not useful for rating individuals directly
- More significantly, they are ill-adapted for “Scholarship 2.0”
  - Citation metrics don’t count blogs, tweets, other social media.
  - They also don’t track use of data (mostly), software, figures, presentations, etc.
  - They have inherent lag time (disadvantageous to new publishers.)
What do altmetrics measure?

• Lots of things! There are currently no standards (though NISO is working on it.)
• Example (from Plum Analytics)
  • Usage (views, clicks, downloads)
  • Captures (bookmarks, favorites, followers)
  • Mentions (social networks, blogs, tweets, news items, reviews)
  • Ratings (likes, recommendations, shares)
• And, oh yes, Citations
Where do they get the numbers?

- Pretty much anywhere the measuring organization can get them for free.
- Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus
- YouTube, Vimeo, SlideShare, FigShare
- CiteULike, Delicious, Mendeley
- GoodReads, Amazon
- SourceForge, Github
- Research Blogging, Science Seeker
- PLOS, PubMed Central
- And commercial sources willing to share.
Who is measuring altmetrics?

- **Altmetric.com** (http://www.altmetric.com/)
- **ImpactStory** (https://impactstory.org/)
  - Not-for-profit company, founded 2011, funded by NSF, Sloan Foundation et al.
- **Plum Analytics** (http://www.plumanalytics.com/)
  - Founded 2011, purchased by EBSCO 2014
Altmetric.com (http://www.altmetric.com/)

• Generates altmetric data for articles, journals, institutions, individuals (at institutions with a contract.)
• Draws data from news, blogs, tweets, social media, social bookmarking, government policy documents.
• Does not use non-public data from publishers, aggregators, etc.
• Bookmarklet provides data for (most) articles.
• API lets you insert Altmetric “badges” on webpages – basic data is free.
ImpactStory (https://impactstory.org/)

- Lets individuals create profiles (online *curriculum vitae*)
- Can import profiles from ORCID, SlideShare, etc.
- Cost is currently $60/year; 30 day free trial.
Plum Analytics (http://www.plumanalytics.com/)

• Aimed at institutional users, though individuals at institutions with Plum contracts can make use of it.
• Uses data from public news, social networks, social bookmarks, plus data from EBSCO resources.
• See PlumX (http://plu.mx) for example of their interfaces.
How can I, as a researcher, use altmetrics?

• Get connected, so people can find your work.
• Deposit articles in repositories (such as UC’s e-Scholarship), presentations in SlideShare, figures in FigShare, data in data repositories.
• Use social networks. Comment on, review and share the works of others as well as promote your own.
• Use social bookmarking (e.g. CiteULike, Connotea, Mendeley) to list both your own publications and those you find important in your field.
• Contribute to Wikipedia, etc.
• See, for example: http://www.chemconnector.com/antonywilliams_cv/
• Register with ORCID (http://www.orcid.org)
• Make use of altmetrics tools (e.g. Altmetric bookmarklet, ImpactStory profile) to get a feel for the tools and see how you’re doing.
ORCID – the ID number for authors

- ORCID.org (http://orcid.org/)
  - Allows authors to register, and create a profile of their publications.
  - ORCID number acts as a unique identifier, distinguishing you from authors with the same name and collating publications you may have made under different names.
  - Example: Charles F. Huber 0000-0003-0205-2261
- ORCID shares information with other systems (e.g. ImpactStory, ResearcherID)
- Increasing numbers of systems allow searching by ORCID (e.g. Web of Science)