Lighting up our ‘dark’ data – using Dropbox for collaborative research data projects

Yvette Wharton
Centre for eResearch, University of Auckland
@y_vettles
Overview

- problem
- pilot | our process
- feedback
- examples
- going forward
Who we are.
Centre for eResearch

Compute
Research Data Solutions
Visualisation
Research Partnerships
Enablement
Training
Advocacy
University of Auckland

11 faculties

6 campuses

42,000 students

~5000 researchers
The Now (Problem)
The problem – for researchers

siloed storage
How are researchers sharing info?

cloud services  usb drives  email  ?
The problem – institutional

Metadata?  Owner?

Sharing?  Value?

Security?  Insight Planning
Helping research move at the speed of thought, not limited by the speed of bureaucracy, and with greater integrity and impact.
Shedding light on dark research data – the pilot
Our process

Collect research information through our research hub
Our process

Collect research information

Invite to join Dropbox pilot

Feedback

Insights

Scripted group team folders
## Dropbox footprint – some numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data from all Dropbox @auckland.ac.nz domain users</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4620 Registered Dropbox Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.67 TB data stored</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data from pilot domain users in 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 Dropbox pilot user licenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~10 TB data stored</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known info about</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>191 Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Faculties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Institutional insights

Top File Types
UoA Pilot

- .tif
- .png
- .wav
- .m
- .jpg
- .f
- .txt
- .dcm
- .log
- .ndb

Projects per Faculty | Institute

Devices
University of Auckland Dropbox users are collaborating within New Zealand & across the globe.
Feedback themes | Use Cases

• Improved ease of collaboration
• Linkage to other tools (Slack, Trello, Office 365)
• Research Community use
• Improved workflows
• Ease of off-campus access
• Synchronisation/Smart Sync
• Dropbox papers
• Versioning
• Security - linkage to encryption
• Multiple types of devices
Challenges

- Research Groups vs Projects/Activities
- Folder Permissions inheritance on team folders
- Data Sovereignty
- Project Ethics

- Thanks Dropbox for listening
Next Steps
Questions
Yvette Wharton

Centre for eResearch | University of Auckland

v.wharton@auckland.ac.nz

@y_vettles
RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

RD Lifecycle