Giving research global reach: ResearchSpace@Auckland

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ResearchSpace@Auckland homepage

What is ResearchSpace?

A key part of the academic research process is publishing the results – 'getting it out there'. An institutional repository such as ResearchSpace@Auckland provides authors with a stable, secure channel for near-instantaneous worldwide dissemination of research. ResearchSpace@Auckland at the University of Auckland was initially developed under the umbrella of the Institutional Repositories Aotearoa (Ira) Project. The project between Auckland, Canterbury and Victoria Universities used DSpace Open Source Software and was funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). The project was completed in 2007. ResearchSpace is now a full production system with seamless Disaster Recovery ability, which allows authors to submit their work confident that it will be secure.

Key features of ResearchSpace:

•Authors submit their own content initially (self-submission), administrators check content and publish it online

•Most content is freely available to any user – use is not restricted to members of the institution or subscribers

•Durable & Permanent URLs: we use 'Handles'. e.g. http://hdl.handle.net/2292/1430. A handle does not have the institution's domain name in the URL, if the website is changed or moved, the URL will still go to the correct location.

•Preservation: creating digital files allows creation of a new print copy if necessary.

•Thesis files are in Portable Document Format (PDF), and the library has undertaken to keep the formats up to date, as technology may change in the future.

Where does the content come from?

ResearchSpace contains 'research outputs' from the University of Auckland's staff and students, including theses, papers and reports. From 2007 it is a requirement for all enrolling PhD students to submit a digital copy of their thesis upon completion.
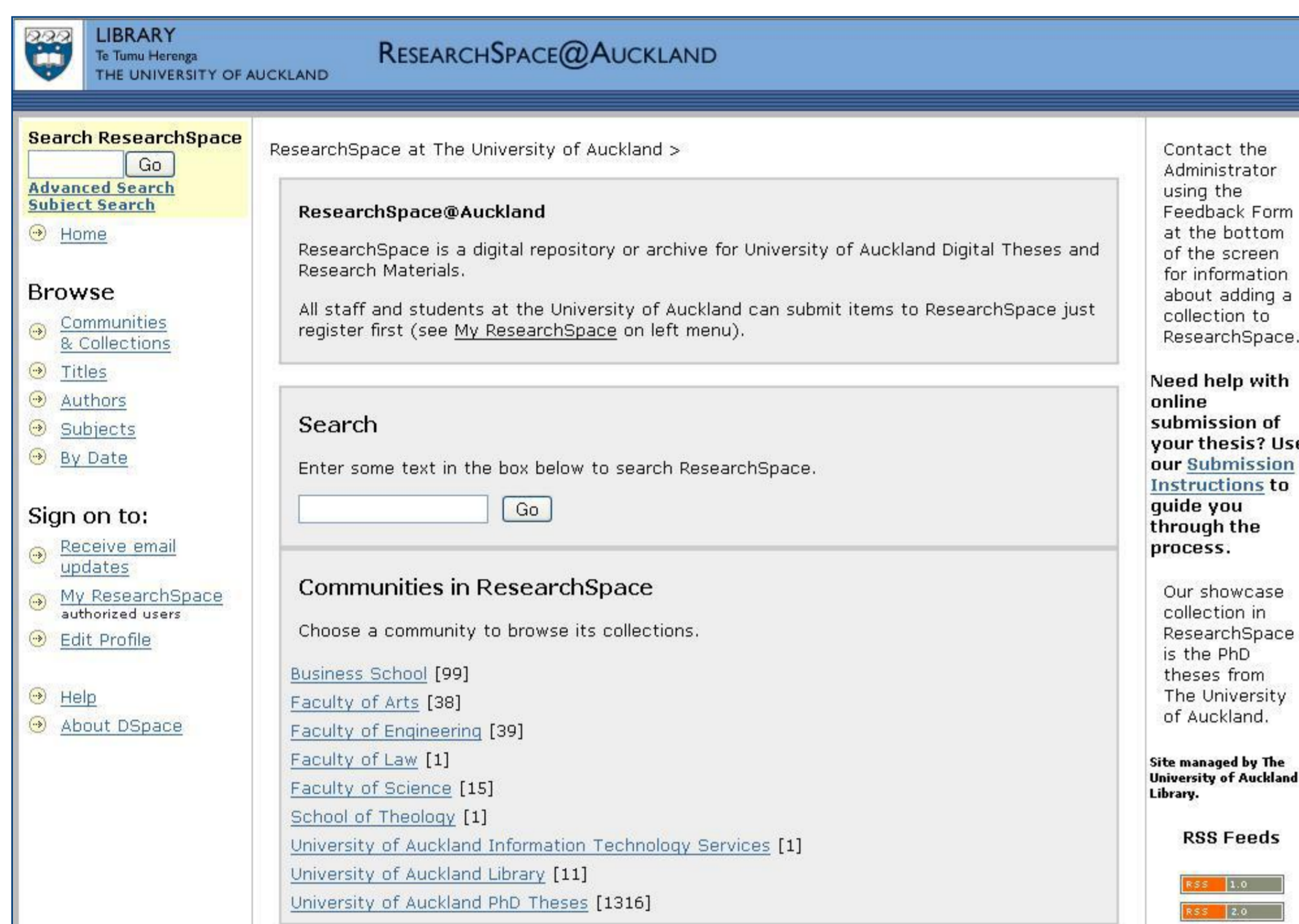
The PhD collection has grown from an initial 200 items at the beginning of 2007 to nearly 1700 items. Approx. 900 of these are open-access. This has been achieved via a retrospective digitization project for all PhD theses and a campaign to contact the authors for permission.

What has been important to the success of ResearchSpace@Auckland?

Content – there has been a focus on directing effort into populating the repository with content. The repository's appearance is very 'vanilla' – it is more or less 'out-of the box' as we have undertaken few customisations. This allows repository staff to focus on the core function of the repository: making content available. The success of the repository is very much dependant on usage – both by submitting authors and end users.

Workflow – the workflow process for newly submitted theses has been closely tied to the current workflows for the print theses. By integrating the digital thesis workflow into existing systems, which involves the Graduate Centre, Cataloguing and Acquisitions staff, the additional workload is spread across existing staff.

Awareness – the Graduate Centre advertises ResearchSpace to submitting PhD students at the time of submission of their print copies. Students are also shown how to format and submit their thesis digitally as part of the library's PhD teaching programme. Voluntary uptake of digital submission has been increasing, and looks set to increase further.

http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/