Iowa Research Online
The University of Iowa's Institutional Repository

University of Iowa Libraries Staff Publications

4-8-2013

Managing E-Publishing: Perfect Harmony for Serialists

Wendy C. Robertson
University of Iowa

Charlene N. Simser
Kansas State University

© 2013 Wendy C Robertson and Charlene N Simser.

Serials Librarian, 64 (2013) pp.118-128. DOI: 10.1080/0361526X.2013.760399

Hosted by Iowa Research Online. For more information please contact: lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

Managing E-Publishing: Perfect Harmony for Serialists

WENDY C. ROBERTSON and CHARLENE N. SIMSER

Abstract: *This paper describes two serialists who use skills honed in their respective serials departments to show how those skills adapt to the world of e-publishing. The presenters will discuss their roles in e-publishing and their respective university presses and library publishing programs. How have their libraries reorganized to provide resources for supporting these new roles? The daily work of an e-publishing librarian will be reviewed, including an overview of working with Digital Commons and Open Journal Systems (OJS), two e-press platforms. The presenters will also discuss funding and sustainability of the programs and working with open access and subscription titles.*

Keywords: *Digital Commons, Open Journal Systems, open access, e-publishing, library as publisher*

Over the last twenty years, both Wendy Robertson and Char Simser have worked with serials in a variety of ways, from paraprofessional to librarian. Their experiences as catalogers and electronic resources librarians provided expertise that their organizations recognized, shifting them to newly-created roles in electronic publishing using Digital Commons and Open Journal Systems (OJS). Once the responsibility of a small unit on the edge of library operations or a percentage of an individual's job, University of Iowa Libraries and Kansas State University Libraries now place increasing importance on publishing and hosting scholarly content, ensuring these activities are central to their missions. This paper discusses the changes that occurred

within each library, the work done to support journal publishing, and the usefulness of a serials background.

OUR ORGANIZATIONS—YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Strategic planning goals for 2007-2012 at Kansas State University Libraries included an objective to become an open access publisher. New Prairie Press (NPP) launched with two charter journals, the first in production by the middle of 2008.[1] Incorporated into the existing Digital Initiatives department, site administration of NPP rolled into the responsibilities of the web librarian. In the 2009/2010 academic year the Scholarly Communications and Publishing (SC&P) department formed as part of a major reorganization. Five new positions were defined and filled from existing positions, centering on digital collections, scholarly communications, copyright consultation, and NPP. A liaison relationship exists with K-REx, the institutional repository. K-REx resides in the library; staff resides in university IT services. Staff changes in 2011 promulgated the creation of a .5FTE position within SC&P and Charlene Simser became the coordinator of electronic publishing. Systems support for NPP comes from the Libraries' IT Services and Development department.

The University of Iowa Libraries Digital Library Services (DLS) department began in 2005, initially focusing on digitized images using CONTENTdm. The department grew from one person to five through a combination of staff reassignments, including Wendy Robertson, and new hires by fall 2007. A task force considered how the Libraries could expand support for electronic scholarship and recommended Digital Commons.[2] Because it is hosted, staff could implement the new services without burdening existing IT staff. Iowa Research Online (IRO) launched January 2009.[3] The institutional repository includes e-journal management software. Annual cost, which varies by library size, includes graphic design for new journals, set-up and

technical assistance with titles, help for editors if needed, and general software developments and updates. The University of Iowa Libraries added no permanent staff to the department to work specifically with the institutional repository or journal publishing, but fortunately had two temporary half-time positions during the first year. Robertson spends no more than 20 percent of her time on e-journal related activities and two paraprofessionals and student assistants work with journals as needed. In the last year The Libraries increased support for faculty projects, including publishing in a variety of forms. DLS became Digital Research & Publishing (DRP), with digitization processes moving to the Preservation Department and metadata to the Cataloging-Metadata Department.

Kansas State chose the Open Journal Systems (OJS) platform to manage the publishing lifecycle for journals hosted by NPP. Annual operating costs beyond the coordinator's time and minimal in-house IT support (approximately .1FTE) was initially projected to total under $1500 and included commercial web hosting ($1100 annually) and the purchase of three domains for ten years ($288).

