

Scientific Communication in Tourism: Standardization of Electronic Journals

Elaine Cristina Miranda Koebisch^a, and
Mirian Rejowski^b

^aMaster Programme in Hospitality
Anhembi Morumbi University, Brazil
elainecpm@hotmail.com

^bAnhembi Morumbi University, Brazil
mirwski@gmail.com

Abstract

This is an exploratory research aimed to diagnose if the electronic Tourism journals published in Brazil has a standart editorial process based on the software used. It is based on data collected for the research on quality of tourism journals and considered 18 journals that were classified as active. Examines witch software is used by most magazines in the area and discusses its strengths and weaknesses. Concludes that the major journals studied use SEER/OJS (Sistema Eletrônico de Editoração de Revistas/ Open Journal System), that follows the open access movement. Among the benefits brought by using the software were found: easy retrieval of items, improvement in the navigability, decreased cost with the publication and increased of the number of articles received. Scores difficulties regarding how to operate the software, the scientific quality in the papers received and the lack of adhesion of many articles to the themes of Tourism and Hospitality.

Keywords: scientific communication; tourism journals; open access; Brazil

1 Introduction

Tourism is considered a new field of study and research in Brazil, which started with higher education degree in the early 1970s and has evolved exponentially from the end of the second half of the 1990s through the first half of the decade 2000. The growth of higher education in tourism in Brazil, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, has influenced the increase of scientific publications, including the number of articles and journals. However the number of titles of such vehicles of scientific communication is not abundant when compared to the lists of tourism and hospitality periodicals published in overseas.

Journals are of great importance to the dissemination of knowledge, since they work as an archive of relevant research, whose results are validated by the scientific community. Configure the primary vehicle of communication between scientific researchers and are used as indicators of the "state of the art" of an area or field of study. With the advancement of information technology, these journals are being published increasingly in electronic version on the web, which increases its circulation, access to and use of its content.

The standardization of the journals by using international regulation is an important issue and is being studied especially in developing countries and non-English speaking because the production in other languages are not internationally visible as in English and keep the knowledge limited to a certain region.

The formatting and standard of scientific journals suffer direct influence on the type of software used, which can bring many benefits to users, authors and editors or, on the other hand, can prejudice the publication.

This paper aims to analyze the software adopted by the Tourism electronic scientific journals published in Brazil, and relate them to the editorial sustainability of these communication vehicles in the 2000s. Presents considerations about the journals in tourism and electronic communication, with emphasis on open access movement and the availability of free software for editing these vehicles.

2 Scientific Tourism Journals and Electronic Communication

The Brazilian government, through the IBICT (Brazilian Institute of Information Science and Technology), distributes for free a software for editing and publishing scientific journals called SEER (Electronic System for Journal Publishing). According to Arellano, Santos & Fonseca (2005), SEER is a translation of the software OJS (Open Journal System), a system developed in Canada by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), a partnership between the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University Library, Stanford University and the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University, dedicated to improving the quality of academic and public research.

OJS is web based software, made freely, that assists management of all stages of the publishing process, from submissions through online publication and indexing. It's the only Brazilian software which has the OAI (Open Archives Initiative) protocol for the digital preservation of contents project - LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe) (Arellano, Santos & Fonseca, 2005). It is available to journals worldwide for the purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals, as open access can increase a journal's readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale. More information can be found on <http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs> [Jun. 8, 2010].

SEER/OJS is the new generation of management systems for scientific journals, and, in Brazil, emerges as an alternative model for the application of scientific knowledge to expand access, preservation, and impact of research and the results derived there from Arellano, Santos and Fonseca (2005).

According to Willinsky (2005), this alternative model is being adopted mainly in developing countries and non-English speaking as Brazil, and its use has grown in the humanities and social sciences. The software is one of the most popular tools for posting peer-reviewed, scholarly journals online. For him it is a vehicle for academic freedom. He estimates that the tool is used to produce more than 5.000 journals all over the world, as follows: South America, 1537; North America, 1343; Europe, 961; Asia, 678; Africa, 429; Oceania, 96 (<http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs> [Jun. 8, 2010]).

This initiative follows the Open Access movement that, according to Hanard (2010) is “free, immediate, permanent online access to the full text of research articles for anyone, web wide” (<http://www.eprints.org/openaccess/>[Out. 18, 2010]). Two documents are the basis of this movement: the Budapest Open Access Initiative in 2002 and Declaración on Open Access to Knowledge in the science and Humanitarian (Berlin, 2003). Harnad et al (2001) claim that “there are two roads to open access: the ‘golden’ road (publish your article in an OA journal) and the ‘green’ road (publish your article in a non-OA journal but also self-archive it in an OA archive)”. For these authors, “To reach 100% OA, self-archiving needs to be mandated by researchers’ employers and funders, as the United Kingdom and the United States have recently recommended, and universities need to implement that mandate.”

