

Applying Library Policies for Digital Content Access to the Commercial Sector

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The digital content of libraries is different from commercial digital products, such as, computer applications, software tools, and computer code or data streams, but they have the same sharing, reproduction and distribution digital properties and similar knowledge management problems. We examine the policies applied to commercial and library digital content. We classify the commercial digital products, according to their use and distribution properties, and we analyze their policy components. Mapping on library and commercial sector policies is illustrated, and their similarities and differences are extracted. Within this mapping, we conclude by showing, how a subset of the library policies can be transferred and implemented by companies. We show how this implementation could be beneficial for commercial companies, because libraries have great experience in providing digital content and in implementing policies. In this sense, *libraries are leading the way*, by showing to commercial companies how to handle and provide digital content.

“Keywords”: Virtual enterprises and communities, knowledge management policies, digital content providers

1. Introduction

The digital content of libraries is different from the digital products that are commercially available, such as, computer applications, software tools, and code libraries or data streams. Nevertheless, their digital properties are the same: they are replicated with minimal cost, are easy to share and distribute, etc. Their acquisition is based on terms and conditions, set in a contract during the sale, and not in physical ownership. We observe that the policies of distributing library and other such digital content can be the same, and the commercial content providers can benefit from the variety of policies that the digital libraries are already using for their content.

Since different types of digital content face different model and copyrighting demands and challenges, we need to consider different forms of administration, management and policies. However, libraries have already implemented knowledge management policies (access, reproduction, distribution, use etc.), on their digital content, for private or commercial use. The library policies have been studied, and they can offer solutions to the management of digital information and knowledge. In this sense, *libraries are leading the way*, by showing to commercial companies how to handle and provide digital content.

The goal of this paper is to show how the library model can be extended to apply to the *commercial* (private) sector. Our thesis is that library policies can be extended and applied to physical and digital content that is shared among companies. The policies can also be tested with parameters and factors that are particular to companies. New factors arise, for example, from the type of the digital

This work was funded by the IRAKLEITOS program, which is co-funded by the European Union and National Resources.