In 2009, NPP became a member of CrossRef and pays annual fees ($300) and fees for digital object identifiers (DOIs) submitted. Additional cost will be incurred when NPP joins CLOCKSS in late 2012. Like CrossRef, CLOCKSS fees are based on publishing revenue ($0 for NPP) and include an article ingest feed. The 2012/13 budget, not including the .6FTE for the coordinator and IT support, will total approximately $2000.

PUBLISHING WITH DRP AND NPP

The University of Iowa Libraries does not have a press or imprint; they provide the infrastructure for journals to be hosted. Like NPP, the Libraries does not have editorial control over the journals. UI Libraries currently hosts twelve journals, including one society title, two

long dead titles, two subscription/moving wall titles, two still published in print, three new titles, two graduate student titles, and three online titles that migrated to the new platform. NPP offers full publication services for seven journals, editorial support for one, and archival hosting for one. Three additional journals are in development, including two undergraduate research publications. All NPP titles are open access with no subscription-based journals. About half have some affiliation with Kansas State. To date, neither library has turned away potential journals; new titles are added at the speed with which they can be accommodated.

Before starting a new title, DRP staff and a subject liaison talk with editors to ensure they understand the long term commitment they are making starting a journal. Similar discussions occur at NPP when new journals are proposed. Ensuring the editors have considered the life of the journal beyond the first issue and can clearly define the purpose, scope and need for the journal is important. A strong editorial board helps demonstrate commitment to the journal. If a journal is edited by students, faculty or department sponsorship is required to maintain long term commitment. This discussion clarifies library responsibilities and what is expected of the editors. At the University of Iowa, if all parties agree that it makes sense for the Libraries to host the journal, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is created. NPP is in the process of developing an MOU and formal policies. Minimal information on services other than consultation regarding journal layout and design as well as troubleshooting is currently noted on the NPP website.

WHAT WE DO—A DAY IN THE LIFE

Routine work varies for Simser and Robertson because of the type of content each of the institutions hosts and their respective software platforms. Work at NPP may include consultation on logos, layout and formatting, and training with new editors, however, the majority of the daily routine is centered on management of CrossRef DOIs and Directory of Open Access Journals

(DOAJ) metadata submissions and the creation of documentation related to those responsibilities. ISSNs are requested for all journals by the individual editors at NPP and by Robertson at IRO to incorporate the publications into the larger world of serials and scholarly publication.

When new or existing journals are added to IRO, a few design decisions must be made. Robertson looks at existing content and requests input from the editors. She provides Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress) with logos, images and colors to be used. The structure of the software creates a fairly standard layout. After working with the software for several years, Robertson appreciates the standardization. She makes consistent modifications to the journals to further standardize information and layout on the sites, such as adding the ISSN and "Hosted by Iowa Research Online" to the sidebar and changing the breadcrumb trail to exclude the repository. Robertson modifies text on the site to meet basic journal standards, such as including contact information for the editors, editorial board affiliation, and clear rights information. She modifies the policies page to include standard text for The University of Iowa Libraries. Generally the editors do not care about these aspects of the site. Routine changes save time by not needing to ask the editors as many questions during set-up and knowing in the future that all titles are set up consistently. Many elements that Robertson notes are also standardized within OJS as is their placement in footers or under "About" pages of each individual NPP journal.

Journal editors have complete control over formatting articles, but Robertson and Simser provide guidance. Most people will find an article directly through a search engine so the PDF must include sufficient citation information for the reader to know where the article was published. Editors are reminded to include this information in a template or have it added in a header/footer or cover page by the software. Robertson notes that these additions are particularly

important for retrospective content, which always lacks the URL and often lacks the journal title and enumeration. Two of the journals in IRO outsource issue formatting. However, fully open access (OA) titles usually cannot afford to pay for formatting. Because editors generally use Microsoft Word, Robertson has made Word templates using styles for several of the journals.

Simser and Robertson agree that training new journal editors occupies a significant amount of time and can be unpredictable. Initial flurries of activity occur; followed by quiet while editors seek submissions, solicit reviews, and ready articles for publication. Oftentimes, there is another round of active emails related to preparing to hit the "publish" button.

Simser discovered that e-mails sent to journal editors regarding suggested enhancements such as sharing tools for social media, which included explicit instructions for set up, are met with silence. These features must be enabled within the OJS software for each journal individually and Simser now incorporates these tasks as part of initial set-up rather than relying on editors to implement them. Setting up RSS notification options has proven particularly useful because it provides a way for Simser to monitor the addition of new content, which is directly related to NPP's obligation to submit DOIs as a member of CrossRef.

