Seventeenth International Conference on Grey Literature

A New Wave of Textual and Non-Textual Grey Literature

The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Amsterdam, December 1-2, 2015

Program Book

ISSN 1385-2308

Program Sponsors:

GL17 Program and Conference Bureau

TextRelease
CIP

GL17 Program Book

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Foreword

A NEW WAVE OF TEXTUAL AND NON-TEXTUAL GREY LITERATURE

As the internet becomes increasingly grey and every cloud now has a grey lining, there arises the need to address a new and challenging wave of textual and non-textual grey literature. GL17 will examine a number of new types of textual grey literature both web-based and submerged in the sea of social networks. No less attention will be drawn to the expanding quantity of non-textual grey literature accessible in visual, audio, and diverse data formats and frequencies. Actually, in order to grasp this new wave of grey literature it may be even more advantageous to look at the convergence of these new types of textual and non-textual content rather than focus separately on each. The problems textual grey literature faced and addressed over the past quarter century are to a certain extent very similar to what non-textual grey literature faces today. The wide range of graphics, photographs, and other data-intensive grey literature is obscure, hard to find, and often short lived because it lacks proper indexing and sustained access. Such non-textual grey literature requires interpretation and documentation, which can in part be achieved by linking and crosslinking to their related textual counterparts. In this way, grey literature becomes leveraged and its value and return on investment made transparent.

While bridging textual and non-textual content is technically possible, it also requires an information policy in place that supports these new digital assets. Likewise, information professionals and practitioners must be able to (re)appropriate human resources and streamline their workflow in innovative ways. These should allow for content and feedback generated in social networks and in particular the information communities served.

The Seventeenth International Conference on Grey Literature welcomes participants, authors and researchers to share their experience and vision on how to channel this new wave of grey literature.

Dominic Farace
GREYNET INTERNATIONAL

Amsterdam, DECEMBER 2015
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Leveraging Grey Literature – Capitalizing on Value and the Return on Investment: A Cumulative Case Study

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Sustained improvements and enhancements in the production and access to grey literature are required. Leveraging grey literature not only seeks to capitalize on its value for science and the public good, but also anticipates a return on investments in some measure.

In an attempt to assess GreyNet’s return on investment in grey literature, this study will identify and review efforts made to leverage its own information products and services, since its relaunch in 2003.

The method of approach is a cumulative case study from 2003 onwards of a select number of information products and services provided by GreyNet. Each were introduced to serve the interests of the grey literature community and their production and supply remain sustained. The first step in the study will be a brief description of the selected resources and their intended purpose in serving the grey literature community. Available statistics and data applicable to each of the items will also be incorporated. The second step will be to design and carry out an online survey among GreyNet’s stakeholders (both financial as well as content providers) in an effort to determine their involvement. And, in the third and final step an analysis will be carried out as to the intended purposes and observed uses of the items in step one with the results of the survey conducted among GreyNet stakeholders in step two.

The anticipated results from this study should establish an acceptable level of disparity among the intended purposes, observed uses, and the expectations of stakeholders. The outcome should better enable GreyNet to leverage its grey literature resources – ensuring its positional advantage and enabling it to function more effectively.

There are no direct costs associated with this project. Each of the partners is committed to allocate human and material resources needed to carry out their related tasks.

Bionotes

Dominic Farace is Head of GreyNet International and Director of TextRelease, an independent information bureau specializing in grey literature and networked information. He holds degrees in sociology from Creighton University (BA) and the University of New Orleans (MA). His doctoral dissertation in social sciences is from the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands, where he has lived and worked since 1976. After six years heading the Department of Documentary Information at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (SWIDOC/KNAW), Farace founded GreyNet, Grey Literature Network Service in 1992. He has since been responsible for the International Conference Series on Grey Literature (1993-2013). In this capacity, he also serves as Program and Conference Director as well as managing editor of the Conference Proceedings. He is editor of The Grey Journal and provides workshops and training in the field of grey literature.

