



# Business Models for Open Access

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# Goal of OSI OA Guides

[www.arl.org/sparc](http://www.arl.org/sparc)

- Start an inventory of Open Access business models.
- Provide practical plans to guide new OA journals and converting existing journals.
- Focus on how, not whether or why.



# Operating Assumptions

- No single model—hybrid models required to generate sufficient revenue.
- Subsidies valid—though radical solution for existing journals.
- Suspend disbelief—many fledgling models have had success in practice.
- Will require experimentation.



# Input Fees

- Article Publication Fees—

*Author or proxy pays fee to subsidize publication.*

- Discipline-specific: requires existing practice.
- Premise: authors & institutions direct beneficiaries of publication.
- Fee will depend on publisher requirements.
- Examples: Legion



# Input Fees

- Institution Submission Charge—  
*Institution-based packaging of author charges.*
  - Institution pre-pays for faculty authors.
  - Example: *BMC*



## Input Fees

- Variation: Open Access at author discretion—

*Example: Author charge that provides PDF “reprints” in advance of publication.*

- Typically works with an embargo.
- Embargo at odds with pure OA.
- Example: *Entomological Society of America*



# Affinity Relationships

- Advertising—

*Extends traditional broadcast media model—publisher sells online advertising.*

- Indicated when site's audience highly specialized, providing an efficient channel to reach audience.
- Impression and pay-for-performance models.
- Online advertising held to higher ROI standards than other media.
- Examples: *BMC* has full ad program.



# Affinity Relationships

- Sponsorships—

*Corporate sponsor(s) subsidizes an OA journal's operating expenses in exchange for recognition.*

- Offers greater funding potential than advertising— sponsor benefits from reputation & goodwill of journal and publishing society.
- Less labor-intensive than ongoing ad sales.
- Requires guidelines to avoid conflict-of-interest.
- Precludes ad sales.
- Examples: *Journal of Clinical Investigation* (Merck) & *TRIZ Journal* (Mitsubishi Research Institute)





# Alternative Distributors

- Convenience Format Licenses—

*Fee to value-added online distributors for convenient delivery of formatted content.*

- Requires content that can be repurposed for secondary audiences.
- Requires critical mass of content.
- Some secondary business and legal markets will perceive high value.
- Potential objections from original authors.
- Examples: License biology articles to legal distributor for patent prior art searches



## Complementary Products & Services

- (Differentiated) Journal Version Offline—  
*Fee-based distribution of offline version, while maintaining free online access.*
  - Archival quality print still attractive to some institutional libraries.
  - Concurrent print with non-research content not delivered online.
  - Cumulative print edition at end of year year.
  - Examples: *British Medical Journal*, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, *JMLR* (MIT), *Science*, etc.



# Complementary Products & Services

- Premium Online Version—

*Fee-based access to fully-featured online version.*

- Added features could include reference linking, site customization, alert services, etc.
- Could include non-research content not available in “base” version.
- Value-added & value-subtracted versioning.
- Examples: Commercial publishers emphasizing value added features in aggregations



# Practical Versioning Techniques

## Service Dimension

- Delay/embargo (non-research)
- Convenience (time-based)
- User interface
- Format
- Comprehensiveness
- Speed of operation
- Features/capabilities
- Annoyance

## Users/Uses

- Patient/impatient users
- Corporate/academic users
- Casual/expert users
- On-screen/printed use
- Casual/intensive users
- Casual/intensive users
- Casual/intensive users
- Low/High time value users

See Shapiro and Varian, *Information Rules*, Chapter 3



# Subsidies

- Grants—

*Foundation and/or government grants fund transformation and/or to establish endowment.*

- May be US-centric.
- Established model for public goods.
- Gov't grants to support publication costs, article processing fees.
- Examples: NSF, AI Access Foundation for *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*



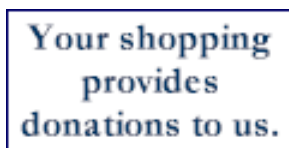
# Subsidies

- Institutional Contributions & Subsidies—  
*Institution provides substantial infrastructure support for journal online operating costs.*
  - Would typically entail in-kind contributions.
  - Might require radical restructuring for established journals.
  - Common practice for start-up Open Access journals.
  - Examples: *Dermatology Online Journal (CDL)*, *Journal of Insect Science (Arizona)*, *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*

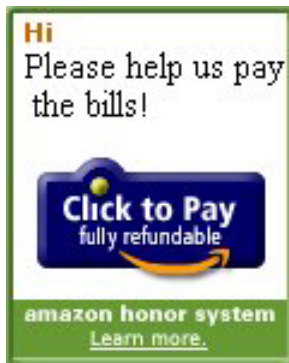


# Charitable Donations

Secure services now available to process online contributions from individuals.



ShopsThatGive.com



amazon.com service



“Network for Good”



# In Conclusion

## **Goals—**

- Start an inventory of models.
- Refine models based on constructive feedback & practical experience.
- Expand inventory to serve all types of organizations—though no universal model.

## **Assumptions—**

- Will require hybrid models, experimentation & long-term strategic view.
- Definite risks in attempting; possible risks of not.