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My publication for everyone - legal, technical and professional questions

"If it's not on the Web, it does not exist at all, says the new adage. Universities, departments and researchers as well are judged by their "visibility". A measure of visibility is the citation index. It is determined by the quality and the number of the publications, and, most importantly, by the way how easily those publications are available.

It is not an easy task to increase the number of publications in a prestigious journal. It requires effort, capital, and time. Achieving a larger publicity for ongoing, finished but not yet accepted, or referred work can be done overnight. This larger publicity is also in the interest of the whole research community.

The need for visibility was recognized by the publishing houses. The price for both the printed and online versions of scientific papers skyrocketed; authors were threatened when they distributed their own work for free among colleagues. By now every researcher and manager knows about the legal issues, and who wants to have a legal affair with a huge firm. Unfortunately the new relaxation of the publishing houses' power is less well-known.

Self archiving is a widely accepted and legally clear procedure which can make all products of a researcher, or of an institution, freely available. Publishing houses interested in disseminating scientific works mainly agreed on some form of self archiving. Such famous firms as Elsevier, John Wiley, Kluwer, or Springer even let the author post the final, printed version of their work. For a full list see <http://romeo.eprints.org/publishers.html>

Self archiving is supported by several excellent software. Their installation and maintenance require minimal technical knowledge and skills. We will touch DSpace and Eprints as examples; and also speak about the legal rights and misconceptions.