The Scholarly Kitchen

AUTHORS, ECONOMICS, HOUSEKEEPING, MARKETING, READING, SOCIAL ROLE, TOOLS, WORLD OF TOMORROW


POSTED BY KENT ANDERSON · OCT 21, 2014 · 7 COMMENTS

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Back in the summer of 2012, I wrote a post outlining 60 things journal publishers do (with many of these applying to publishers of books and other scholarly formats, as well). The post was written because journal publishers have been under pressure to prove that they add value beyond managing peer-review and doing some basic copy editing and formatting. Often, authors are the ones asserting that journal publishers do so little, which is understandable, as authors only experience a small part of the journal publishing process, and care about the editing and formatting bits the most, making those the most memorable.

A recent survey of authors by the Nature Publishing Group suggests that journal reputation, relevance to the discipline, quality of peer review, and impact factor are the four items driving most of their decision-making about where to submit. This helps put some items listed below into perspective — branding, reputation management, peer review management, and training of editors and reviewers are likely more important to authors, at least. However, some — such as running at a surplus — is fundamental.

Since the publication of the original list, comments on that post, Alice Meadows’ wise and insightful expansion of the list, and a “Stick to Your Ribs” recapitulation of the post and its attendant comments all added items to consider. Other posts I and others have written since then have also helped to expand the list. Last year, the list expanded to 73 items. This year, we move to a list of 82 items in total.

All new items are marked with a [NEW] flag, and expanded or edited items are marked with [ENHANCED]. I have dropped the cycling analogy of “Terrain” to represent difficulty and qualify it a bit, since the list is long and the analogy tortured. In its place, I have added “Difficulty” and “Duration” to express some of the qualitative aspects.

1. Audience/field detection and cultivation. [ENHANCED] This is why you start a journal — there’s a new field emerging, a field splintering, or a field growing beyond the outputs currently available. Detecting and cultivating these forks and leaps in scientific progress is what a good publisher does. It’s not just about new audiences, but new audience needs within fields. In addition, publishers can create fields of study that weren’t apparent to the practitioners until disparate research outputs were pulled together into a salient journal property. Finally, with the emergence of general OA journals,
publishers can start journals to capture the marginal increase in research outputs across many specialties at once. So, this is many things, but for the sake of economy, we’ll count it as one thing. Expense level: $-$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Variable.

2. Journal launch and registration (ISSN and PubMed, for example). [ENHANCED] A small but detailed job, with follow-up being important. Both PubMed and MEDLINE are proving more labyrinthine and unpredictable than ever, requiring more time and more iterations even for top publishers. Fortunately, ISSNs can be registered online now. Expense level: $. Difficulty: More difficult than ever. Duration: Longer than it used to take.

3. Create and establish a viable brand (including filing, protecting, and maintaining trademarks). This is a step many take for granted, but it’s potentially expensive and time-consuming. First, what is your brand? How do you decide? Some use consultants, some use internal brainstorming, some use individual inspiration. Once you have an idea, you have to express it visually. If you want to protect it, you have to register trademarks in many markets, and renew them every so often. The initial registration is usually the most time-consuming part. Failure to do so may limit your ability to own your brand. Defending a trademark is part of the deal. Expense level: $$. Difficulty: Hard. Duration: Continuous.

4. Make money and remain a constant in the system of scholarly output. [ENHANCED] A fundamental goal for any business, it seems even more important for a system based on subtle signaling of quality and prestige for the brands and markers in that system to remain strong for as long as possible. This requires them to make enough money to remain in business while doing these other things, and that means making a profit, surplus, or gain sufficient to cover downturns, major technology transitions, field expansions, and parent organization (society or university) downturns. Believe it or not, but making money matters even for non-profit publishers. Expense level: $$. Difficulty: Hard. Duration: Continuous.

5. Plan and create strategies for the future. A famous joke is that the second book Gutenberg printed was entitled, “Now What? The End of Publishing is Nigh.” Publishers are famous worriers, and for good reason. Content has long been scarce, technological change is a constant, and risk is our shadow. Now more than ever perhaps, planning for the future is vital to survival. Expense: $$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Variable.

6. Establish, cultivate, and maintain a good reputation (this is vital to attracting papers and conveying prestige to authors). A brand is a brand, but a reputation is even more important. You might say that Nature and Science are equivalent brands in some ways, but to many, they have slightly nuanced reputations. Reputations diverge significantly in some fields, and can take a hit before brands will. Keeping your reputation requires a lot of good management throughout the organization. Expense level: $$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Continuous.

