Need analysis

The needs analysis for Open Journal Systems (OJS) aims at a systematic exchange with the OJS actors at universities and scientific colleges in the German-speaking area. Your experience in publishing e-journals and dealing with OJS will be recorded and documented. This should help the OJS community to optimize the software for the German university publication landscape and to develop structures for the sustainable support of e-journal publications.

The evaluation is carried out via an online survey in German and English. On the one hand, responsible players are addressed in infrastructure facilities, such as university libraries or data centers, which act as hosting providers for OJS. On the other hand, the survey is addressed to scientists who run a journal with OJS and are involved eg as publishers, editors, authors or reviewers. Following the online survey, a [detailed evaluation and documentation of the results will](http://www.ojs-de.net/projektbeschreibung/bedarfsanalyse/Ergebnisse/index.html)follow .

# Results of the needs analysis

## **overview**

The "Online Survey on Open Journal Systems (OJS)" was part of the cooperation project "OJS-de.net - Sustainable OJS infrastructure for the electronic publication of scientific journals", funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). It reflects previous evaluations on OJS and was developed in consultation with PKP and with the expertise of the GESIS - Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences.

The Needs Assessment was a closed survey in which targeted OJS actors in German-speaking countries were invited to participate. Technically, it was set up with the open-source software LimeSurvey. There was both a German-language and an English-language version to adequately address the often international composition of the editorial teams.

## **The goal of the online survey**

The aim of the survey was firstly to get an overview of the use and application of OJS at German-speaking universities and research institutions, secondly to identify and analyze the needs of hosting providers and journal operators in the OJS software and, of course, to OJS actors at universities and research institutes To approach research institutions in order to build a network and a supportive community in German-speaking countries.

## **Target groups**

The focus was on the actors in connection with OJS journals, which are published at universities and other institutions in German-speaking countries. These were determined by a systematic search in advance, in which all three project partners acted under the auspices of the KIM Konstanz, and based on the CeDiS compiled list of OJS installations in the PKP Wiki. The total of 810 identified actors are in part several members of a magazine editorial or a hosting team, in some cases there were also personnel overlaps, ie the same editors work in different magazine teams. In total, 285 and thus 35% of the invited persons took part in the survey; Of these, 196 and thus 24% of the respondents answered in full.

The four target groups were the following:

1. Hosting providers, ie persons responsible for infrastructure hosting and maintaining OJS journals, such as university libraries or data centers.
2. Journal operators, ie scientists who run a journal with OJS and are directly involved as editors or editors in the editing process.
3. Authors, reviewers, advisory board members and readers of an OJS journal.
4. Other: here participants were offered the opportunity to leave only a comment to OJS.

## **Questions and method**

The questionnaire was structured differently according to the functions of the addressed focus groups. Subdivided into 32 superordinate thematic areas, the total of 73 main questions were divided into 388 sub-questions, whereby the individual target groups had to answer only a fraction of these questions. Hosting providers had a total of 47 questions to answer, magazine administrators 49 questions, reviewers / authors / advisory board members had 19 questions and participants who only wanted to leave a comment had 4 questions in total. The questions were thematically broad and related to the general satisfaction with the OJS software as well as to technical details such as the use of plug-ins or publication formats.

It was a quantitative questionnaire with closed, open and half-open questions, ie multiple-choice questions, the possibility to supplement them and free-text fields for more detailed answers and suggestions. 46 of the questions were required questions, the remaining 27 questions were mainly based on general personal information or free-text answers. As a result, the responses evaluated usually do not refer to all 285 participants and their answers. For some questions, the multiple choice option was offered.

# Evaluation of the online survey - an insight

## **Satisfaction with OJS in general**

The feedback from the hosting providers and magazine operators on the question "How satisfied are you with the OJS software in general?" Was positive. 94% of hosting providers and 85% of magazine publishers said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the open source software. 3% of the hosting providers and 9% of the magazine operators, however, stated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The reasons for this are due to the lack of responsive design and the complicated editorial channels, which will be adapted in the upcoming OJS 3.0 version.

## **Department of OJS Journals**

In German-speaking countries, OJS journals are predominantly published in the humanities (44%) and the economic and social sciences (30%). Natural and life sciences play a subordinate role. For the project "OJS-de.net", this means that the focus should be on interfaces and dissemination of the journals in the field of humanities, economics and social sciences. In particular, added value could be created for the natural and life sciences.

