

## UK LOCKSS Alliance Case Study University of Warwick

This case study is based on an interview with James Fisher, Digital Access Manager at the University of Warwick Library (September 2012).

### Background to the UK LOCKSS Alliance

UK LOCKSS Alliance is a co-operative movement of UK academic libraries that deploy LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) technology to share archival responsibility through a network of local archives.

LOCKSS provides libraries with open-source software that enables them to:

- Set up a LOCKSS box that acts as the digital equivalent of a library shelf.
- Select content for preservation according to an institution's collection policies.
- Build an archive of content using the web-crawling capabilities of LOCKSS, taking content as it was rendered to the web.
- Take advantage of the LOCKSS automated preservation technology, designed so that almost no daily administration is needed to assure long-term access.
- Access preserved content when needed via integration with existing library and university systems.

### University of Warwick

The University of Warwick was founded in 1965. It currently has over 23,000 students of which over 10,000 are post graduates and over 6,000 are international students. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, Warwick was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> overall in the UK. Its highest-ranking departments included Film Studies, Warwick HRI, History, Pure Mathematics, French, Economics and Italian.

### The Library and its journals collection

The University of Warwick library uses Innovative Interfaces Millennium as its library management system, including the WebBridge OpenURL resolver. It uses Serials Solutions to manage its e-journals collection. In recent years it has been moving increasingly towards e-only provision of journals, especially as space in the library is limited.



Figure 1: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ccacnorthlib/3554628032>

The library pays for access to more than 48,000 journals, of which almost 47,000 are available electronically. It also makes available 6,500 electronic journals for which no payment was made in the previous year (archives or free titles).

### Motive for participating in UK LOCKSS Alliance

The UK LOCKSS Alliance is the only archiving agency that Warwick uses at present. Robin Green (currently Acting Librarian at Warwick) is very clear about their reasons for joining:

- The LOCKSS approach works.
- The LOCKSS box is held locally and thus is under the control of the library. This involves some maintenance and administration effort from the library but significantly it also means that the library decides what to archive.
- The infrastructure requirements are minimal and set-up and maintenance require little time. The cost of implementing and running LOCKSS is low.
- LOCKSS provides preservation as well as backup of content.
- LOCKSS offers a collaborative approach, and there is an active community in the UK who can help with any problems.
- As LOCKSS was developed at Stanford University, its priorities are likely to be aligned with those of other academic institutions. The support from both Jisc and the DCC lends it credibility.
- Warwick is interested in the possibility of establishing a Private LOCKSS Network (PLN). The university has substantial volumes of locally digitized content and would like to ensure its safe backup.
- When Warwick adopted LOCKSS it was the only archiving solution known to the library that Warwick could implement in-house.

### What's involved in using LOCKSS?

The member of staff responsible for adding content to the LOCKSS box receives emails from the central LOCKSS team alerting her that new content is available. She works through the list of titles and volumes and marks those that Warwick is entitled to archive in its box either because it has a subscription or the title is available open access. She then logs onto the LOCKSS server and configures them for collection by selecting the titles and volumes on the LOCKSS box user interface. Inspired by the blog postings of others in the UK community, Warwick are considering adding a second step to their workflow, undertaking a periodic audit to confirm that the content is preserved and available for end-user access.

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### Key value of LOCKSS for Warwick

The key value of the LOCKSS approach for Warwick is that it provides an insurance policy. Library staff are confident that the content that the library has purchased is preserved and archived. For print, the library knows that it has content if the volume is on the shelf but, in an electronic environment, it cannot be confident of long-term access unless it participates in an archiving initiative. Warwick values the integrity checking features of LOCKSS, meaning the library knows not only that the content is stored on the LOCKSS box but also that the content remains unchanged since it was collected.

Warwick is looking forward to integrating LOCKSS with Innovative Interfaces WebBridge. This will give further confidence to staff and academics of the value of LOCKSS. Once WebBridge is configured to access content from LOCKSS, library staff at Warwick will consider making it continuously available so that it can act as a back up should the primary source be down. Warwick staff would not wish library users to go to the LOCKSS box as a first port of call, but the OpenURL resolver can be configured to prioritise sources making the LOCKSS target available only when other sources fail.



Figure 2: [http://www.flickr.com/photos/andrea\\_k/339229476](http://www.flickr.com/photos/andrea_k/339229476)

### Improving the LOCKSS software

Staff at Warwick are excited by the user interface features currently in development.

Scheduled for release in Summer 2013, the LOCKSS developers are introducing a Subscription Manager feature. As part of Warwick's content administration process, staff use a spreadsheet made available as part of the content release, deleting those titles and volumes to which Warwick does not have a subscription. The new feature will allow Warwick to extend this process, allowing staff to upload this customized file and configure content in bulk.

Ideally, staff would like LOCKSS to automate the collection development process by integrating LOCKSS with local holdings information held in a library management system, but appreciate that this would be complicated by the fact that local holdings often specify content in aggregator services, which the library has no right to archive. Support for this feature is being considered as part of the Subscription Manager.