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Conference Proceedings and Events

CI Days: Cyberinfrastructure 2010 in the Rockies

Transcription of Cyberinfrastructure 2010 in the Rockies: breakout group discussion topics, 2010

Collection: CI Days: Cyberinfrastructure 2010 in the Rockies

Title: Cyberinfrastructure 2010 in the Rockies: big three points from breakout discussion groups

Date: 2010

File Name: CI\_Days\_2010\_Breakout\_Big3.mp4

Date Transcribed: November 2024

Transcription Platform: Konch AI

BEGIN TRANSCRIPTION

[00:02 - 00:28] Moderator 1: So this is the part of the day where we have [indistinct conversation in the background] the reports from the breakout sessions. And what we're going to ask [chairs scraping] the session conveners to do is to go up and present their three main points. And then, in each of the sessions we'll have dialogue and discussion. And then, at the end of this, then Russ is going to help us wrap the day up. So, Google Cloud.

[00:29 - 02:28] Speaker 1: Google Cloud, the question was, why not the Google Cloud. And there seems to be a few knots. And among the knots are privacy and security that, um, [clicks tongue] there is some information that we would like to have some visibility on, but not universal visibility on, that, um, there's a lot of tension about handing over to someone else. Google, in this case, our content. And one of the issues buried in this number one is, what is the content? That's a decision factor in determining whether to put something on Google or not. And there's some legal issues, which is our number three that um, um, Google is viewing itself and presenting itself as kind of a commodity or utility. But, um, what is what is everybody's responsibility? By what vehicle shall we identify it? Um, who has, um, uh, the availability of reusing these data that we put on Google Cloud? Uh, there's also kind of a subset in here. I'm slipping in a fourth one. Um, I hope you don't mind, which has to do with there are other clouds and there could be clouds smaller in scale, um, involving a consortium or a cluster within a consortium. There are other options. This isn't the only way to go. And finally, um, responsibility that we don't want to do this lightly. And so far, none of the institutions in our group was contemplating doing it. There was a lot of conversations in house about it. It's certainly a hot topic, but not quite ready for prime time.

[02:28 - 02:28] Moderator 1: Thank you. [indistinct chatter]

[02:33 - 02:33] Moderator 2: Post some questions?

[02:33 - 02:33] Speaker 1: Questions?

[02:34 - 02:34] Moderator 2: Ask it first.

[02:34 - 02:34] Participant 1: Questions.

[02:35 - 02:51] Speaker 1: Oh, questions. I should give, um, as I say, a shout out, [chuckles] um, to Beth Ollards, who was our scribe and was terrific and did an excellent job.

[02:54 - 02:58] Participant 1: So were you looking mostly at, uh, commercial-based clouds or you're looking at broader view where you get what you thought of-

[03:01 - 03:37] Speaker 1: We started out limited to Google Cloud, but the group didn't let me get away with that. And pretty soon we were talking about clouds in general, alternative clouds, [chairs slide noisily] and as I said, clouds that we organizationally could create if in fact, um, there's an economic advantage to collaboration, why should we collaborate with Google? We can collaborate otherwise. Um, and whether it's a private, public, we are— we're not that far along. Other questions?

[03:37 - 03:42] Moderator 2: Okay.

[03:42 - 06:03] Speaker 2: Okay, for session two, the focus was on the collaboration and human dimensions, and we had a really great active group there that we went kind of nonstop. And to try to summarize, of I think the three main areas that we discussed or as follows. It's up over there. One was the involvement of researchers. One was, second was support for cyber infrastructure use. And finally, number three end user need. So for the first, the involvement of researchers in getting them to use the cyber infrastructure and data repositories and such is how do we motivate, you know, what are the incentives, what are the outcomes, and mandates by federal funding agencies are always a strong carrot, if not a stick. So that was for getting the researchers involved to participate and make use of the— these cyber infrastructure of the libraries. The next was a support for the use, in the sense of having library slash IT skilled staff to work with faculty to help them prepare their data to get on to the data repositories, for example, how to set up metadata. You got to realize, as it became clear to me in our breakout group, you know, most of you folks are library people who have your own language and have your knowledge set there. And I, I kept sitting there as just a poor faculty member going, well, what's that mean? And what's that mean? So, we don't know about, you know, setting up metadata and participatory and a bunch of other acronyms that came up. So we

really need your help to hold our hand and to guide us. And to get— so we can get the data on in the types of standard formats people have been discussing with the proper metadata. So that was one aspect of the support for CIUs. Another was someone else from outside CSU brought up the fact having the IT and libraries, both under the VP IT, as we do at CSU, was really good and important because they really so strongly interconnected.

