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Beyond the "Cool" factor: the Challenge of Making Altmetrics Indispensable

Welzenbach, Rebecca

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BEYOND THE “COOL!” FACTOR: THE CHALLENGE OF MAKING ALTERNATIVE METRICS INDISPENSABLE

Rebecca Welzenbach
Research Impact Librarian
University of Michigan Library
Altmetrics 6:AM October 9, 2019

THE KEEPER OF ALTMETRIC EXPLORER, 2015 - 2018 - PRESENT

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Altmetric and Altmetric Explorer for Institutions

What is Altmetric?

[Altmetric.com](#) is a tool created by the company [Digital Science](#) that searches the web for "mentions" of research outputs, such as journal articles or book chapters, to show how readers are engaging with scholarly publications online. Mentions can appear in social media, scholarly blogs, news outlets, Wikipedia, citation managers like Mendeley, etc. You may have seen Altmetric donuts, badges, and scores on your own published research or on other research outputs that you have encountered.

The color-coded Altmetric "donut" shows the Altmetric score of attention surrounded by colorful bands. Each stripe of color on the donut represents a different type of engagement. For example, light blue indicates Twitter, red indicates news, and yellow indicates blogs. If you hover over the donut, you'll see an abbreviated summary of engagement with the work.

Size: 254.4KB
Format: PDF



- Picked up by **9** news outlets
- Blogged by **2**
- Referenced in **1** policy sources
- Tweeted by **2**
- Referenced in **1** Wikipedia pages
- 634** readers on Mendeley

[See more details](#) | [Close this](#)

You can click on the donut to view the details page for that item and dig deeper into each instance of engagement. For some types of

THE THRILL FADES FAST
...OR DOES IT?

Nocturne in Black and Gold, the
Falling Rocket, 1875. James Abbott
McNeill Whistler, American,
1834-1903



OUTREACH AND FEEDBACK, 2018

- Cross-campus onsite training from Altmetric (February 2018)
- Library outreach & instruction:
 - College of Engineering
 - Enriching Scholarship conference
 - Institute for Health Innovation and Policy
 - Institute for Social Research
 - ICPSR
 - Life Sciences Institute
 - Michigan Publishing
 - National Council on Institutional Diversity, Research Data Services
 - School for Environment And Sustainability
 - Social Sciences Librarians
 - Taubman Health Sciences Library Informationists

“Unfortunately we haven't been able to incorporate its use as I would have liked, but we recently brought in an intern who I hope can help us in building out our community and the use of these resources more!”

“I look forward to spending the remainder of the year further exploring the tool and implementing into our tool chest.”

“I can say there are plans to try to use the badges, perhaps in tandem with some other services, to highlight research pertaining to news content we might produce. Additionally I think we're (or I am) ruminating on how we might use the API itself to pull and display information.”

USAGE & ENGAGEMENT, THROUGH JANUARY 2019

Through mid January of 2019, there were 1,752 sessions of use w/ Altmetric EFI

- 421 (24% of total sessions) came from anonymous users
- 1,331 (76% of total sessions) came from logged in users.
 - 77% of usage from top 10 users.
 - 23% comprised of 81 additional users
 - ~70% of users logged in fewer than five times

Takeaway: a few power users, along with a number of folks who have been exposed, but not engaged deeply

NB: this data dates back to the first usage of Altmetric Explorer by anyone with a umich email address, which predates our 2018 pilot of Explorer for Institutions

APRIL 1, 2019 - PRESENT : A NEW ERA IN USAGE DATA

10/4/2



Usage Report for University of Michigan

Select a timeframe:

Jul 1, 2019 - Sep 30, 2019

Please note that data are only accurate as of 1 April 2019.

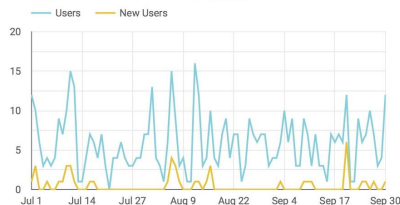
Explorer users in the selected timeframe

Users
165

± 1.2%

New Users
55

± 34.1%



Top Explorer pages visited

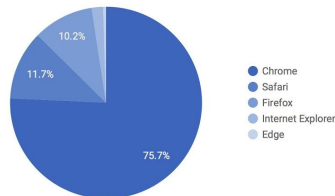
Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
1. www.altmetric.com/explorer/mentions?author...	924	600
2. www.altmetric.com/explorer/saved_searches	321	77
3. www.altmetric.com/explorer/highlights	288	181
4. www.altmetric.com/explorer/outputs	131	94
5. www.altmetric.com/explorer/outputs?publishe...	88	6
6. www.altmetric.com/explorer/highlights?author...	80	64
7. www.altmetric.com/explorer/outputs?publishe...	79	24
8. www.altmetric.com/explorer/mentions?journal...	56	48
9. www.altmetric.com/explorer/highlights?journal...	55	46
... www.altmetric.com/explorer/institution/people	55	37

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User Type	Users	Pageviews	Avg. Session Duration
1. Returning Visitor	97	4,481	00:06:00
2. New Visitor	89	567	00:07:16

1 - 2 / 2 < >

Browsers used to access Explorer



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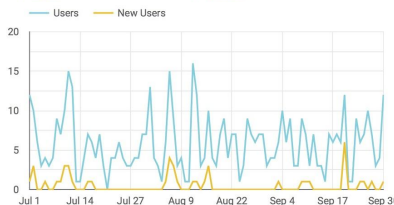
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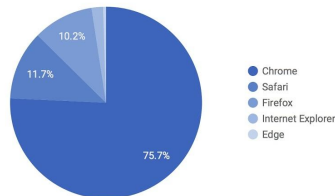
Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
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4. www.altmetric.com/explorer/outputs	131	94
5. www.altmetric.com/explorer/outputs?publishe...	88	6
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Browsers used to access Explorer

