

Release of research knowledge through visibility of virtual journals

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The appeal of electronic publishing is closely linked to globalization of computer networks. Although these networks were born just three decades ago, many experts and stakeholders of journals in academia and other relevant arenas of research and knowledge agree their development actually was in the early nineties following a widespread internet access (Ramos, 1998).² Since then advance of electronic journals has had a large acceleration. In 1997 we saw emerging online versions of previously paper peer-reviewed journals and the Association of Research Libraries at the United States recorded 1,002 electronic refereed journals in the seventh edition of the Directory of Journals, Newsletters and Academic Electronic Discussion Archives (Fosmire and Yu, 2000).³ In 2003 EBSCO recorded nearly 9,000 electronic journals, and 80 per cent of them were scientific journals (Martinez, EBSCO, Mexico.)

Our experience, *Revista Academia y Virtualidad –A&V–*

Our *Revista Academia y Virtualidad* is the nearest reference thanks to achievements of academic and research lab by UMNG besides release initiatives of many other works, papers and documents at national and international level, which evidence key implications matching their print counterparts in the same rank and seniority in terms of:

a. *Significant cost shrinking.* A printed journal involves considerable expense of paper, layout, printing and distribution, and the latter may be one of the biggest outlays. A printed peer-reviewed journal, e.g. publishes

between 300, 500 to 1,000 copies per issue, and a very important part of budget is spent on placement (trade) and circulation. Between January 2014 and January 2015, our digital journal *A&V* was visited at website by 3,500 readers,⁴ something compared with printed distribution virtually unaffordable for an official college or any other institution which would release its publication.

b. *Significance of information at national and international level.* Traditionally, the distribution of print media has been constrained by economic, time, geographic dimensions and other issues. However, development of new technology has removed such boundaries thanks to release and placement via Internet. In our case, *A&V*, the record of visitors by country and city has been taken into account; on August 2015 more than seventy countries of five continents have been recorded. Table 1 shows blue countries (users) which have read the journal.

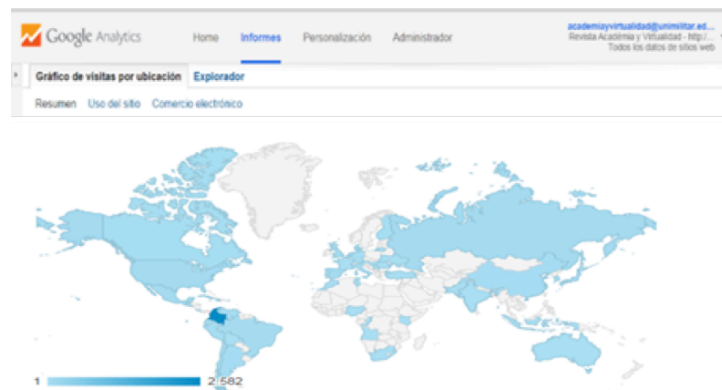


Table 1. Countries reading A&V⁵

1. Economist and Senior Management Specialist, Universidad Militar Nueva Granada (UMNG). Global Marketing Graduate, University of Girona, Spain; Foreign Trade Master in International Marketing; PhD in Global Ethics, Religions and International Business (DIB), Spanish International Business School; Professor at the same institution; Specialized Professional, FAEDIS; Leadership Group member, UMNG; Junior Researcher, Colciencias. E-mails: henry.acuna@unimilitar.edu.co, hacuna@reingex.com.
2. Ramos (1998) said thereon: “[...] The electronic publications will transform the scientific editing and librarian functions at the University.” Documentation notebooks.
3. Fosmire y Yu (2000). Free scholarly electronic journals: How good are they? Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship <<http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/00-summer/refereed.html>> [Accessed June 8, 2003.]
4. Data taken by Google Analytics, referral period.
5. *Ibid.* April 2015.

c. Available 24 hours, seven days a week. Subscribers of the journal may access from home, university or laboratory to recent papers and editorials and also previous issues of A&V.

d. The electronic publication breaks the sequential reading concept. Subscriber becomes a surfer as he/she builds his/her own paths among several texts, then articles of interest become “a potential information source for those interested on a specific topic” (Aliaga and Suárez, 2002)⁶.

e. Each paper includes email of every author. Furthermore, the mail editor is open to be contacted by subscribers.

f. Quickest arbitration process. Internet lets release quickly the results of a research project. Our journal A&V uses OJS⁷.

Some considerations

While the advantages of electronic journals are something promising for readers, there are also some restrictions although they are sometimes scarce for some populations undoubtedly by requirements of equipment (computers), interconnection and special software to be linked to Internet. This would be a handicap for users who want to stay informed using this resource. Also we should take into account some issues to improve and increase the number of users to this new way of electronic information, among them as follows:

a. *Quality standards of electronic journals.* A rather critical problem faced by subscribers to digital journals is quickness of many journals replicated, many times neglecting quality standards.

b. *Copyright of digital publications.* Based on new digital technology, plagiarism chances are more and

more critical, producing a serious problem not only to the manipulation of pictures but also information since some authors do not quote the original source presumably by public domain on the Internet.

