OJS is not enough

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OJS

• A powerful publishing tool
• Designed for electronic publishing
  • Good workflow capabilities
• Functionality that supports Open Access-publishing
• Plug-ins for communication with OA services and infrastructures
• Much used by smaller and scholar-led publishing activities
What does the OA landscape look like?

- OA publishers are many, but small measured in the number of journals they publish
- Can they be competent?
  - When it comes to publishing and technology
- Can they be efficient in an economic sense?
  - Economies of scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publisher Size</th>
<th>No of Publishers</th>
<th>No of Journals</th>
<th>Percentage of Publishers</th>
<th>Percentage of Journals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4446</td>
<td>4446</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–10</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1029</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–20</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1019</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51–100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2179</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
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Problems for editors

• Used to the paper world
  • Lot of thinking need to be re-learnt

• Limited understanding of Open Access
  • No understanding of the infrastructures of OA

• Generally not technology-wise
  • Exceptions exist, but as exceptions

• No idea about economics
  • They don’t have financial funding, either
What can we observe?

• A large number of journals not listed in DOAJ
  • Crawford: 5,988 (2015)
    • A DOAJ listing is a sign of acceptable scholarly and OA quality
    • A DOAJ listing is also a distribution tool for metadata
• Those listed in DOAJ still lack or are weak on a number of quality aspects
Plan S requirements (the original ones)

- Significant differences between small and large publishers
- Some difference between non-APC and APC publishers
But also

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-APC publishers</th>
<th>Small (1–5 journals)</th>
<th>meet 1.9 of 3 policy criteria on average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large (&gt;100 journals)</td>
<td>meet 1.7 of 3 policy criteria on average</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APC publishers</th>
<th>Small (1–5 journals)</th>
<th>meet 2.4 of 4 policy criteria on average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large (&gt;100 journals)</td>
<td>meet 3.0 of 4 policy criteria on average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If we look at policy criteria, we find that there is not much difference between large and small, and APC journals and non-APC journals.
- So it is on the technical side the problems lie.
What are the technical problems?

• Lack of DOIs
  • Which also reduces dissemination of metadata
  • OJS helps with assigning DOIs, and submitting to CrossRef
  • But one need to understand why and how – and have the money
  • Many small journals have no financial economy, and cannot pay bills

• Lack of long-term preservation arrangements
  • Even if PKP offers an easy, free solution

• No machine-readable full-text format
  • Fully understandable! XML is not for amateurs!
  • Will be costly, and need financing

• No embedded license info in text files
  • Lacking for 46 per cent of journals
Why?

- Publishing entails a number of important competences
- Scholar-led publishing is led by scholars
  - They are very competent, but probably not in publishing
  - There is a huge cost associated with acquiring the necessary competence
    - Time is money! Or costs to other activities, or family life …
- The average OA journal is APC-free, published alone and has few articles
  - The cost of competence has few articles to be divided between
    - i.e., the model is very expensive per article
  - And no income to buy competence with
  - Not being competent also has costs!
The future

• Plan S relented and the final criteria were less demanding
• But: Plan S will be evaluated in 2024. Clear signs that the criteria softened now will be toughened up from 2025 – most are already recommendations
• Meaning: Very few small, scholar-led/institution-based journals will be compliant in 6 years from now
  • While Plan S may have grown to become more important
• The demise of scholar-led publishing, unless something is done!
Solutions?

• More APC-based scholar-led publishing?
  • Allows outsourcing of competence-demanding activities
• More and better tools, esp. regarding XML
• Larger publishing entities?
  • More resilient entities
  • Allows costs to be spread over more articles
    • Economies of scale
  • But what scale is needed?
    • Probably rather large – 50+?
• Institutional willingness to provide better funding!
  • And to enter into inter-institutional publishing arrangements to create large entities

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Questions?

• Remember to keep a look-out for the Munin conference
• This year’s next week in Tromsø 27-28 November
  • https://site.uit.no/muinconf/
• But there will probably be one next year in November, too
• The Munin Conference is an annual conference on scholarly publishing and communication, primarily revolving around open access, open data and open science

Thanks for listening!

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