[06:03 - 07:27] Speaker 2: And furthermore, to make sure we had the VP for IT and VP for research, you know, working together to help support the cyber infrastructure. And the another point was sustainability. How do we how do we keep it going? And once it's built and going, how do we how do we keep it going and maintain it? The last about the end user needs were points such as ease of use, a vehicle for a community engagement that is a collaboration tool. People see something on the data repository. There's easy for them to get to the researchers who put that material up there and comment on it, either arguing with them or wanting to work with them, uh, participatory design, working with the researchers and establishing what the database should look like and how it can be accessed. And finally, a support for a global environment, recognizing that not everybody speaks English and that we got to be accepted, you know, be able to really be global and be able to have it easily. And metadata and other terms be able to translate into other languages so people from other countries can make use of our databases for for the folks in session two, are there any other key points I'm missing you'd like me to toss out? [chairs scraping] Okay, guess we're okay then. Questions?

[07:27 - 07:27] Man 1: How about-

[07:28 - 07:42] Moderator 1: How about questions, dialogue? Um, comments, diatribes? [laughs] Anybody, anything from anybody? Okay. Thank you, H.J..

[07:42 - 07:43] Speaker 2: Sure.

[07:45 - 09:42] Speaker 4: I was in session number three, and we had a wide range of topics, but picking sort of three out of the big list. Um, there's a lot of digital content being created. What's worth saving because as we were talking about, for example, Library of Congress saving all of the public Twitters, um, you've got all of this raw data we talked about today. You've got published and unpublished research and the cost of saving this material. You've got to capture it, preserve it, save it, provide access to it. Um, and so there's a lot of issues that I think that we need to get a little smarter about what we're going to save and what we're not going to save. Related to that is, what are you going to when you store digital content, uh, what's going to be your supported and unsupported formats? A supported format might be a format that you would say that we want to, uh,

we say when we capture, for example, PDFs or things and other files that as technology changes, as formats change, will migrate that data into maybe newer, more usable formats. But we also then got into, uh, unsupported formats, would be those that will say, we'll save it, but, you know, it may not be usable in the future. What about an old, uh, paradox file or, uh, Amy profile or something like that? Those kinds of things, you may save them, but they may not be usable in the future. And we also went into areas such as not only the actual digital objects themselves, but what about applications? What about the hardware itself that, uh, and the obsolescence of that technology, you know, going into zip drives and to mag tapes and all of that? Uh, the group, I think, sort of generally felt that if you're going to be a responsible repository, um, you're going to use the storage media of the day, but you're going to have to migrate the data forward into the new technology, whatever it is.

[09:43 - 11:10] Speaker 4: Uh, the third area was sort of a different topic. Um, and we talked about resource sharing and e-books that as scholarly publishing goes more and more digital, um, and as we buy fewer printed books, um, what are we going to do to make those electronic e-books usable? Because right now in the print world, a library exists because you can grab the book, you can check it out, you can share it between libraries in the digital world, unless you've got appropriate resource sharing, uh, rights in your contracts, if a library buys it, they can't share it with anyone. And we're actually going to roll back the clock on accessibility and usability, because even the largest of us can't afford everything. And so that we feel that we need to work as librarians, not only regionally but nationally, in getting into our contracts, especially for the emerging world of scholarly e-books, uh, different kinds of provisions, so that we can share this content between each other. And it sort of happened in the in the journal world, you know, when first, the first e-journals first came out, we really couldn't share them, but we sort of stood our ground as librarians. And now most publishers do allow us to share, um, do interlibrary loan, if you will, or resource share our e-journal articles. We need to get those same sort of provisions in our e-books. Uh, comments or questions?

