



About

- press.umich.edu and publishing.umich.edu
- Located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
- University publisher specializing in humanities and social sciences

People

- **Charles Watkinson**
Associate University Librarian
- **Jon McGlone**
Front-end developer
- **Rebecca Welzenbach**
Journals Coordinator

Goals

- Promote the visibility of open access books and journals published by the Press and incubated by the Library
- Assess impact of documents held in Library's institutional repository

Approach

- Deploy Altmetric Badges on full text publishing platform and institutional repository

Results

- Much broader assessment of impact
- Data that can be turned into 'stories' to solicit continued support & funding for open access
- Information that can be used to improve usability of platform and content design
- New perceived value and understanding of research impact for editors



Charles
Watkinson

Jon
McGlone

Rebecca
Welzenbach

University of Michigan Press broadens its view of the impact of its publishing products, and those of its parent library

The University of Michigan Press is a vital component of Michigan Publishing, which is the primary academic publishing division of the University. In partnership with authors and series editors, Michigan Publishing publishes material on a wide range of humanities and social science topics. It also champions the Library's research and scholarly communication missions by providing global digital and print publishing services and distribution programs.

Together with its authors, the Press also plays a critical role in the teaching and learning mission of the University by developing instructional materials for students. To address the educational and information needs of its regional readers the Press also produces publications on Michigan and the Great Lakes region.

Charles Watkinson is the Associate University Librarian for Publishing and Director of the University of Michigan Press. Jon McGlone is a front-end developer, responsible for the development, design and implementation of projects supporting the journals and open access monographs published by the press. Rebecca Welzenbach is a Journals Coordinator who has provided significant support for the duration of the project.

The University of Michigan Press has implemented Altmetric Badges on its full-text publishing platform and on Deep Blue, the university's institutional repository, for two reasons.

Altmetric is used to help the Press assess the impact of its publications

"Altmetric is crucial in helping us tell stories of impact so that we can report back to the university and the authors and editors that publish with us."

Charles also stresses that Altmetric attention data and scores are important in determining and showcasing the value of open access books. "The income generated by print on-demand versions of the books currently supports the cost of producing them but we also need to demonstrate their visibility and reach to ensure future support," he says. "Metrics that relate to positive reviews in journals, prizes and awards attained, scholarly buzz generated, and reach to readers beyond the academy such as policy makers and journalists, are critical in driving the sustainability of our emerging OA book programs."

"The university must see the value of the publications, how they are performing in the social media world. With Altmetric, the narratives are captured much more clearly than with counting downloads or using a web analytics tool."

Charles highlights some specific cases of where Altmetric is helping to expose the impact of the Press' published works. In the first example, he highlights an open access article on female photographers in Bengal, India. The publishing strategy employed by the editor and authors in this case was

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN: THE NUMBERS

Mentions of nearly **150**
articles, over **600** tweets
and **100** Facebook shares
Nov–Apr 2015

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“Altmetric is crucial in helping us tell stories of impact so that we can report back to the university and the authors and editors that publish with us.”

For more information on Digital
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to use an open access model to disseminate this article widely to get more recognition of the work of these pioneers in India. The strategy succeeded judging by the spread of social media coverage the article received.

The second example has a legal context that is steeped in American history. The Altmetric attention to an article on Habeas Corpus and past suspensions of civil liberties by US presidents, in this case Abraham Lincoln, could have an impact on modern policy making in this area via coverage in media such as Salon, The Huffington Post and The Nation.

The third example highlights the attention that open access monographs have the potential to get. A book on the principles of web writing for teachers and students at liberal arts colleges is attracting a lot of scholarly and social buzz and this can be measured and explored using Altmetric.

More meaningful metrics

The Altmetric Badges give new more meaningful metrics beyond web analytics and usage data to tell the impact story of the Institutional Repository, especially material hosted by the repository that has never been published electronically before. For example, faculty put a lot of effort into producing technical reports, conference proceedings and white papers but find it difficult to articulate credit for this work. “We know this, as 30% of the materials on the repository can be classed as grey literature,” says Charles. “With Altmetric, Michigan faculty get an opportunity to report on new extensions of scholarly value beyond downloads and citations.”

Previously, while at Purdue University, Charles had analyzed usage patterns from web analytics tools to try to develop impact stories, including cases where local government departments in Indiana were using technical reports from the university. “The absolute download counts only told part of the story and the web analytics were only partially effective. The fact that Altmetric can pick up the qualitative contexts is really improving the situation,” he says.

Ease of implementation

Jon was also impressed with the ease and speed of the implementation of the Altmetric Badges. “It looks really good on the page,” he says. “There was some tweaking necessary to make the Badges fit to the journal and page templates. Charles was also pleased with the willingness of Euan Adie and the Altmetric team to work “with a non-standard system” since Michigan hosts its publications on a home-grown platform, DLXS, while the repository is based on DSpace.

The University of Michigan is committed to open source development and is focused on building systems that can link in, overlay and provide added value to the open source base. Altmetric fits into this category of service provider and therefore is a good strategic fit to work with the Press and Library.