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Jerry Frantzen graduated in 1999 from the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences/Hogeschool van Amsterdam (AUAS/HvA) in Library and Information Science. Frantzen is the technical editor of The Grey Journal (TGI). And, since 1996, he is affiliated with GreyNet, Grey Literature Network Service, as a freelance technical consultant. Email: info@greynet.org
Stefania Biagioni graduated in Italian Language and Literature at the University of Pisa and specialized in Data Processing and DBMS. She is currently a member of the research staff at the Istituto di Scienza e Tecnologie dell'Informazione "A. Faedo" (ISTI), an institute of the Italian National Research Council (CNR) located in Pisa. She is head librarian of the Multidisciplinary Library of the CNR Campus in Pisa and member of the ISTI Networked Multimedia Information Systems Laboratory (NMIS). She has been the responsible of ERCIM Technical Reference Digital Library (ETRDL) and currently of the PUMA (PUblication MAngement) & MetaPub, a service oriented and user focused infrastructure for institutional and thematic Open Access repositories looking at the DRIVER/OpenAire vision, http://puma.isti.cnr.it. She has coauthored a number of publications dealing with digital libraries. Her activities include integration of grey literature into library collections and web access to the library's digital resources, including electronic journals and databases. She is a member of GreyNet since 2005. Since 2013 she is involved on the GreyGuide Project. Email: stefania.biagioni@isti.cnr.it

Carlo Carlesi, graduated in Computer Science, worked since 1970 at the IEI (now ISTI) of the Italian National Research Council in Pisa. His interest are focused in many software engineering field such as: Development of data base systems, Software quality and testing, Administration and UNIX system management, Digital library systems, Network security and management. In the year 2000-2010 he was head of the "Information Technology Security Service" of the Institute. He participated in many national and international projects, the last being: Italian Project for Research in the Antarctic - (South Pole project), the aim of the project was the creation of a Multidisciplinary Integrated Information System to manage and query the Set of Antarctic Data Bases; ERCIM Technical Reference Digital Library - (ETRDL Project), The Digital Library service allows public access through Internet to the technical reports and other not published document produced by several organizations. It is currently a Research Associate of the Institute ISTI and he is involved in the following projects: PUMA - Publication Management. The Digital Library service allows public access (when permitted) through Internet to the published documents produced by CNR Organizations. GreyGuide - Guide to Good Practices and Resources in Grey Literature. An online forum and repository of good practice and resources in the field of grey literature. Email: carlo.carlesi@isti.cnr.it

Christiane Stock is the Head of the Monographs and Grey Literature service at INIST, in charge of the repositories LARA (reports), mémSIC (master’s theses in information sciences) and OpenGrey. Member of the Technical Committee for the SIGLE database from 1993 to 2005, she also set up the national agency for ISRN (International Standard Report Number). She is member of the AFNOR expert group who prepared the recommended metadata scheme for French electronic theses (TEF). Email: christiane.stock@inist.fr
Leveraging Grey Literature
Capitalizing on Value and the Return on Investment: A Cumulative Case Study

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The purpose of this study is to identify and assess efforts in leveraging GreyNet’s information resources, since its relaunch in 2003.

The method of approach is a cumulative case study of a select number of sustained information resources provided by GreyNet in collaboration with its stakeholders.

Leveraging implies the effective use of a cognitive tool applied in order to improve and/or enhance an organization’s positional advantage. It is the power to act effectively on behalf of one’s stakeholders by using its key resources to their maximum advantage. For a business this may be interpreted by an increase in profit. For a non-profit organization it may rather imply meeting costs, matching funds, and/or increased use and application of its products and services.

Disparity implies apparent differences or inconsistencies, when the statistics and data compiled on the key sustained resources do not correlate with the results of the stakeholder survey carried out in the study.
Step 1  Identify GreyNet’s stakeholders and sustained information resources as well as their intended purposes in serving the grey literature community. Available statistics and data applicable to each of the resources are likewise compiled and incorporated in this study.