7. Initial funding (3-5 years typically before break-even, and even longer before payback). This is where risk becomes real — expenditures are made, financial projections activated, and staff hired. Without this stage, there is no new publishing initiative or journal. Expense level: $$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

8. Establish and monitor infrastructure systems and contracts, managing these ongoing. Establishing these systems involves a lot of choices, and is often repeated as the years go by. Expense level: $$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Ongoing.

9. Solicitation of materials. How do you get those first papers? This is often the responsibility of a thought leader or a set of them. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Short.

10. Rejection of submissions (and in some cases multiple rejections). Some of the first papers will be rejected, and if you’re successful, you’ll attract more papers than you can use, papers that aren’t appropriate, and papers of low quality. These have to be rejected, sometimes more than once.
Communications with authors, a fair system to determine what makes it through, and ways to know what you’ve seen before are all important. Expense: $-$$$.
Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Constant.

11. **Acceptance of submissions.** Luckily, some submissions are really good, and they deserve more attention. That’s when a lot more work starts. But notice how much has gone on before even the first paper is accepted. Expense: $ (act of acceptance only). Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Ongoing.

12. **Tracking of submissions throughout.** [ENHANCED] This bears on the infrastructure, which is becoming more complex at the submission level, with more complex submission requirements. But systems and technologies aren’t enough. Authors need a lot of handholding, materials can spring surprises on you, new requests from editors can come in, and so forth. Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Endless.

13. **Tracking changes in the authorship environment.** In many fields, rules around authorship requirements, funding disclosures, technical requirements, and funder requirements can change, and authors often don’t know this has occurred. Publishers have to keep track of these changes so they can provide useful advice and plan for the implications. This includes keeping authors compliant with funder mandates and ensuring domain normalization through compliance with broader standards. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Sporadic.

14. **Plagiarism detection.** A new activity thanks to new tools and expectations, comparing manuscripts using plagiarism detection software often ends with steps involving human judgment. Other roles have included figure manipulation detection initiatives created and propagated by publishers. Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Usually sporadic.

15. **Copyright registration and protection.** [ENHANCED] While many publishers allow licenses to suffice, most still require copyright transfer. This is a highly valuable service for authors, I believe, as it alleviates them of monitoring something that loses its value to them once published and gives it to a trusted partner to monitor and protect on their behalf. *Surveys seem to bear this out.* Expense: $$. Difficulty: Easy (registration) to difficult (protection). Duration: Ongoing.

16. **Recruitment and retention of editors and reviewers.** Editors and reviewers don’t grown on trees. They are usually busy people with a lot of demands on their time and professional options. How do you get them to head up a journal or provide expert review of submitted manuscripts? Expense: $-$$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

17. **Care and feeding of reviewers.** A list of reviewers isn’t enough. They need to be acknowledged, communicated with, helped, and supported. Publishers are good at this, or try to be. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Consistent.

18. **Training of peer reviewers.** In addition to caring and feeding, peer reviewers have to be trained. They don’t arrive knowing how to use the systems, either technical or categorical, and they often deviate from one another in unhelpful ways within both systems. Expense: $$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

19. **Manage statistical reviewers and reviews.** This varies by domain. Some don’t use statistical reviewers, especially when direct observations are possible. Others, like medicine and public health, use them all the time. They are often more integral than peer reviewers, and have more decision-making authority. Expense: $$$$. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Ongoing.

20. **Manage technical reviewers and reviews.** See above.

21. **Training of editors.** It may be surprising, but a subject-matter expert needs to learn how to be a good editor. This comes naturally enough to some, but others struggle with it, and a few never quite get it. Staff provide a lot of training and monitoring, and this is an area of some confidentiality as to what actually goes on. After all, nobody wants to lose face. Expense: $$-$$$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.
22. **Editorial meetings.** Another level of editorial support, this often involves meetings that include selected high-level reviewers, a tier of editors, statisticians or technical reviewers, and editors. Staff have to plan, run, and manage these, along with editorial leaders. *Expense: $-$$$$*. *Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.*

23. **Management of peer review process.** The peer review process isn’t static. New elements come in — like new disclosure rules, new grading or evaluation approaches, and new media forms. How these are integrated matters a good deal, and it takes work. *Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Duration: Constant.*

