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Scholarly Communications & Data Management Tip Sheet: Readme.txt Files

Ellie Dworak
Boise State University

Albertsons Library Research Data Management Team

README.TXT FILES

Readme.txt files are a common type of study-level documentation.

“Study-level documentation for a data collection or dataset provides high-level information on the research context and design, the data collection methods used, any data preparations & manipulations & summaries of findings based on the data.”

-[Managing & Sharing Research Data: A Guide to Good Practice \(Corti, et al., 2014\)](#)

What types of information does study-level documentation include?

- General overview information: title, creator, summary, date.
- Content description: names of specific files, file formats, & software used.
- Data attributes: specific information that will help someone understand the content of the data & how it was collected or generated.
- Identifier & rights information: related DOIs, funder statements, rights statements.

EXAMPLE



2019 Library Survey Dataset Readme File July 2020, Ellie Dworak

ABOUT

This is a readme.txt file for the 2019 Library Survey dataset. It contains background information as well as information about file structure, content, and permissions.

FILE STRUCTURE

2019 LIBRARY SURVEY ANALYSIS

This directory contains subdirectories which correlate to the groups with whom the content can be shared. The subdirectories include:

- /Library Leadership Team**
- /Library Staff**
- /Public**
- /University Administrators**

Each of these directories is described in further detail below.

/LIBRARY LEADERSHIP TEAM/

These are files to be shared with members of the Library Leadership Team, which is comprised of library employees with administrative roles.

For more information and to learn about how the Library's Research Data Management Team can help, visit: <https://www.boisestate.edu/library/research-support/data/read-me>