### Types of Stakeholders
- Organizational Members
- Recognized Partners
- Conference Hosts/Sponsors
- Authors and Researchers
- Service Providers
- Committee Members
- Journal Editors

### Sustained Information Resources
- 2003 Relaunch GreyNet.org
- 2003 Relaunch GL-Conference Series
- 2004 GreyNet Annual Award
- 2005 The Grey Journal (TGJ)
- 2007 Conference Preprints in OS/OG
- 2009 GreyNet Workshop Series
- 2010 GreyNet Social Media
- 2012 Datasets in DANS Data Archive
- 2013 GreyGuide Repository/Portal

Step 2  Design and carry out an online survey among GreyNet’s stakeholders in an effort to determine their involvement and outward satisfaction with the information resources provided.

Step 3  A comparative analysis of the intended purposes and observed uses of the information resources in Step One with the results of the survey conducted among GreyNet Stakeholders in Step Two.
Step 1 – Some Results in Context
Statistics and data related to all nine of GreyNet’s sustained information resources in the study indicate steady and at times significant increases.

**GreyNet Sources of Data & Statistics**
- In-house Excel and Outlook files
- Conference Evaluation Forms
- Estimated time recorded
- Web Stats (Network Solutions)
- Licensed Journal Stats (EBSCO)
- Service Provider Stats (OpenGrey, DANS, and GreyGuide)
- Social Media (LinkedIn and Twitter)

Step 2 – Some Results in Context
The online questionnaire was carried out over a 12-day period via SurveyMonkey. It was disseminated by way of GreyNet’s in-house Distribution List as well as its LinkedIn and Twitter accounts. There was a total of 77 respondents (100%), 18 (23%) of whom did not identify themselves as a GreyNet stakeholder based on the 7 categories that were provided. 38% of the respondents chose to enter their email address, while the other 62% remained anonymous. Responses to each of the 10 survey questions varied from 77 (100%) to 62 (81%).

Step 3 – Some Results in Context
A comparison of findings from Steps 1 and 2 indicate that data and stats from five of the nine resources in the study are consistent with the responses from the stakeholder survey. Data and stats however from the other four resources in the study appear to some degree inconsistent with responses from the survey.
Leveraging Grey Literature

Examples of Marginal Disparity

In Question Two, a near 53% of the survey respondents “never participated” in one of the sixteen GL Conferences, while stats and data relating to the conference series demonstrate increases.

The wording of the question may have been cause for disparity. Researchers and co-authors, while physically absent from a conference are considered to have participated via their content contribution to the program.

In Question Three, a near 53% of the survey respondents could not name one of the sixteen GreyNet Award Recipients. The wording of the question may have been cause for the disparity. Perhaps the question should have been directed more to the respondent’s awareness that an Annual Award for Outstanding Achievement in the field of Grey literature is presented.

Examples of Significant Disparity

In Question Six, over 67% of the survey respondents had not posted, shared, or liked content via one of GreyNet’s channels of social media - even though stats indicate an increasing number of members and a steady number of new postings.

Relatively, only a few members provide content and feedback via GreyNet’s social media. The significant majority can be categorized as passive recipients. However, they do remain potential contributors.

In Question Seven, 80% of the survey respondents had not accessed one of GreyNet’s datasets in DANS or in another data archive. Just over 6.1% (21) of the 344 metadata, full-text records are currently crosslinked to accompanying data files. Now that the acquisition of data is part of GreyNet’s workflow, the potential to increase access and use of data relies on input from the authors and researchers.

Some Closing Comments

In order to maintain and improve GreyNet’s positional advantage and ability to act effectively on behalf of its stakeholders, recent action has been undertaken to further leverage two of its sustained resources:

● Social Media

Since the close of the stakeholder survey, a GreyNet Facebook account has been opened by the Community Management Committee alongside its LinkedIn, Twitter, and Netvibes accounts.

● Datasets

A poster on submitting datasets in the DANS Data Archive will have been presented at GL17 and a Workshop on Data Papers is planned for 2016.