

Quality Communication: Is There A Best Practice for Library Publishers? A Group Discussion

Ally Laird

Open Publishing Program Specialist
Penn State University

IFLA SIG Meeting, Dublin Business School
February 28th, 2019

Speaker's Note

- Planned as a Roundtable Discussion
- Going to attempt a “room-wide discussion” and encourage knowledge sharing instead
- Please ask any and all questions, and provide comments or answers to others' questions– I want to hear from you!

My Background

- “New” to Library Publishing – wasn’t even aware of it before Penn State
 - This talk motivated due to lack of information about editor/library publisher communication
- My Role within Open Publishing at PSU
 - OA Journals, Bibliographies, Monographs
 - Some digital projects
 - Lead Open Access outreach support team
- SpringerNature Journal Editor from 2014-2017
 - Journal editorship and support at a publisher like Springer is different from Library Publishing

Traditional Academic Publishing Communications

- Primary focus on acquiring articles and growing the journal in size and in profit
- Fairly frequent communication with Editor-in-Chief (anywhere from once a month to four times annually)
 - Informed if content is running late, reviews are due, etc.
- Yearly Editorial Board meetings
 - Discuss the goals of the journal (primarily article count goals and profit)
 - Discuss the journal's growth areas (new sections, desired research to feature, etc.)



Library Publisher Communications

- Library Publishing programs differ from commercial publishers and from each other in:
 - Size
 - FTE (staff) support
 - Number of journals published
 - Kinds of services provided (Hosting, DOI, ISSN, indexing, preservation, promotion, etc.)
- Library publishers not concerned with profit (generally)
- Library publishers not equivalent to commercial publishing editors
 - Do not have their hands in the journal content itself
 - Many provide hosting and guidance, but leaving running the journal to the editors themselves
 - Do not own the journals

Library Publishing at Penn State

We provide support to both journals that hope to make an impact and have a strong peer review, set publication schedule, use DOIs, etc., and to journals that to publish content in a more non-traditional format.

- Two levels of publication service:
 - Supported Journals
 - Imprint Journals
- Journal Requirements/expectations differ
- Services provided can differ
- Thus, conversations with journals in each category will differ
- So, can there be overlap/a best practice?

Discussion

- Do you have general guidelines or practices for communicating with your journal editors?
- What are those guidelines/practices?
- What are your goals and challenges?
- What is the role of the publishing specialist in your program when it comes to communication?

Concluding Questions

- Should there be a required annual meeting between library publisher and editor/editorial board annually?
- If so, what should be discussed?
- Should this meeting be more often than annual?
 - Does this depend on resources/services provided?
- Can and should there be a best practice? Or just encouraged guidelines?

Final Thoughts

My recommendation is that communication with journal editors is necessary, and all library publishers should establish a communication schedule that remains somewhat consistent across publications. What the exact guidelines or best practices might be are still up for debate, but establishing these would be beneficial to the library publishing community.