



Why and how of indexing

Nick Reddan
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What I will cover

- Why do we want to create indexes?
- Types of indexes
- Indexes in Microsoft Word
- Indexing a PDF file
- Indexing a manuscript



Why do we want to create indexes?

- Indexes are finding aids that direct us to the relevant part of the document
- They make the document more accessible to the reader of the index
- The longer the document the more important an index is
- While there is some skill in putting together an index the technology is not difficult
- Pre-computers we used index cards to construct an index



Types of indexes

- Today I will discuss two types of index
 - in document index like found in good books
 - external database index



Indexes in Microsoft Word

- Like all modern word-processors Microsoft Word has extensive indexing capabilities
- Though there are some issues
 - [Troubleshooting Those Horrible Microsoft Word Index Problems](#)
- Indexing names is tricky. We need to change the order of the name in the index so that John Smith and Jeremy Smith appear close to each other in the index
- I have some macros to make this process quick and easy
- https://nickreddan.net/tools/index_tools.html



Indexing a PDF file

- PDF files produced from documents are relatively easy to index as an external index
- Each quarter I index the Ancestral Searcher using a macro workbook



Indexing a manuscript

- Indexing a manuscript is similar to indexing a PDF file only you have to type in most of the information
- I have my [Registry of Deeds Index Project Ireland](#) nearly 280,000 index records
- Recently I constructed an index for a census of Carrick-on-Suir in Ireland which has just under 11,000 records



Conclusion

- Constructing for or adding an index to a document is not difficult
- If you are producing a document of more than a few pages you should include an index
- There are an enormous number of manuscripts that need indexing
- It would be great if more people contributed to indexing