24. **Conflicts of interest and disclosures.** As noted above, conflicts of interest and disclosures are becoming more important in many fields (and should be very important in most). Keeping current with the state of the art, collecting and organizing the forms from dozens of authors, matching them with manuscripts, and following up with reluctant or forgetful authors all requires a lot of work. *Expense: $. Difficulty: Variable. Duration: Constant.*

25. **Implement and enforce editorial policies and procedures.** [NEW] There is an increasingly long list of editorial policies too implement and enforce, which has led to much longer and more convoluted instructions to authors. Enforcing these for each manuscript is hard work and requires diligent, trained, experienced staff. These often need to be revisited frequently, and instructions to authors modified regularly. *Expense: $. Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Constant.*

26. **Author attestations.** Scandals around fake or shadow authorship have made it necessary to get authors to attest that they indeed wrote, and were in a position to control the data and write freely, the paper submitted under their name. With growing author lists, this can involve a lot of attestations for the average paper. *Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.*

27. **Dealing with authorship problems.** Authors get things wrong. Authors make mistakes. Authors commit fraud. Editors and publishers deal with allegations, try to understand their veracity, collaborate on what to do if claims have merit, and then implement a response — perhaps a retraction, perhaps an expression of concern, perhaps letters to the editor. In extreme cases, authors can be banned from publishing for a period of time, and the publisher has to keep track of these bans. *Expense: $-$$$$*. *Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Sporadic.*

28. **Editing of content.** This is the one everyone is familiar with, but it’s also a complex one with a lot of variability possible. Some editing is cursory and done by outsourced editors with little domain expertise who just apply style guides. Some editing is intensive, done by lay editors with the training and experience to really push authors to be clear and precise, catching errors peer review and authors both failed to identify. *Expense: $-$$$$*. *Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Constant.*

29. **Illustration.** Some high-end journals provide illustration staff to authors of selected papers, particularly review articles or review journals. Some improve the basic illustrations authors provide, for the sake of clarity and consistency. *Expense: $$$*. *Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Ongoing.*

30. **Art handling.** Authors don’t always follow instructions, sometimes submit the wrong figures, sometimes submit too many figures, or need to supply new figures after review and editing have uncovered ways to improve their materials. *Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.*


32. **Layout and composition.** Whether the journal in question is still printed, the PDF is still in high demand, and typesetting and layout still occur. Luckily, computers make this relatively easy, but it’s not automatic. Figure-sizing, pagination, and other factors demand knowledgeable human intervention and skills. *Expense: $$-$$$*. *Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.*

33. **Design print and various online publication versions.** [NEW] Design for journals has exploded as an issue, with print designs revisited in light of online trends, online designs at the home page and
article level in flux, and mobile/tablet/social designs all needing attention. Keeping these complementary and coordinated takes a lot of work, not to mention the creative process behind the designs. Finally, some journals design each issue in print and online to some degree, to improve user experience. **Expense: $$$-$$$$**. **Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic to ongoing.**

34. **XML generation and DTD migration.** Now, in addition to making pages, publishers spit out XML, and track DTD migrations as they occur. DTD migrations can be minor (new elements to reflect a change somewhere in the pipeline) or extreme (a new DTD requirement, like the NLM DTD was). **Expense: $-$$$$**. **Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Ongoing (generation) and sporadic (migration).**

35. **Format migrations.** Just in the past two decades, we’ve moved from SGML to XML to NLM DTD and now to JATS. Flipping your content from one to the other is not a trivial exercise, and it’s not cheap. It takes planning, money, and management to do it right. Content stores are becoming larger, as well. **Expense: $$$-$$$$**. **Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Longer than you think.**

36. **Tagging.** To generate good metadata, articles and elements are often tagged using either semantic, custom taxonomies, or both. Sometimes, tagging is manual, sometimes automated, and sometimes a little of both. But it doesn’t happen all by itself. And it isn’t maintained, enhanced, expanded, migrated, or corrected all by itself, either. **Expense: $-$$$**. **Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.**

37. **DOI registration.** A minor task usually, and easily accomplished. But a task. **Expense: *$. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Ongoing.**

38. **Search engine optimization.** Ah, Google, how you vex us! The black magic of SEO can drain teams and budgets, all to deal with the swamp light of search. But authors want their papers to be found. **Expense: $$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.**