[11:17 - 11:21] Speaker 3: We're all tired, aren't we? [background laughter] [chuckles] No, I'm tired, come. [chairs scraping]

[11:21 - 11:21] Man 2: Where you go? [indistinct chatter]

[11:22 - 14:03] Speaker 4: So at risk of beating dead horses with talking to you more? Uh, we actually had a really nice discussion in the open access group. Um, I'll give you just three very simple points that came out of it, but perhaps they'll be useful. Um, we were made up of eight different institutions, some academics, some, uh, governmental, uh, very broad diversity of institutions. And essentially, point number one is that all of these institutions, in some way or form, are interested and exploring these— this idea of an open access policy. Um, a second point, kind of

going into the realm of how do you get started? The second point is, I think we had complete agreement that anything that is not faculty driven, uh, will probably be a non-starter. Um, essentially, if it's seen as originating in the administration or even if it's seen as, as originating in that diabolical institution within our institutions, the libraries, um, it'll probably be a non-starter. The third point is actually a collection of smaller points, um, but simply a set of facts that, uh, it's quite important to maintain focus, because when you say open access, uh, that refers to a myriad of, of concepts and ideas, and some of them are very controversial and some of them are less controversial. Um, so certainly at KU, we always had to begin our discussions with we are talking about scholarly journal published peer reviewed articles published, not for profit. I mean, we had we had this long series of definitions. We're talking about an institutional repository, not open access journals, etc., etc. so that focus is very critical. You're going to need a period of education and essentially sussing out the the local community. If that's not done, uh, it'll also be a non-starter.

[14:03 - 15:17] Speaker 4: You know, we had, we we pondered the question of what if you just put on the faculty council or faculty senate agenda, uh, vote yes or no on this open access resolution. [indistinct chattering] And I'd love to try it, but [laughs] just to see what happened. You know, maybe you'd sneak it by in one of ten institutions and save yourself years of work. [audience laughing] Um, but maybe the best— the best little clause under point three is kind of a strategy, which is to get whatever faculty council, faculty senate, whatever faculty body attempts to make decisions in your institution, get it to, uh, recommend the task force to charge a task force or a committee or whatever they call them. Um, to explore this issue in the context of your institution and it— its current situation. And that has a huge advantage in that it is faculty driven. It has some sort of stamp of of officialness, but that'll go a long way. So that's kind of more than three points, but any questions?

[15:27 - 15:46] Participant 2: Um, in terms of having it faculty driven, I'm from the library. This is an important issue for me. I am a member of the faculty here, but how can I take my library hat off and put my faculty hat off, and speak to my faculty peers?

[15:47 - 16:51] Speaker 4: That's a, that's a point which I had never appreciated in my self-imposed world of isolation and ignorance at KU, obviously library, faculty or faculty, right? Well, in the eyes of a lot of regular faculty, library faculty are often perceived differently. And I, I think the answer to your question, without using expletives about those regular faculty that I disagree with strongly. I think the answer to your question is simple. You need that task force or that committee to be broadly based, including teaching faculty, library faculty a good distribution across whatever unit is considering the the policy. Regardless, you need that broad base and I think you need you need strong, strong advocates from the administration, from the libraries, and from the, you know, faculty. [chuckles]

[17:00 - 17:01] Speaker 3: Actually, we'll do this quicker.

[17:02 - 17:04] Man 3: [chairs sliding] Look, we're talking.

[17:04 - 18:45] Participant 3: So, um, [indistinct chatter] at Anchor, our experience was a little bit different in that we were able to pass an open access policy relatively quickly. Again, we're a single discipline institution. Um, we don't have faculty, but we have scientists who, you know, could give faculty a run for their money. What we did, what I did is look for a couple leaders inside the senior scientists. And I took them out to lunch, took them out for drinks, bought and breakfast and said, "Will you speak up at this meeting?" And I don't want to say use them as pawns, but, you know, they were [background laughter] they were the front people, they were the front people. So, you know, I guess every institution is different, but this is an institution where the library was able to take the leadership and the way we were able to do that. I absolutely agree. If this was perceived as coming from the library, well, what do we know? I mean, you know, we're we're just librarians, but as long as you got the, the, the thought leaders and the prestigious people and the people who publish a lot to to advocate for you, that in our case was very effective. The second thing we did is, when I stood up in front of our governance, in front of our board of trustees, in front of the National Science Foundation, because the NSF did have to approve our policy. I said, "Well, Harvard and MIT are doing it." And unlike Kansas, our people think that they're like Harvard and MIT. So, [audience laughter] I think it was, you know, it was a very, um, again, again, the same strategy that if you get people who are and I'm sure there's a psychological construct for this that has a special name, but, you know, if you get the if you get the big people to endorse it, you can you can move along pretty quickly in our case.