Documentation for the OJS software is good but, like Robertson, Simser created a few cheat-sheets for the editors for processes specifically related to journal submissions. Additional documentation has been created for NPP internal processes, which describe some of the nuances in DOI and DOAJ submissions not spelled out in OJS, CrossRef or DOAJ documentation. This includes information about modifying specific information in the XML files, which is different for each of the services. Both OJS and Digital Commons have helpful user communities for additional problem solving.

Because two of UI Libraries' titles are restricted access for the current four issues, Robertson's routine work includes updating the IP ranges and subscriber emails. The editors inform her of new and cancelled subscriptions. She is gently encouraging these titles to become fully OA, but for now the subscription allows them to cover editorial costs. The subscription journals follow SERU (Shared E-Resource Understanding) guidelines.[4] Robertson uses RSS feeds for a different reason than Simser; they alert her to new issues of subscription titles so the moving wall date can be changed. After an issue has become open access, the note indicating it is restricted to subscribers is removed.

NEW ISSUES AND ONGOING MAINTENANCE

Robertson's and Simser's tasks are not complete when a journal has been set-up and the editor has been trained. Each new issue gives our intrepid serialists a bit more work. NPP's obligation as a CrossRef member requires the submission of DOIs as soon as possible following publication of an issue. While the DOIs are automatically generated through the administrative set up of each journal, XML files must be exported via OJS and uploaded to CrossRef. That part of the process is straightforward and requires minimal time.

Providing DOIs for every work cited (called outbound linking by CrossRef) within an article is the time-consuming task. Consideration was given as to whether this should fall within the editors' responsibilities. Explaining the process and getting cooperation seemed counter-productive. Simser completes the work using the citations from the published PDF to generate a list that is run against the CrossRef DOI database.[5] Once verified, the citations must be pasted on the article abstract page and linked.

CrossRef expects its publishing partners to maintain and update DOIs when necessary. A resolution report is received monthly and must be reviewed to resolve DOI errors. Other

maintenance would be necessary if a journal moves to another publisher, requiring transferring the ownership of the specific DOIs to the new publisher. CrossRef's stipulation that publishers add DOIs to works cited in all content within 18 months presents a difficulty for The University of Iowa because IRO has about 4000 articles. Robertson hopes that staff can begin working on this in the upcoming year.

Additional routine work involves sharing article and journal metadata. XML metadata for the DOAJ is exported for four NPP journals using the OJS software following publication of each issue. DOAJ allows uploads via individual article or via an XML file transfer. The current function in OJS exports the entire journal rather than individual issues or articles. Dependent on the run of the journal, clean-up of the XML can be significant before the file is uploaded to the DOAJ.

Robertson also submits article metadata to DOAJ when appropriate. She requests local serials catalogers add the title to WorldCat (something Simser just put in motion for NPP), and notifies link resolvers. Notifying link resolvers is particularly critical as a substantial portion of non-search engine traffic comes from other institutions' link resolvers. Robertson used the KBART (Knowledge Bases and Related Tools) format for communication with link resolvers.[6] Robertson and Simser recommend regular reviews of standards and best practices to check that the journals meet expectations for publications, including The Council of Editors of Learned Journals "Best Practice for Online Journal Editors" and the draft "Recommended Practices for the Presentation and Identification of E-Journals (PIE-J)."[7] Robertson periodically reviews new issue metadata, either alerting editors to inconsistencies or making the corrections herself.

Much of the work at the UI Libraries involves retrospective content. The Libraries currently use ABBYY Finereader for most OCR (Optical Character Recognition) because

corrections can be made in the text and there are more output options. Staff makes few corrections, both because there are few errors and because they are taking a "good enough" approach. Staff manually creates metadata for retrospective content in a spreadsheet designed for upload, including author, title, pagination and a few standard values. Though several NPP journals have retrospective content, Simser has not yet dealt with the issues noted by Robertson. She anticipates that staff in both the Digital Collections unit of SC&P as well as staff in the Metadata-Preservation Department would be closely involved in any digitization of new retrospective content.