39. **Integrate and track metrics and, increasingly, altmetrics.** The Internet throws off data, and now publishers are running more data-intensive businesses. In addition, these data are shared with more constituencies, from librarians (COUNTER reports) to authors (usage metrics and altmetrics). **Expense: $$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Ongoing.**

40. **Rapid publication practices.** More common than ever, most journals have a custom path for rapid publication. This often involves special staff and processes. **Expense: $$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.**

41. **Publication.** Ah, at last, we’re published! This involves more now than ever (the next few steps at least). **Expense: $$$$. Difficulty: In total, difficult. Duration: Ongoing.**

42. **Printing.** Yes, many journals still print, and it’s not getting less complicated, as presses, paper mills, and mailing facilities adjust to a shrinking print world. **Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.**

43. **Physical distribution.** Mailing is more complex in some ways, because the mail streams are less robust. And reduced print runs have made postal expenses lumpy. **Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.**

44. **Media relations and publicity.** Press coverage drives awareness, and important authors of important studies expect to be in the mediasphere. Also, if there’s a scandal, you’d better know who to call and what to say. **Expense: $$. Difficulty: Easy to excruciating. Duration: Sporadic.**

45. **Social media distribution.** [ENHANCED] Twitter and Facebook have created a new alerting expectation and outlet. YouTube is increasingly valuable. More editorial and marketing time is being spent on these outlets now. **Expense: $$. Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Duration: Ongoing.**

46. **Depositing content and data.** [NEW] Downstream deposit of articles and data to help authors comply with funder requirements or community norms is a growing function of publishers, who are responsible for the majority of compliance overall. Initiatives like GenBank and others wouldn’t be nearly as robust if publishers were not requiring authors to deposit data as part of the publication process or, in some cases, providing deposit services on behalf of authors. Requires setup and
monitoring of related production systems and workflows, and ongoing management, as well as occasional interventions when things go off the rails. Expense: $-$$. Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Duration: Ongoing.

47. Third-party licensing and negotiation. Users aren’t the only ones who want the content, and your direct audience is not the only audience. Some companies want to include the content in their offerings, or try to sell the content into adjacent markets. Negotiating and managing these deals and relationships takes time. Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

48. On-site hosting and archiving. Hosting platforms can be expensive because they support many of the functions above. Archiving is a new expectation that comes with the digital age, and one that is not trivial or simple to do well. However, solutions provided by the likes of CLOCKSS and Portico certainly help. Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

49. Platform upgrades and migrations. Ah, the fun of either upgrading your platform or moving to another provider. It’s a lot of work, and the fear of downtime makes it a delicate task. Expense: $$$$$$. Difficulty: Hair-raising. Duration: Longer than you think.

50. Native search engine improvements. [NEW] A bane to every journal web site, the native search engine is an ongoing source of strife, as users, editors, authors, and others constantly find “problems” and report them, expecting easy fixes. The variability of the underlying content combined with the variability of user search practices makes this a difficult area to resolve. Expense: $-$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

51. Journals packaging and sales. [NEW] Increasingly, journals are sold in bundles or as database packages, at least to certain customer segments (institutions, corporations). Publishers have to understand the sales process and approach, package and price their offerings to match, and conduct and complete sales. Database offerings are distinctly more complex to create. Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Variable.

52. Comment moderation. Sure, nobody comments on articles — until they do. Then what? The publisher has to staff for it and establish policies around it. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Sporadic.

53. Implement and manage interlinking services. With the Web, linking became a new expectation, and publishers had to work with vendors to implement linking options at various points in their content sets and across their service offerings. These links need to be reevaluated periodically, and some of the data they throw off tracked. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Sporadic.

54. Supplement proposals. Some journals allow supplements. Dealing with proposals alone is a chore. Publishing supplements delves into many of the steps that precede and follow. But because these can come from core authors, they have to be handled delicately. Expense: $. Difficulty: Political. Duration: Sporadic.

55. Managing or implementing CE/CME/CLE or other educational offerings. [NEW] Many journals have integrated or related educational offerings, either in the health, medicine, or legal space. Others support less formal certification courses. Developing, implementing, and managing these programs can be involved and requires a lot of meticulous work and interactions with editors and oversight bodies. Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Ongoing, with periods of intense effort.