Conclusions

The foremost advances in the electronic publications have been produced by technical, geographical coverage and, of course, cost dimensions. Our experience issuing *Revista Academia y Virtualidad* along six years sets us clearly this type of publication is facing a peculiarity because only “some” users prefer to read the printed journal, but at the same time they demand speed to access information and the capability to edit their texts on screen.

Meanwhile, some authors (e.g. Kidd, 1995), believe that electronic media at short term will be crucial to produce and release most research journals at international level. This does not mean that printed media could disappear for scientific issues since they will coexist many years with digital issues as both media of scientific communication have a specific role. However, currently we see a growth of electronic journals, which will be a trend of new and frequent subscribers at medium term.

Finally, digital journals are intercultural helping subscribers of current several publications as they may read in their native language or other ones, usually Spanish, English and Portuguese, or translate them in real time; at medium term we will have journals including video and voices by authors. Then, this scenario marks important research processes which generate new scientific and academic knowledge from local, national and global epistemologies for this great dynamics of our contemporary world.

6. Aliaga and Suárez (2002). “Tendencias actuales en la edición de revistas electrónicas: nueva etapa en RELIEVE”. In Revista Electrónica de Investigación y Evaluación Educativa, 8, 1. <http://www.uv.es/RELIEVE/v8n1/RELIEVEv8n1_0.htm> [Accessed June 8, 2003.]

7. Open code software for journal administration, created by Public Knowledge Project and released under GNU General Public License.

8. Kidd (1995) “The implications of the new technology for scientific journal publishing.” In A. M. Cetto and Hillerud, K. (comp.) *Publicaciones científicas en América Latina*. México: International Council of Scientific Unions, pp. 268-276.

This Volume 8 No. 2 of our *Revista Academia y Virtualidad*, offers papers and articles by leading national and international researchers. This content presents and continues guidelines established by the Board of the Journal, headed by Dr. Felipe Riaño Pérez, Dean of the Faculty of Distance Learning, the Editorial Board and the Scientific Committee. The following nine articles present research outcomes resulting in research, reflection and review issues. We include articles showing a work based on different educational issues, particularly those involving ICTs and all those aspects in one way or another underpin the online education. In the first paper, researchers Estrada and Boude present an article of reflection, “A proposal to assess virtual learning environments –VLE– in higher education,” where an assessment tool based on models and theories of educational evaluation is displayed as a starting point for evaluation of virtual learning environments at distance programs of Colombian higher education.

On the other hand, Zapata Callejas, in his paper “A model and approach of competency-based training in higher education: strengths and weaknesses,” traces the main strengths and weaknesses of a model and approach of educational, training and learning processes of higher education. Dr. Cánchez from Universidad Nacional Experimental “Francisco De Miranda” at Venezuela, gives us a short article entitled “IDL: A learning approach under process within a B-Learning scenery,” where an *interactive dialogic learning* –IDL– becomes a need to appropriate the use of information and communication technologies –ICT– in B-Learning type, following a set of principles related to non-bank communication model where the main role of the teacher is an innovative player.

The researchers Botello and Pedraza, moreover, in their research “Key factors to adopt ICTs at developing countries: an experience of Ecuadorian industrial firms,” investigate the key determinants to adopt information and communication technologies –ICTs– in the industrial area of Ecuador based on industrial census data of 14,324 companies. Professors Barrero Rivera, Barrero Espinosa, Borja and Montaña from Universidad San Buenaventura, give a result titled “Risk factors related to undergraduate student dropout rate at Universidad de San Buenaventura,

Bogotá (2009-2013),” where it is clear that those factors in this educational context correspond to academic events, followed by institutional, individual and socioeconomic issues. Regarding work “A virtual math lab as a teaching strategy to promote logical thinking,” researchers Torres and Martinez look for supplement educational inclusion processes, allowing students according to their heterogeneity of mathematical knowledge and skills to achieve at the end of their academic process a similar level of math skills.

Then Professors Arcos, Suárez and Zambrano offer us the paper titled “Social innovation processes as a basis of social transformation of rural communities,” which show successful experiences of social innovation in rural environments, and highlight achievements of those communities related to several aspects, such as leadership development, making decisions together, empowering individuals, a reconstruction of the territory and a development of shared visions. Then researchers Ortiz, Gómez and Arias wrote an outcome entitled “Saber Pro results. Face-to-face and online students at two Colombian universities,” which discusses differences of tests Saber Pro results by management graduates, face-to-face and online mode, in two Colombian higher education institutions.

Finally, Professors Contreras, Trisancho and González, in their research “Design of lab guidelines to develop professional skills of subject Automation of industrial engineering program,” propose an evaluation of teaching as a methodology including more participation and responsibility on the part of students in their own learning by giving an opportunity to develop professional skills.

Now, on behalf of our *Revista Academia y Virtualidad*, thank to all the authors of papers, groups and research networks, referees, members of the Editorial Board, the Scientific Committee, and the team of translators, methodological reviewers, technical reviewers and proofreaders, to contribute to the excellent academic and scientific level of our publication.

Revista Academia y Virtualidad
 July-December, 2015