Antetelman (2004) and Lawrence (2001) study the impact of the Open-Access publications and online visibility in the academic production. The first author highlights that: a) the articles published in open access journals are more used resulting in greater impact than those that are not free; b) it is necessary to maintain the quality of the journal with the practices of the Open-access and not publishing texts randomly on personal pages. The second author states that: a) articles freely available are cited more often and that open access leads to benefits for science and society; b) for greater impact and scientific progress, authors and publishers should facilitate access to research.

In research on the techno-scientific periodicals published in Brazil, Rejowski and Aldrigui (2007) identified, between 2000 and 2007, 18 journals. Of these, 6 were inactive, 11 electronic published and only one still being printed. Considering the free availability of the SEER/OJS, that improved and facilitated the editorial process, the authors predicted that all the journals would be in electronic format and freely available on open access by the end of the decade, and also highlighted that the main weakness of these vehicles was not being indexed in international databases and therefore, the lack of Impact Factor or Hirsch index related to them.

3 Methods

This is an exploratory research focused on the Tourism scientific journals, published electronically in the 2000s and classified as active, according to the last published edition, with at least one edition in the second half of 2009 and beginning of 2010. It was based on the journal raised by Rejowski and Aldrigui (2007) and supplemented by consulting the database of CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education), an agency of the Ministry of Education, and the site of the Virtual Institute of Tourism (IVT) that maintains a list of such communication vehicles.

The research was developed in two stages. In the first stage, a documental research based on the content analysis of each journal site, and data were collected using a structured form with the following fields: a) journal title, site address, frequency, editor, publisher or responsible institution, start year, format - printed and / or electronic, software and access type. In the second stage, characterized as a survey, we applied a questionnaire by e-mail to the journal editors that use the SEER/OJS, asking them about the use of this software in the editorial process, its advantages and difficulties and major operational difficulties. The results were classified into the

following categories of analysis: a) general characterization; b) temporal evolution; c) operating system and access; d) editors view.

After discussing the results in comparison with the authors, the following hypothesis were tested: H1 – the majority of tourism electronic journals published in Brazil are using the SEER/OJS as the operating software and is part of the Open Access movement; H2 – journals format are according to the international standards; H3 – the majority of journals that use the SEER/OJS are not indexed in international databases.

4 Results

Initially 34 journals in tourism and hospitality were identified. Of these, two were discarded because they did not register any type of online information. Querying the journals websites were found that 12 of them (38%) appear to be inactive because the latest published edition is for 2008 or earlier and their websites are outdated, and two of them (6%) did not show data (month and year) of publication issues. Thus the final sample is consisted of 18 active journals (56%) and the results are summarized below.

It was noticed that most journals were created in the second half of the 2000s (94%) and only 2 (6%) were created earlier, in the 1990s: *Turismo em Análise* (1990) and *Turismo Visão e Ação* (1998).

About the operational software, from the 18 active journals, 10 use the OJS (56%), and 8 use other softwares (44%). It was noticed a tendency in Tourism and Hospitality journals to adopt OJS that is a software that allows more control of the quality of articles received from submission to publication. The journals using OJS have a similar layout, with standard links from the menu. They prioritize the scientific article in its content and follow the international standards. What may change is the cover that can be customized by the institution. All the journals have free access to its contents.

However, only the oldest journals had been indexed in international database, as mentioned by Rejowski and Aldrigui (2007) but still being published only in Portuguese. Thus one cannot discuss the impact of these vehicles in the Brazilian scientific production as proposed by Lawrence (2001) and Antelman (2004).

According to the editors consulted, despite some difficulties, the use of the software facilitated the editorial process, but it is recommend the system training course offered by IBICIT. Among the advantages brought by the use of the tool are: increasing the number of articles received, less time for the review of documents and low costs associated with publishing, easy search and retrieval of articles and their metadata and good navigability. The main difficulties are regarding to how to operate the software, the scientific quality in the papers received and the lack of adhesion of many articles to the themes of Tourism and Hospitality.

The results confirmed all three hypothesis of the research. Other issues that emerged from the research and must be studied indicated that there is no interest from private publishers in publishing this segment in Brazil; the scientific journals in Tourism are published, mostly by universities and their editors are working voluntarily and with scarce financial and human resources.

5 Conclusions

In Brazil, there is a concern on the part of the academic community and publishers in the use of Open Access to improve the quality and visibility of scientific communication in Tourism.

The use of SEER/OJS allows the standardization of periodical publications in accordance with international practices and standards and it is appropriate to the needs of Brazilian publishers. It was found that use of the tool contributed to the survival of journals, to the publication within the time expected and to create a standard that can be improved in order to preserve the digital content, the authenticity and the retrieval of scientific articles.

The standardization of scientific journals, following national and international criteria's and follow the demands of new technologies may be an option for recognition, acceptance and dissemination of scientific communication in Tourism in Brazil and abroad, contributing to the quality and visibility of these journals.

However, were noticed the lack of international integration of scientific communication vehicles, due to the lack of indexing and the lack of investment by institutions responsible for their edition. It is noted that this preliminary study provided important foundations for future research, which will further develop the role and operation of the editors of tourism scientific journals published in Brazil.

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