

Press Release

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For immediate release

Latest ALPSP *Scholarly Publishing Practice Survey* on online journal publishing is now available

The third in a series of ALPSP surveys undertaken to establish current scholarly publishing practices and designed to track changes in policy and practice since 2000, has been published by the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishing. The survey, carried out by Laura Cox of *Frontline Global Marketing Services* and John Cox of *John Cox Associates*, was conducted of 400 journal publishers, both commercial and not-for-profit, consisting of ALPSP and other major association members. A response rate of over 65% was achieved including the majority of major journal publishers.

Key findings include:

- Publishers - especially large publishers and commercial publishers are launching new journals at a higher rate than in 2005.
- The growth trajectory of online availability has been steady since 2003. There is still some difference between the disciplines, with 96.1% of STM and 86.5% of arts, humanities and social science titles accessible online.
- Pricing models are just as complex and varied as they were in 2005. Most publishers use a variety of means to establish prices. It is notable that fewer publishers are providing online access free with print and instead are offering online-only subscriptions.
- Open access advocacy has clearly had an effect on publishers' thinking. The proportion of publishers offering optional open access to authors has grown from 9% in 2005 to 30% in 2008. However, the take-up of the author pays open access option is exceedingly low.
- Licensing terms have become more generous, as publishers have become more comfortable with the use of digital content, including allowing use in Virtual Learning Environments and repurposing to create learning objects.
- Publishers' practice on authors' rights is changing. Fewer publishers now require authors to transfer copyright to the publisher and will instead accept a licence to publish.
- The growth of institutional and subject based repositories has prompted a rethink on authors' rights to post their articles on the web. Large publishers have relaxed prohibitions on posting pre-prints, but have imposed embargoes on the final accepted version.
- Publishers are at different stages of development in their implementation of Web 2.0 technologies, with 20% enabling collaborative tagging and between 10% and 15% implementing forums, blogs and podcasts for a journal.

The full report provides a vast array of evidence about the current policies and practices of scholarly journal publishers, but it also shows how these practices have changed over time with comparisons with the survey results from 2003 and 2005. It will be invaluable to those who wish to dispel some of the misunderstandings that have been voiced about journal publishing and to show how publishers' policies have changed in response to advocacy groups and funding mandates.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Scholarly Publishing Practice, Third Survey 2008: Academic journal publishers' policies and practices in online publishing by John Cox and Laura Cox is available to ALPSP members as a free to download PDF or may be purchased by non-members online at the ALPSP website www.alpsp.org. PLEASE NOTE: The PDF file of the Scholarly Publishing Practice contains DOI's which will link to the underlying data in Excel form. These are currently not operational, but are expected to be available within the next 10 days. We apologise for any inconvenience caused meanwhile.

Responses to the survey

The survey was conducted at the beginning of 2008. Publishing is still populated by small publishers, in spite of the process of concentration that has characterised the past ten years. Over half of the publishers surveyed publish five or fewer journals (54%), 11% were quite small (6-10 titles), 16% small to medium (11-25), 8% medium (26-50), 4% medium to large (51-100) and 7% large (100+ titles).

Responses included the majority of major journal publishers whose output dominates the acquisitions of most libraries. The sample is weighted to the UK and North America, with the highest proportion of respondents from the USA. 32.5% are UK-based, 10.8% in mainland Europe, 46.8% in North America, 4.4% in Asia Pacific and 5.5% in the rest of the world. 47 publishers (23.2%) have offices in regions other than that of their principal office, with the major locations being the UK and Western Europe, North America and East Asia. 76.4% of publishers are not-for-profit, 23.6% are commercial, which is down 1.4% on 2005 and 7.4% on 2003, a reflection of the merger and acquisition activity of the past few years in commercial scholarly publishing. 31% of respondents publish exclusively in the arts and humanities and social sciences, while 53.7% publish exclusively in STM.

About ALPSP

ALPSP is the international trade association for non-profit publishers and those who work with them. ALPSP was formed in 1972. Today it is the largest trade association for scholarly and professional publishers. It has more than 360 members in 36 countries, publishing scholarly content in many different ways. Over 10,000 journals are published by ALPSP members as well as numerous books, reports, databases and other products and services.

Membership of ALPSP has been taken up by a wide range of different types of publishers - journal publishers, book publishers, learned societies and professional bodies, database publishers, university presses and intergovernmental organizations. The variety and range of the 260+ publisher members and the 100+ associate members who provide services to the sector provides a unique network serving the interests of scholarly publishing worldwide.

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