

2012 SAA Research Forum Poster Session Application

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Title: Trust What? Understanding users' trust in data repositories

Abstract

Over the years, archives and repositories have tried to understand how digital repositories can be trusted and have tried to build so-called “Trusted Digital Repositories (TDRs),” in which “trusted” information can be preserved. While these efforts have resulted in the development of general criteria for considering a repository to be trusted, it is unclear whether *users* of these repositories would accept them as “trusted.” Few studies have looked at the concept of trust from the user’s perspective, which is particularly significant as it is directly related to the fundamental mission of repositories—to serve particular user groups or designated communities and to meet (or exceed) the expectations or needs of these communities. This study attempts to investigate how users define and develop trust in digital repositories, particularly in data repositories. It investigates how users define “trust” regarding digital repositories; where trust comes from (e.g., from information, people, organization, or system); and which factors influence users to build and/or maintain trust. The poster will present preliminary results from interviews with 10 users of three major social science data repositories in the U.S. Users of the repositories were identified through a data citation tracking method and had published study results either in journals or conference papers using data sets from the repositories. By providing an in-depth understanding of the user’s perspective on trust, this study will broaden our understanding of TDRs and how repositories can meet users’ expectations of trustworthiness.