Robertson is experimenting with ways to make back content fully accessible and easier to read on mobile devices. At this time, the *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies* is being added to IRO. The articles of the most current eleven issues had been online as HTML pages. The editors desired a more traditional, citable PDF for each article, all back content online, and a website that was easier to maintain. Because the HTML articles work well for accessibility and mobile devices, include links to the footnotes, and could be easily edited to include DOIs, the Libraries is offering each recent article as both PDF and HTML. The HTML version includes DOIs. Robertson hopes to have a student assistant create the remaining pages for the back content.

As Simser and Robertson learn of new standards and technological changes, existing titles need to be reviewed and updated. Metadata sometimes needs alteration or enhancement to become more shareable and meet interoperability requirements. For example, Robertson is adding "Version of Record" to their content in accordance with NISO's Journal Article Version recommendations since the journal content is included in the repository.[8] Changes such as these are easy to make through batch editing since it is a standard value or can be constructed in a standard manner.

Because Digital Commons is hosted software, the University of Iowa Libraries has little control about when new features are added and many tools are automatically enabled, unlike those in OJS noted by Simser. The software is updated quarterly, but the specific updates are chosen by bepress for all customers. Both Robertson and Simser review release notes accompanying updates to determine their impact on existing titles or journal procedures. Though bepress and OJS standards generally align with national practice, understanding the requirements and checking that the software follows external guidelines, such as the Google Scholar "Inclusion Guidelines for Webmasters," which suggest the use of meta tags, are important.[9]

Editors of both NPP and Iowa Research Online titles are able to view usage information for their journals. Robertson can view data for all the journals from Digital Commons and through Google Analytics. Individual authors receive monthly usage statistics. Simser began downloading COUNTER statistics for NPP journals in May and may also retrieve data at the individual article level via OJS. Editors also have access to this information and may choose to share it with authors. In the future, the statistics may be used for promotional purposes to highlight the value of OA publishing.

BEYOND THE ROUTINE—TROUBLESHOOTING

Beyond initial set-up for new journals and the DOI submission and subsequent DOAJ work when a new article or journal issue is published with NPP, there is little else that might be described as routine. During the course of a week, troubleshooting requires the most time and effort. Problems arise unpredictably and may require one e-mail or a dozen or numerous phone calls. Issues may be resolved in ten minutes, or may take several hours of investigation over the course of a week or more. For example, frantic e-mails arrive from journal editors:

- I am unable to upload the article as a new submission. It appears on my desktop, and I select it, and it says it's uploading, but then it disappears, and the browser window indicates that I have not uploaded anything
- The journal title is wrapping on the homepage. How can this be fixed?
- I put an article through review and now I cannot see any of the feedback
- I am stuck in a login loop and cannot access the submissions [or review, etc.] page

Knowing what browser and computer the editor uses is important. Troubleshooting is conducted across browser platforms, including Firefox, Chrome, Safari, and IE using both MACs and PCs. OJS allows the site administrator to be set up for multiple roles on every journal published: as editor, author, reviewer, and journal manager. Logging in with a specific role is often required to see the problem from the perspective of the individual reporting it. Troubleshooting may involve:

- Testing failed uploads
- Searching the OJS support forums; submitting messages to the boards if no solution is found
- Communicating with the editors to keep them informed of the status
- Documenting the problem in LibStats, a web-based app for tracking library reference statistics, and adding the solution when found

Crises often occur as a journal editor is preparing for publication of a new issue. Simser's consistent use of OJS software provides familiarity with the back end for workflows related to managing DOIs and DOAJ metadata, but beyond the simple request to "walk me through publishing this issue" journal editors often report unique problems. Each one becomes an investigation with resolutions documented as noted above using LibStats software.

Since assuming the coordinator role in September 2011, Simser has uncovered solutions or explanations for items such as missing files, missing or broken links, archiving content that has been rejected, re-ordering the table of contents in an issue that is about to be published, importing comments from reviews to send to authors, submissions problems based on user role, how an author submits a new article, login, and CAPTCHA problems.

For Simser, the bottom line is that all communications with journal editors and finding solutions to the problems they encounter are a number one priority and jump to the top of a task list for any given day. Troubleshooting for Digital Commons is similar to what Simser describes for OJS, with the main difference that Robertson often forwards problems to bepress for resolution. There are also fewer questions and it takes less of Robertson's time. Since the software is hosted, there are many things Robertson cannot personally change and needs to ask bepress staff to do. However, this also means Robertson does not need to know how to make every kind of modification.