## **publication formats**

OJS articles are mostly available in PDF format (98%). Only 26% of magazine publishers reported publishing their articles in HTML format, 7% in EPub, 2% in XML format and another 2% in LaTex. Combined with the free text questions, where respondents were able to suggest suggestions for improvement, it became clear that the primary reason for the low use of formats such as HTML or EPub is that the OJS software does not provide a means of document conversion or editing and thus the effort to create other document formats is too high. For the project "OJS-de.net" in particular these feedbacks are helpful and flow into the further project planning. For example, IT staff at Heidelberg University Library are currently busy to develop such a document conversion and editing function for the new OJS 3.0 release. Also, IT developers at CeDiS, which were hired specifically for the project "OJS-de.net", are working in parallel on the professionalization and improvement of the software.

## **licenses**

It was surprising that 24% of magazine operators responded to the question "Under what license do you publish your articles" with "do not know". Another 21% do not use a specific license. 45% of respondents claim copyright and the majority (52%) use Creative Commons licenses, with the CC-BY license being most frequently listed here at 35%.

The fact that many magazine operators are uncertain about the use of licenses in the publication of articles reveals an area in which the project "OJS-de.net" can be active with education and information. The colleagues from CeDiS created a page on ["Notification of the allocation of CC licenses"](http://www.ojs-de.net/services/cc-lizenzen/index.html) and adapted the software accordingly. Here, not only general CC licenses are discussed, but also detailed descriptions of how they can be integrated and displayed in the OJS software.

## **Review process**

The fact that 90% of magazine publishers claim to publish their e-journal in Open Access was not surprising and confirmed the expectations of the project partners. 7% said they would publish their expenses with a moving wall. The quality of the e-journals is usually ensured by a review process, whereby here the publisher's review (60%) outweighs. 49% of the magazine operators also declared that they would use a double-blind peer review and 11% involved a scientific advisory board in the quality assurance of their e-journal.

## **Use of plug-ins**

Of 139 journal operators, 139 answered the question about using plug-ins: 62 do not know whether or which plug-ins they use (45%) and 9 do not use plug-ins (6%). Thus over half (51%) do not work with plug-ins or do not know what their concrete plug-ins are in this context. Widely used among the plug-ins are:

* Fast Submission Plug-in (25%),
* Reading tools (20%),
* Static pages (17%) and
* Report plug-in (17%).

60% of hosting providers offer their magazine operators additional plug-ins upon request. Of these, 88% obtain the plug-ins via PKP or its plug-in gallery. 13% program plug-ins themselves.

## **Contact point for technical questions**

For technical questions about OJS, the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) Forum is the one-stop-shop (74%). In addition, 41% of hosting providers turn to other IT developers and 39% to other hosting providers.

## **Communication between hosting providers and magazine operators**

Hosting providers and magazine operators communicate via multiple channels. In the foreground is the personal exchange via e-mail (85%), telephone (61%) or personal meeting (48%).

## **hosting provider**

The hosting providers are distributed as follows in the German publication landscape:

* 51% of surveyed hosting providers said they were from university libraries,
* 11% from data centers and
* 13% of faculties, institutes or chairs. The latter group thus sets up its OJS instance without the support of university infrastructure. As a rule, the hosting service is offered free of charge (68%).

# Documentation and publications

## **Documentation of all survey results**

Gehrlein, Sabine / Büttner, Alexandra / Clormann, Stefanie:  [Online Survey on Open Journal Systems (OJS). Needs analysis within the project "OJS-de.net"](http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-heidok-192994) . , 2015.

## **evaluation of results**

Gehrlein, Sabine / Büttner, Alexandra / Clormann, Stefanie: [Open Journal Systems in German-speaking countries. Results of the survey OJS-net.de](http://www.b-i-t-online.de/heft/2015-06-index.php) , in: bitonline 18 (6: 2015), S. 494-500.

Büttner, Alexandra: [Online survey on Open Journal Systems and the network OJS-de.net.](http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-thekeakt-251920)in: Theke aktuell 21 (2015), p. 20-24.

Büttner, Alexandra / Gehrlein, Sabine / Clormann, Stefanie: [Online Survey on Open Journal Systems in Germany and the Network OJS-de.net.](http://src-online.ca/index.php/src/article/view/240)In: Scholarly and Research Communication, 7 (1: 2016).