56. Analytics and abuse monitoring. Is your site under attack? Has someone stolen a paper and reversed its meaning on a commercial site? A good publisher watches for these things, and has a network that will tremble when there’s a problem. And then there are the more mundane analytics editors and business units need. Expense: $$-$$$$$. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

57. Managing and protecting financial records. Yes, publishers get hacked, and have to create firewalls, handle credit card transactions, maintain payroll records, and so forth. Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Constant.
58. **Managing and protecting subscriber records.** If you have subscribers, you have to keep their records from prying eyes, or risk violating your privacy policy. Expense: $. Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Ongoing.

59. **Managing and protecting editorial records.** Peer reviews are confidential. Records showing which manuscripts you rejected are confidential and definitely touchy. Expense: $. Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Ongoing.

60. **Responding to legal actions.** Sometimes, authors are sued, and publishers get entangled. Then, things get interesting. Expense: $–$$$. Difficulty: Variable, usually difficult. Duration: Sporadic.


62. **Construct annual budgets and financial projections.** [NEW] A basic function overlooked on this list until now, every year entails publishing staff working in a coordinated manner to submit their expense budgets and revenue projections, then responding as senior management provides further guidance. The process has become more complex in the online world. Expense: $. Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Annual.

63. **Extended management functions.** Many publishers exist inside a society of some sort, and have extended management roles that include internal reporting, strategic consultation, internal resource negotiations, basic office politics, and more complicated contracts. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Constant.

64. **Board interactions.** [NEW] Publishers have Boards of Directors or Trustees, and interact with these bodies around budgetary, strategic, and other issues. As strategies have become less certain, these interactions are becoming more frequent and perhaps more fraught. A good Board can provide strong support for good strategies and leadership. Expense: $$. Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

65. **Create and maintain e-commerce systems.** Whatever your revenue model (subscription, OA [APCs], or some hybrid [page charges, color charges, subscription]), you have to take online orders. These systems can be simple or very complex, but they have to be robust enough to comply with credit card processing requirements, which have become much more stringent. In addition, the international scope of e-commerce has many publishers wrestling with VAT compliance. Expense: $$–$$$. Difficulty: Difficult. Duration: Ongoing.

66. **Sell advertising, reprints, and single copies.** Not all publishers or journals can make a significant amount of money from selling ads, reprints, or single articles, but when they can, their subscription prices or APCs can be — and often are — lower. Therefore, there is a mutual win if this can occur — publishers diversify their risk, readers or authors pay less. Expense: $$. Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Ongoing.

67. **Manage sales forces.** Whether you sell subscriptions, advertising, ancillary products, sponsorships, or licenses, you have either an internal, outside, or mixed sales force. Expense: $$$. Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Ongoing.

68. **Provide reporting to oversight, governance, tax, and local authorities.** Some novice journals have lost their non-profit status because they didn’t comply with this obligation. It’s part of the deal. Expense: $. Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

69. **Interact with agents for institutional and individual sales.** In addition to direct sales forces, agents provide another layer of sales support, and often offer different services and approaches, from telemarketing to storefronts. Expense: $. Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Sporadic.

70. **Create or integrate with educational offerings.** In some fields, CME or CE credits are commonly tied to journal publication in one way or another. In others, separate publishing initiatives are built around educational modalities of some sort, often relying on a journal or periodical product as their
backbone. Expense: $$.

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

71. **Conduct financial projections and set prices accordingly.** Publishers want to be around for a long time, and that requires planning. Expense: $.
Difficult: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

72. **Maintain facilities.** Publishers have to live somewhere, and often the expectation is that they have inspiring and impressive offices. It’s part of the prestige factor so important to the mutual aspirations of authors and editors as well. They should be at least as nice as the universities where so many work, or so it seems. Expense: $$-$$$$.

Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Sporadic or ongoing.

73. **Engage in product development.** Things change. Little changes like the Internet or the iPhone drive product changes. Somewhere, no matter what technology is emerging, some publisher somewhere is experimenting with it. In some cases, entire new product suites are developed and launched, as well.

Expense: $$-$$$$.

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Sporadic or ongoing.

74. **Experiment with new technologies.** [NEW] This one goes back a good many years, from podcasts to Kindles to mobile to PowerPoints to RSS, journals have been tinkering with new technologies. Today, it’s image viewers and alternative article formats, among many others. Expense: $$-$$$.

Difficulty: Variable. Duration: Sporadic.

75. **Conduct market research.** This informs so many aspects of editorial and business planning. Expense: $$-$$$.