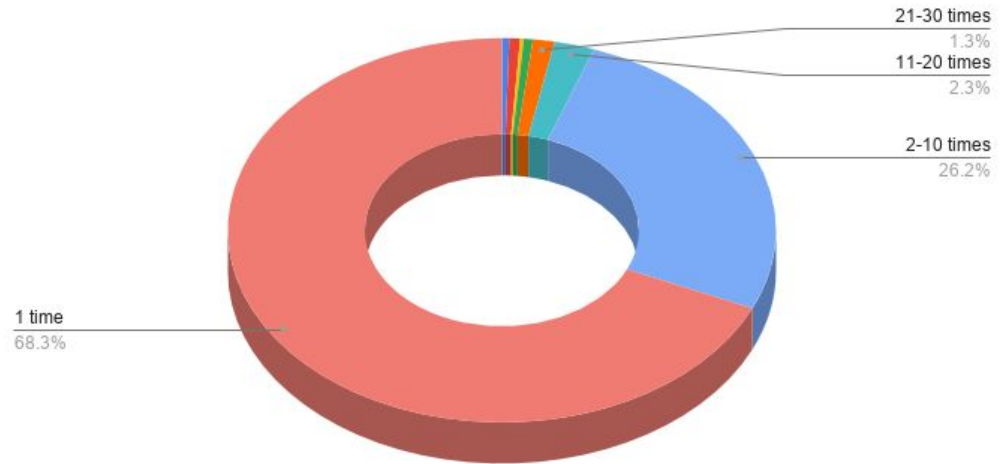


WHICH ALTMETRIC EXPLORER PAGES DRAW THE MOST ATTENTION?

From July 1 - September 30, 2019:

- 4 distinct pages visited >100 times:
 - An outlier individual author
 - Saved Search page (!!)
 - All highlights & All outputs (e.g., browsing behavior)
- 25 distinct pages were visited 21-99 times
 - Single author, single journal, single publisher
 - Browse by author/Browse by department
 - One topical keyword search
- 268 distinct pages (~28%) viewed 3-20 times, suggesting weekly or monthly monitoring
- 641 distinct pages (~68%) of pages were viewed only once
- **Observation: 116 pages viewed 3 times, but NO pages viewed twice!**

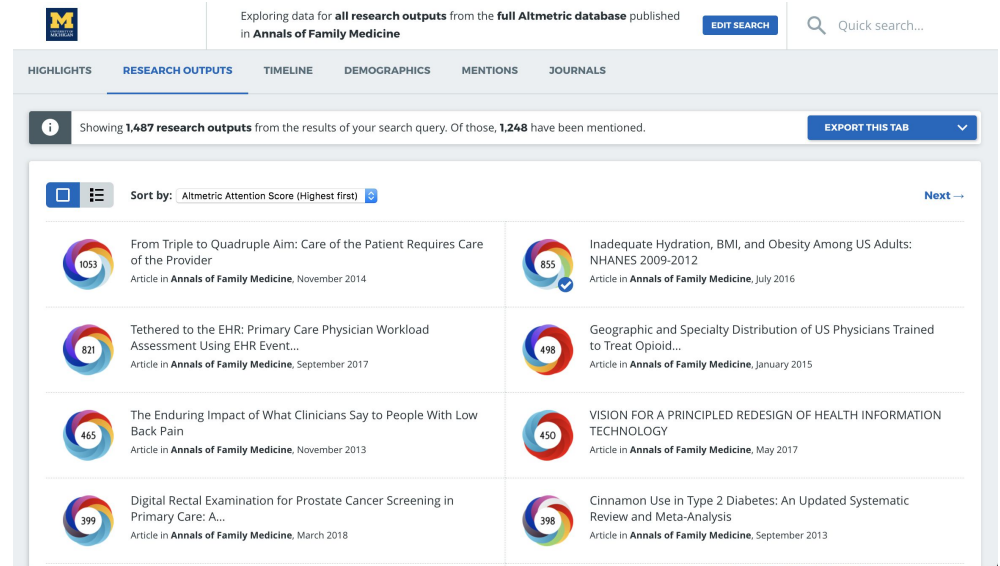
Visits to distinct Altmetric Explorer Pages, July 1- September 30, 2019



WHAT'S IN THE "3-20 VIEWS" RANGE?

From July 1 - September 30, 2019:

- Activity dominated by known power users:
 - Annals of Family Medicine
 - Michigan Publishing
 - Institute of Health Policy and Innovation
- The most consistent activity is monitoring activity related to known individuals or research outputs--or custom-built groups
- Variations on the same page arrived at by different means
- Keyword and Field of Research searches nearly all one-offs. Just a few searches repeated.



HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE SUSTAINED, REGULAR USAGE?

Signals of integration into regular workflows(?):

- Consistent behavior over time: the most popular pages viewed are visited steadily over many weeks--not just a few big spikes.
- The “saved searches” page one of the most frequently visited --people are setting up searches and returning to them
- Do return visits to a an Altmetric details page suggest an email alert on?
- Six & three were common frequencies--signal of a monthly or bi-weekly check?

What (else) we'd like to know, but can't tell from this usage report:

- Are people visiting shareable report links?
- Are people incorporating the API into web pages?
- What about embeddable badges--what role do they play?

OK. SO WHAT NOW?

- Analyze the data in more detail to answer some additional questions
- Integrate with data about Altmetric usage that didn't happen through the Explorer interface
- Identify some of the major actors and reach out to them
- Campaign/ recommendation for continued support

Detroit Industry, North Wall, 1932-33, Diego Rivera (1886-1957)

