DIKTUON*: The Library as Publisher? Is It Possible for a Small Library?*

by Melody Layton McMahon

Since the 2008 article by Kevin Guthrie, Rebecca Griffiths, and Nancy Maron on *Sustainability and Revenue Models for Online Academic Resources*, published by Ithaka,[1] and Raym Crow's *Income Models for Open Access Projects* (2009) published by SPARC,[2] others have been seeking ways to project better models that will work to propel the open access movement towards a more sustainable model. For example, Alexis Seeley, Rebecca Kennison, and Lisa Norberg have recently published *A Scalable and Sustainable Approach to Open Access* for Educause[3] that pushes for a united front of academic libraries and scholarly associations. They propose a model that will eschew "article processing costs" and will provide for the gamut of scholarly output: article, monograph, data set, conference presentation, multimodal website, or formats not yet envisioned.

Martin Paul Eve defines the concept of ROT (Research-Output Team) that "moves publishing in-house to institutional libraries thereby safeguarding publishing jobs and expertise while defeating the problematic aspects of the existing set-up."[4] The Library Publishing Coalition has just published the second edition of the *Library Publishing Directory*.[5] Most of its current sixty members are large universities with a few smaller liberal arts schools. In 2015 they will be accepting new members. In their *Publishing Directory*, they list 124 libraries that are involved in publishing, though not all publish journals.[6] Rebecca Kennison has also been at the forefront advocating for the "library as publisher" concept, though the Columbia University model (which she runs) is clearly a "large" university project. However, it seems scalable. Her work can be adapted to help those getting started with journal and monograph publishing.[7]

Match Your Library Publishing Services to Local Capacity and Budget

According to Kennison, libraries might consider a continuum of services for journals — this is the approach taken at Catholic Theological Union's Paul Bechtold Library, where the OJS platform is key. Currently, three journals are in

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[1] Kevin Guthrie, Rebecca Griffiths, and Nancy Maron, Sustainability and Revenue Models for Online Academic Resources, Ithaka, May 1, 2008. http://www.sr.ithaka.org/research-publications/sustainability-and-revenue-models-online-academic-resources.

[2] Raym Crow, *Income Models for Open Access Projects* (2009), SPARC, http://www.sparc.arl.org/sites/default/files/incomemodels_v1.pdf.

[3] Alexis Seeley, Rebecca Kennison, and Lisa Norberg, *A Scalable and Sustainable Approach to Open Access,* Educause, September 15, 2014, http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/scalable-and-sustainable-approach-open-access.

[4] Martin Paul Eve, "Tear It Down, Build It Up: The Research Output Team, or the Library-As-Publisher," *Insights* 25, no. 2 (July 2012): 158-62.

[5] Sarah K. Lippincott, ed., *Library Publishing Directory* (Atlanta: Library Publishing Coalition, 2015), http://www.librarypublishing.org/sites/librarypublishing.org/files/documents/lpc_dir_2015lpd.pdf.

[6] This listing now includes the Catholic Theological Union.

[7] Rebecca Kennison, "Libraries as Publishers: Current and Best Practices," (Presentation/discussion at the Association of Southeast Research Libraries Spring 2012 Membership Meeting and Annual Meeting, Charleston, South Carolina, April 11 – 12, 2012), http://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac:162631.

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various stages of publication at CTU. Two in-house journals, *New Theology Review* (NTR)[8] and the student journal *Theophilus*,[9] have issues published and can be accessed through the URLs that go to the OJS platform hosted on a library server. One external journal is in startup and will publish its first issue in a few months.

Thought is given to what services a journal will need and what services can realistically be provided through the library.

- Barebones — CTU domain, software, maintenance, training, preservation through LOCKSS, ISSN registration, DOIs, seek indexing

- Upgrade — add design work to the above

- In addition, OJS sports a number of reader tools to enhance content discovery and use. These tools include multilingual support for both online interfaces and content for many languages, persistent URLs, RSS feeds, tools for bookmarking and sharing articles through social networking sites, full-text searching, compliance with the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH), and online usage statistics.

