

Why not HTML for online journals? People need the right tools.

I have already mentioned this blog post lamenting the use of PDF instead of HTML in an online journal:

In short, choosing to use PDF rather than HTML tends to make the content less open than it otherwise could be. That feels wrong to me, especially for an open access journal! One could just about justify this approach for a journal destined to be published both on paper and online (though even in that case I think it would be wrong) but surely not for an online-only 'open' publication?

<http://efoundations.typepad.com/efoundations/2007/08/open-online-jou.html>

One of the commenters nails the issue:

Go find 'em a workflow that produces good HTML as well as PDF, and I'm sure they'll sign right on.

Posted by: Dorothea Salo | August 06, 2007 at 01:54 PM

The workflow that produces *good HTML as well as PDF* is what we're after with the [ICE-RS project](#). I talked about the project in my [paper for the ETD 07 conference](#). I use ICE to write this blog, and you get both HTML and PDF. And the [e-Journal of Instructional Science and Technology \(e-JIST\)](#) is published in ICE, meaning that all the papers are in HTML and PDF. Anyone who wants help trying out ICE [contact me](#).

Now why is that paper of mine only available in PDF at the moment?

It's because it's a real pain to add it to the Eprints software we use at USQ – you have to upload the HTML and all its images and so on one at a time.

If you're using other repository software, at least the stuff that's commonly used in a Australia, then you're out of luck as most of it doesn't handle HTML at all.

It would help for the Open Access community and repository software publishers to help drive the adoption of HTML by making OA repositories first-class web citizens. Why isn't it easy to put HTML into Eprints, DSpace, VITAL and Fez?

To do our bit, we're planning to integrate ICE with Eprints, DSpace and Fedora later this year building on the [outcomes from the SWORD project](#) – when that's done I'll update my papers in the USQ repository, over the Atom Publishing Protocol interface that SWORD is developing.