FUNDING & SUSTAINABILITY

The University of Iowa and Kansas State University libraries see their ventures in e-publishing as central to their missions. Both are committed to open access publishing. Neither library imposes fees on the journals; the library budgets cover all related expenses. Sustainability is not considered an issue. No changes regarding fees are anticipated in the foreseeable future, although this could change as new titles and services are added.

HOW BEING A SERIALIST HELPS IN OUR DAILY WORK

Simser and Robertson note that experience rooted in serials enhances their overall understanding of what should be part of the work they do regarding electronic publishing.

Serialists' experience that helps in both the routine and troubleshooting aspects of their jobs include:

- Familiarity with academic publishing, the journal volume life cycle, scholarly journals, and peer review processes
- Understanding the role of serials, articles and monographs in scholarly publishing
- Familiarity with standards (existing and developing)
- Familiarity with technology including work on administrative clients of the ILS or using a variety of vendor platforms to manage e-journal knowledge bases or to customize database front ends for users
- Organizational skills and attention to details
- Familiarity with issues related to scholarly communication, open access and licensing
- Experience working with vendors enable the development of communication skills that are vital whether via e-mail or telephone
- As in serials troubleshooting, some problems are resolved quickly; others take days or weeks of investigation and the patience learned from working with serials is a definite plus

Other useful skills or qualifications to manage e-publishing include:

- Familiarity with social media and skills with blogs, wikis, RSS, twitter
- Enjoy experimenting with new technology
- Basic knowledge of HTML
- Familiarity with the research process as a researcher

CONCLUSION

Management of e-publishing is an increasingly important role for libraries. Session attendees were intrigued by the work at both the University of Iowa and Kansas State. They encouraged ongoing discussion amongst NASIG members as a way to learn best practices and recommended that serialists share their valuable serials knowledge with their institutions. Based on Robertson's and Simser's experience, it is evident that librarians with serialist backgrounds are well-suited to the work, even given the nature of responsibilities required by different hosting systems or by the type of content being published, whether new or retrospective, subscription-based or open access. At UI and Kansas State, the libraries' involvement as publisher not only shows commitment to offering lower-cost alternatives to journal editors to make scholarly content more accessible and affordable, but also recognizes the expertise of technical services librarians. In a time when "return on investment" is the buzzword for those holding the purse strings, libraries must demonstrate value to their universities by partnering with academic faculty in research and scholarship activities. Those roles have often been consigned to staff in public services. Managing e-publishing provides opportunities for serialists to strengthen the mission and goals of their organizations by being engaged in work that should define the library of the 21st century.

NOTES

1. Kansas State University Libraries. New Prairie Press, http://www.newprairiepress.org/ (accessed June 1, 2012).

2. Bepress. Digital Commons, http://digitalcommons.bepress.com/ (accessed June 1, 2012).

3. The University of Iowa. Iowa Research Online, http://ir.uiowa.edu/ (accessed June 1, 2012).

4. National Information Standards Organization, "Shared E-Resource Understanding (SERU)," http://www.niso.org/workrooms/seru (accessed June 1, 2012).

5. Crossref.org, “Simple Text Query Form,” http://www.crossref.org/SimpleTextQuery/ (accessed June 1, 2012).

6. UKSG, “KBART: Knowledge Bases and Related Tools,” http://www.uksg.org/kbart (accessed June 1, 2012).

7. Council of Editors of Learned Journals, “Best Practice for Online Journal Editors,” May 2008. http://www.celj.org/files/downloads/CELJEjournalEditorsGuidelines.pdf (accessed June 1, 2012); National Information Standards Organization, “Recommended Practices for the Presentation and Identification of E-Journals (PIE-J),” http://www.niso.org/workrooms/piej/ (accessed June 1, 2012).

8. National Information Standards Organization, “Journal Article Versions (JAV): Recommendations of the NISO/ALPSP JAV Technical Working Group,” April 2008. http://www.niso.org/publications/rp/RP-8-2008.pdf (accessed June 1, 2012).

9. Google Scholar, “Inclusion Guidelines for Webmasters,” http://scholar.google.com/intl/en/scholar/inclusion.html (accessed June 1, 2012).