Business Models for Open Access

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Goal of OSI OA Guides

- 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

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*

Secure services now available to process online contributions from individuals.

ShopsThatGive.com

“Network for Good”

amazon.com service
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.