[18:49 - 19:09] Speaker 4: I, I think the point of having strong advocates, you know, people who are willing to go to the mat for an idea is really critical that that situation, I'll be really surprised if it would work in a more diverse unit. But, but you know, more power to you. That's wonderful.

[19:09 - 19:09] Participant 3: Do you see, uh, Harvard, you know, Harvard and MIT, they're flashing results in that.

[19:12 - 19:15] Speaker 4: And unless you're the University of Kansas, then why. [laughs]

[19:22 - 21:09] Speaker 3: Well, it's like a lot of things. You're not Harvard when you don't want to be Harvard, and you're like Harvard whenever you want to be like Harvard. I mean, isn't that true that we we use those things all the time. So, um, okay, a lot of really good themes, and I'm going to try to touch on some of them when I do mine. Um, so libraries and IT, uh, we had a really good

conversation around both the, the bringing together of the two units and why what's the purpose? And then also talking a little bit about the federally mandated data management programs. Um, our three big things, um, we pulled ourselves do, do these two components belong together or have a synergy, or have a common purpose? And the answer was yes, we do. We believe so. Um, and the demand is user driven. Again, we do our things. We have our disciplines. We have our things that that we're trying to take care of. But the reality is we're here to support the university. We're here to support learning, we're here to support researchers, students and everybody else. And they're just trying to get things done. And they don't understand the difference or need to deal with the difference of whether it's about library content or whether it's about using a technology to pull together a message. We need to stay focused on the user and that the user is trying to get things done. And that's our driver. And that ought to be what crystallizes and focuses our energy. Um, there is little unifying vision from the top sounded like from a lot of our places. The vision and the need is coming from the bottom up as opposed to from the top down. Um, and our question is, does that really matter? Does it matter where the vision and where the drive comes from, or just does it matter that there's something there that that is helping us work on, on getting to wherever we need to go? Um, we thought it was really important.

[21:09 - 22:53] Speaker 3: We need to find ways to have the groups work together on projects, on issues, on things, both so that they can develop understanding, they can develop the common languages. And so I'll throw in what we didn't talk about as much, but that we also bring in more of the faculty and more of the other sectors. It's about developing common language, common understanding, seeing where you actually connect. Um, and how and why. Um, so, and we need to focus on solutions, not just the problems, which again, it's obvious, but how many times do we fall into that trap where we we start to gripe about what's not going wrong and not staying as focused on how do we get to something else? Um, I think a big one really is we need to find ways to create projects and define the projects that bring the different groups together and figure out how to move forward. Um, so again, the notion of vision, we need to bring all of those people together to create, craft, think through, and find the vision for where all this is going. And so the other thing I'll bring up is that we all exist in somewhat unique ecosystems. I mean, so we're very much alike, but we're all also very different each institution, each academy has a somewhat different culture. And so you've got to pay attention to both how you navigate that local geography, but also tap into the bigger issues and, and the more universal themes and topics. So, questions? Okay, [chuckles] H.J..

[22:53 - 22:53] Speaker 2: Not good enough for the microphone.

[22:53 - 22:55] Speaker 3: No, no, no. You're not. [background laughter]

[22:55 - 22:56] Moderator 2: Here, you can have it.

[22:57 - 22:57] Speaker 2: The- [indistinct conversation]

[22:57 - 22:58] Moderator 2: You can have it, too.

[22:58 - 23:11] Speaker 2: All right, well, we'll do this in stereo. [laughs] No. Um, sort of I'll put down here. Uh, in relation to the, was it you who try to trick faculty into doing things by [background laughter] bribing them?

[23:12 - 23:12] Participant 3: Scientist.

[23:12 - 23:12] Speaker 2: Scientist.

[23:12 - 23:12] Participant 3: You?

