
Openwashing in Open Spaces: A Review of the Literature

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Openwashing background



Openwashing was first defined by Michelle Thorne in 2009 as “spin[ning] a product or company as open, although it is not.”

Openwashing is also defined as:

- “dubious vendor claims about open”
- “the act of appropriating the open signifier while discounting or rejecting the core principles of the open...movement” (Moe, 2015, p. 351)

Open means


- content must be free to access
 - some rights and permissions typically reserved by copyright must be transferred to the user
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Calling out an act of openwashing signals that despite claims suggesting otherwise, a product, service, or company does not fulfill the basic requirements to be defined as open.

Openwashing examples

- Open resources within proprietary systems
 - Free ≠ Open
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Greenwashing --> Openwashing



Greenwashing is defined as “dubious claims about a product’s greenness, naturalness, or eco-friendliness”
(Weller, 2013)

Greenwashing classifications

- “7 sins of greenwashing” (Terrachoice, 2007)
- Carlson et al’s (1993) two typologies of green claims
- Contreras-Pacheco and Claasen (2020)

From Contreras-Pacheco and Claasen

Dirty business: belonging to an inherently unsustainable business, but promoting sustainable practices or products.

From Contreras-Pacheco and Claasen

Ad bluster: diverting attention from sustainable issues through advertising that exaggerates achievements or presents programs that are not related to the main sustainability concern.

Frameworks for openwashing?

Literature review



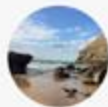
Elena Giglia

@egiglia



#osc2022 Selinger beware of **#openwashing** VS **#openaccess** - publishers are increasingly linking access to other services and data analytics selling, binding more and more institutions to a single provider

6:26 AM · Mar 9, 2022 · Twitter Web App



Jenny Duckworth @jennyduckworth9 · Dec 17, 2019



I'm trying to understand 'Bronze' Open Access. Is this always down to the publisher? Would the author know if their paper has been made Bronze OA and would they have any control over this? Thanks @eam0 @researchremix #OA



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Eamon Costello

@eam0



Replying to @jennyduckworth9 and @researchremix

Could depend on the fine-print of agreement you sign with the publisher. Ultimately they own the copyright and can make the article "free", on a temporary basis, to drive citations/web SEO to the journal. The terms #openwashing #fauxpenaccess and #peekabooaccess spring to mind

8:08 AM · Dec 17, 2019 · Twitter Web App

Key Terms

Openwashing

“Open washing”

Fauxpen

Openwashing by discipline

- Information Technology
- Education
- LIS
- Management & Organizational Studies
- Science

Marketing Tactics

- Co-opting the language of open
 - Open = Good
 - Freemium
 - Openwrapping
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Transparency

“...a mismatch between how the public expects information to be shared, and how an organization actually makes information available to the public” (Heimstadt, 2017)

Relevance for academic librarians

Springer Nature supports gold OA as the simplest, most open, and most sustainable route to OA and to open science and research. Unlike green OA self-archiving of accepted manuscripts (AM), gold OA provides immediate access to the trusted, enhanced, and publisher-maintained version of record (VOR), and is not reliant on the continued existence of journal subscriptions.

Implications for academic librarians

- Supporting researchers
- Working and signing deals with publishers and vendors
- Supporting institutional open access policies and initiatives

In summary



Does “open” mean “made public”?
Does “open” mean shared? Does
“open” mean “accessible”? Accessible
how? ... Does “open” mean
transparent? Does “open” mean
“open-minded”? “Open” to new ideas
and to intellectual exchange? Open to
interpretation? ...” (Watters, 2014)

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Questions?

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