The editorial staff of each journal determines the content of the journal and controls all editorial decisions. Using the OJS platform, the editors are responsible for all editorial workflow management, including the work of soliciting submissions, conducting peer reviews, copyediting, layout, publication scheduling, and all correspondence with readers, authors, reviewers, and editorial staff. All fees (if necessary) around these functions are paid by the journal. (*NTR* hires a layout editor and copy editor/proofreader; the editorial board receives a small stipend, in lieu of course reduction.)

As for financial considerations for the library budget, there is a $4,000 per year line item for publishing. This includes (and very little has been spent):

- Purchase of server (shared with the Archives at the Paul Bechtold Library)

- DOI service through CrossRef

- Domain fees

- Maintenance of server and installation of updates to software

Non-CTU journals will pay a small fee for upgrade to services (or they may do the design work themselves).

Another big consideration is personnel for library publishing — who will do what, and how much time can be dedicated to doing the "publishing" work. At CTU, this currently falls mostly to the Library Director. The director writes the documents (journal proposals, hosting agreements), receives the proposals and makes the decisions about acceptance, provides the training, consults about standards and services (for example, learning about DOIs, subscribing to the service, insisting journals begin to adhere to DOI requirements, etc.). Once all the policies and procedures are in place, a part-time project manager may be hired to do most of the work.

Some Benefits of Library Publishing

- Build collaborations with faculty and other scholars and librarians

- Save journals from selling to for-profit publishers

- Gain prestige as a leader in the field of scholarly communication

- Provide access to scholarship that might otherwise be hidden

A Response to the Increasing Commercialization of Theological Journal Publishing

Martin Eve points out several problems with the current system of scholarly communication:

- Academic publisher profits seem extortionate

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[8] http://newtheologyreview.com/index.php/ntr
[9] http://newtheologyreview.org/index.php/ctustud/

- The value added by academic publishers is not perspicuous
- We are not 'all in it together.'

The high overhead of for-profit journal publishers is creating havoc with library budgets. For example, Taylor & Francis (a division of Informa) publishes 39 journals in religion and theology. Heather Morrison, an open access advocate, refers to Informa's 2013 Annual Report: "Informa, the multinational conglomerate owner of publishing brands including Taylor & Francis and Routledge, report that their academic publishing division earned an adjusted operating margin (profit) of 35.7% in 2013, or approximately 218 million USD in profits…Of course, that's after paying expenses — such as paying the basic salary of 770,000 GBP (1.3 million USD) to the Executive Director (p. 56) (not counting benefits, of course — like 25% of base salary towards pension and the 20,000 GBP car allowance."[10]

Every time Taylor & Francis purchases another religious studies or theology journal our libraries are forced to decide whether to continue the subscription at an extortionate price and decrease our ability to provide other resources, or to cancel what might otherwise be a useful journal. Library-based open access journal publishing is a way to regain focus on the mission of this form of scholarly communication — dissemination of knowledge to people around the world.

New Theology Review has reached over 40 countries since becoming open access in 2012. With a relatively minor investment of time and money, a library can make a big difference in the serials crisis facing us. A start can be made by publishing journals that already belong to your institution, publishing journals that a faculty member edits, or reaching out to a small journal whose niche is allied with your mission. Become a library publisher.

See also:

Brown, Allison P., ed. *The Library Publishing Toolkit*. (IDS Project Press, 2013). http://www.publishingtoolkit.org/.

Eve, Martin Paul. *Open Access and the Humanities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Cambridge Books Online. Web. 30 November 2014. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316161012.

Anali Maughan Perry, Carol Ann Borchert, Timothy S. Deliyannides, Andrea Kosavic and Rebecca Kennison. "Libraries as Journal Publishers," *Serials Review* 37 (2011): 196-204. doi:10.1016/j.serrev.2011.06.006.

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[10] Heather Morrison, "Informa/Taylor & Francis' 35.7% / 218 Million USD Profits," *Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics* blog, June 5, 2015. http://poeticeconomics.blogspot.com/2014/06/informa-taylor-francis-357-218-million.html.