[23:12 - 23:59] Speaker 2: Well, I'm also free from the free lunches. So, [laughs in the background] breakfast, at breakfast, I guess. Uh, I'm wondering if, you know, when you talk about the fact all these groups are different. And, you know, I certainly agree that the different areas of technology are different. Uh, I'm wondering if maybe when you're trying to convince the faculty groups to get involved with the open access and such, maybe should try to figure out who's the whole the low hanging fruit, which of the faculty may be more easy to convince, because then if you go to a department and say, gee, you know, all of the, all of the biologists have agreed to do this and they're going to improve their citations and the provost is really smiling about this, and then you go to another department, maybe you can leverage that somehow.

[23:59 - 24:14] Speaker 3: And I agree, and so Tom brought that up in his present, you know, and I think in general, you find you find even one person who champions or, or has bought into the idea or believes in it. You start to showcase them, you start to work with them and start to try to build your critical mass. I agree.

[24:14 - 24:26] Participant 4: And I guess, I guess I had a similar thought to that. And that's um, if you guys have ever read the book The Tipping Point, you can find a Maven of Paul Revere who really spearheads an effort and try to gain momentum that way.

[24:37 - 24:50] Participant 5: Yeah, I also think you'll find some maybe case studies here, and lessons learned. Like, Greg was able to present and some other projects that are already engaged and have been engaged in doing-

[24:50 - 24:50] Speaker 3: Yeah.

[24:50 - 24:56] Participant 5: Information management and would be willing to share and, you know, invite others to the sandbox.

[25:02 - 25:21] Speaker 3: I agree, and really a lot of it. It's not like none of this is going on. It's just we need to again, keep keep raising the visibility, the awareness, showcasing where it is happening, starting to use that to to create the examples and really start to build that momentum. Anything else on this one? Okay.

[25:23 - 26:46] Speaker 5: Okay, I feel like my topic is very different than the rest of yours, so bear with me. We talked about copyright in group six, and our statements are copyright is complex and confusing, and most people just aren't aware of what its limits are and what rights they have. So there was some discussion about people violating copyright all the time without really paying attention to it. And then, our second comment was, there are a number of threats attached to the sharing of information and data. Specifically, plagiarism is easier in electronic world. The stealing of ideas and being scooped. So you have your data set out there and other people see your data set and they might publish the great article, the great website, the great blog entry before you do. So there's that kind of threat with having the data that you gathered put out there. And then our our third comment is we are in very intrigued by the Creative Commons licensing system and are eager to learn more about it. But do take note, we've copyrighted trademarked. All rights reserved [gentle breathing] [audience laughs] in press. So, any comments? [indistinct chattering] Yeah?

[26:48 - 27:21] Participant 6: It just to say that, you know, you're talking about there are a number of threats attached to sharing information and data. I'm not sure that sharing them in these new ways is any more, I guess it made it easier for some of these things to happen. But speaking as someone who just recently had a project that I worked on, the complete idea was stolen and published by somebody who reviewed the paper for a conference at another university. I'm not sure that it's became a threat. I just think it's a little bit more of a threat than it was in the electronic world. That's all.

[27:23 - 27:57] Speaker 5: It's easier to steal the information. I mean, you actually had to read the article or attend the conference to see the report. The peer reviewed it to be there, how— how jolly. Um, [laughs] but, but now you have the raw data out there, and someone else could come up with a creative idea that you would have come up with two years later or whatever, but now someone else is published. So, I mean, all those things were stolen in the past all the time. I mean, that that that hasn't changed. What we're saying is in the electronic environment, it's that much easier.

[28:06 - 28:27] Speaker 3: Well, we'll bring Russ up and have him do a wrap up in a minute. But, um, before that, having walked through all six of these, any, um, any final thoughts? There are recurring theme that anybody sees or again, things that that, uh, you recognize after we've looked at all six of these. Nancy.

[28:33 - 28:57] Participant 2: The one thing I see is that there all of these are things that we need to think about deeply, and we need to make conscious choices and not be driven by technology. We need to be a step ahead of it, and forums such as this are a good start. [indistinct chatter]

[29:06 - 29:10] Speaker 3: Okay, well, we'll turn it over to Russ to have him try to summarize.

END TRANSCRIPTION