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Duration: Should be ongoing, usually sporadic.

76. **Do renewal and retention marketing.** Marketing and sales go hand in hand. Renewals keep the audience in place for future authors to reach. Expense: $.

Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Ongoing.

77. **Do new customer marketing.** Growing the audience is also important. Expense: $$$-$$$$.

Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Ongoing.

78. **Buy and rent lists for various email and snail-mail marketing initiatives.** To grow the audience, marketing experts have to source and secure lists of potential customers, and track results over time.

Expense: $$-$$$.

Difficulty: Moderate. Duration: Sporadic.

79. **Comply with privacy, email CAN-SPAM, and other regulations affecting publishing.** There are a lot of standards and rules about online advertising and marketing, and publishers know and live by these.

Expense: $.

Difficulty: Increasing. Duration: Sporadic.

80. **Pay for and comply with terms of publisher insurance policies.** Yes, authors can do things that make it even riskier for publishers presenting new findings to the world on their behalf, so we buy insurance. Expense: $$.

Difficulty: Easy. Duration: Sporadic.

81. **Work together to solve more general access and fairness issues.** As pointed out in Alice Meadows’ post, publishers have a great track record of working together to solve perceived inequities or general problems, from DOIs to CrossRef to CrossCheck to HINARI to Research4Life to INASP to free access to low-income countries to FundRef to CHORUS, publishers generally aspire to fairness and accessibility, and have created an admirable legacy of working to implement these aspirations.

Expense: $$-$$$.

Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

82. **Benchmark and compare notes.** Publishers like to check in with other publishers to make sure we’re not falling behind, to get advice when the going gets rough, and to see if there are better ways to do things. We attend meetings and webinars to remain on the forefront. In a rapidly changing environment, the time needed to do this is increasing.

Expense: $$.

Difficulty: Easy to difficult. Duration: Sporadic.

In the big picture, having publishers doing these things means that scientists and policymakers don’t have to do them and can focus on doing their work. We represent a set of trades and associated professionals who do all these things on their behalf.

Any updates you’d like to propose for next time? The comments thread is open below.
What is the practical difference between constant, endless and ongoing, three adjectives you use to describe several of the parameters?

1. What is the practical difference between constant, endless and ongoing, three adjectives you use to describe several of the parameters?

POSTED BY JATDS | OCT 22, 2014, 12:45 AM

○ It was very “stream of consciousness,” with “constant” more along the lines of repetitive and at a generally uniform level of effort, “endless” expressing some humorous exasperation, and “ongoing” implying some improvements as time passes.

POSTED BY KENT ANDERSON | OCT 22, 2014, 9:27 AM

2. I like the additions. I think Vendor Management, which you touch on in a few places, deserves it’s own major category. It feels like we are constantly evaluating potential vendors, putting out RFPs, testing, training, transitioning, evaluating quality and then starting all over again. In some areas, the options dwindle between bouts of RFPs–especially if you are burning through vendors due to high cost or lack of quality output. Consolidation among the technology partners, not to mention outright buyouts by commercial publishers, add a whole other level of uncertainty.

The other part of vendor management on the technology side is getting them to do the work you need done. Every workshop, user group meeting, and conference seems to air the same gripes. Our tried and true technology partners are having trouble scaling up and the competition is consolidating–more customers and less vendors. Any customization you may want takes a back seat to new development or implementation of new industry standards. The consensus seems to be that throwing money at the problem doesn’t get you anywhere.

If you feel the need to venture out with a technology partner that does not have a history with scholarly publishing, you spend an awful lot of time training them on why your products are different than selling software or printing catalogs for Land’s End.
3. One more: Soliciting, peer-reviewing, tracking, tagging, hosting on the publisher’s own platform, and curating/migrating supplemental materials and/or smaller data sets that are not deposited into external repositories.

4. Reblogged this on INANE – International Academy of Nursing Editors and commented:
I found this post particularly interesting in an era when associations are carefully scrutinizing cost to value relationships in publishing our journals. I’ve had many conversations with our association about why our costs for publishing continue to rise and there are several useful suggestions in this list that are not evident to those outside the editing and publishing arenas.

Trackbacks/Pingbacks

1. PINGBACK: IN OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING THERE ARE NO FREE LUNCHES….. BUT IT IS REALLY REALLY CHEAP. | DOUG’S ARCHAEOLOGY - OCT 23, 2014