

*What difference
does Open Access
publishing make?*

Sally Morris
Chief Executive
*Association of Learned and
Professional Society Publishers*

Different kinds of Open Access Journals

- Full, Immediate Open Access
- Partial Open Access
 - selected articles (publisher pays)
 - author's choice (author or author's funder pays)
- Delayed Open Access
 - archive freely available after a time (e.g. 3, 6, 12, 24 months)

Different ways of funding Open Access journals

- Author (or, more likely, funder) pays
- Subsidised (e.g. by institution, sponsor)
 - Cash grant
 - In-kind subsidy
 - Other revenue sources (e.g. advertising)

What publishers are doing (1)

- Full Open Access journals – 1642 currently in DOAJ (<http://www.doaj.org>)
- Full Open Access experiments by traditional publishers – e.g. BioMed Central, Public Library of Science, Oxford University Press, Hindawi Publishing, Bioline.

What publishers are doing (2)

- Optional Open Access experiments – e.g. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, Company of Biologists, Blackwell, Springer, Oxford University Press. If author pays, article is free – if not, it is only available to subscribers. Annual subscription cost reduced in proportion to number of free articles in previous year
- Delayed Open Access – e.g. HighWire publishers

What authors are doing

- CIBER study (2004) found that 19% of authors had published in an Open Access journal
- Publishers with a low author-pays charge find good uptake (e.g. Florida Entomological Society - \$100 (plus page charges))
- Publishers with a high (realistic?) author-pays charge find little or no uptake (e.g. Company of Biologists \$2560, Springer \$3000)

What are the costs of publication?

- My own estimate (*Learned Publishing* Vol 18 No 2, 200x) from various published sources = \$2,250 - \$4,375 per published article
- Journals with high rejection rate and/or with high standards of editing have higher costs per published article

How to cover the costs of publication?

- Author-pays model – charges between \$100 and \$3000 per article. Funds usually come from author's research funds, sometimes from author's institution; fee may be reduced if institution has a subscription to that journal
- Alternative sources of income – advertising, subsidy by institution, support from grant-making body (e.g. Public Library of Science received \$9m from Moore Foundation)

What do we know about the effects of Open Access publishing?

- The ALPSP/AAAS/HighWire study
 - Looking at both financial and non-financial variables
 - 4 cohorts surveyed:
 - DOAJ 'Full Open Access' journals (248/1325)
 - HighWire 'Delayed Open Access' journals (signatories of DC Principles) (85/184)
 - American Association of Medical Colleges journals (34/103) – all models
 - ALPSP journals (128/7847) – all models
 - 22 interviews:
 - All models (4390 journals)

Accessibility

- 1325 DOAJ journals listed at the time
 - 53 either inaccessible online, or gave no email address
 - 121 proved undeliverable
 - 174 (13%) uncontactable

Age of journals

- OA journals are relatively new – but not as new as we thought
- Median launch date:
 - DOAJ - 1990
 - HW/DC - 1966
 - AAMC - 1977
 - ALPSP - 1965

Disciplines covered

- Full OA journals cover all disciplines
 - Science & Technology – 45%
 - Medicine¹ – 34%
 - Social Sciences – 10%
 - Arts & Humanities – 7%
 - Other – 5%

¹ *Includes BioMed Central and Internet Scientific Publications (123 journals)*

Location of publisher

- OA journals come from all over the world
 - North America – 48%
 - Europe including UK – 41%
 - Central/South America – 4%
 - Australia/New Zealand – 2%
 - Asia – 2%
 - Africa – 1%
 - Africa, Indian subcontinent, Middle East, other – 2%

Number of articles

- OA journals don't publish very many articles
 - 7% more frequent than quarterly
 - Average articles published in 2004
 - DOAJ - 41
 - HW/DC - 351
 - AAMC - 342
 - ALPSP - 173

Acceptance/rejection rate

- They reject fewer articles than non-OA journals
- Percentage accepted:
 - DOAJ – 64%
 - HW/DC – 38%
 - AAMC – 40%
 - ALPSP – 42%

Peer review

- OA journals do carry out peer review, but they make less use of external peer reviewers than non-OA journals

| | All external | Mixed internal/external | All internal | Other (e.g. no PR) |
|-------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| DOAJ | 31% | 37% | 28% | 3% |
| HW/DC | 48% | 49% | 3% | 1% |
| AAMC | 53% | 33% | 3% | 10% |
| ALPSP | 18% | 81% | 1% | 0% |

Copy-editing

- OA journals do carry out copy-editing, but less than non-OA journals

| | Content editing | Style/ grammar editing |
|-------|-----------------|------------------------|
| DOAJ | 34% | 72% |
| HW/DC | 39% | 98% |
| AAMC | 26% | 96% |
| ALPSP | 62% | 100% |

Copyright

- Some OA journals do require authors to transfer copyright
- Some OA journals have no formal agreement with authors

| | Transfer © | No agreement |
|-------|------------|--------------|
| DOAJ | 14% | 18% |
| HW/DC | 68% | 0% |
| AAMC | 88% | 0% |
| ALPSP | 40% | 3% |

Funding model

- Fewer OA journals use 'author-side' charges than do non-OA journals

| | Do charge authors | Do not charge authors |
|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| DOAJ | 47% | 53% |
| HW/DC | 82% | 18% |
| AAMC | 85% | 15% |
| ALPSP | 73% | 27% |

Financial viability

- Fewer OA journals are financially viable than non-OA journals

| | Surplus | Break-even | Loss |
|-------|---------|------------|------|
| DOAJ | 35% | 24% | 41% |
| HW/DC | 81% | 10% | 10% |
| AAMC | 81% | 11% | 6% |
| ALPSP | 74% | 3% | 22% |

Financial realism

- Some of those who run OA journals are quite naïve about finances:
 - “We have no business model”
 - “What do you mean by business model?”
 - “Peace of mind, advance science for free”
 - “Help mankind acquire knowledge”
 - “Advance Full Open Access”
 - “Changing the World”

Volunteer study

- 21 volunteers each analysed 20 – 200 journals from the (early 2005) DOAJ list
- 1129 journals surveyed in total
- Looked at:
 - Whether accessible
 - Date of first article
 - Date of last article
 - Total number of articles published

What we found

- **Accessibility**
 - 20 (1.68%) not accessible at the time
 - 17 (1.43%) partially inaccessible
- **Appropriateness of journals**
 - 8 (0.67%) not Full Open Access
 - 14 (1.18%) not research journals

Date of first and last article

- Mean date of first article
 - Range from 1911 (retrodigitised archives)
 - Median date 2000
 - Cf previous study – median launch 1990, online 2000
- Mean date of last article
 - 2005 – 520 (47%)
 - 2004 – 474 (42.86%)
 - 2003 or earlier – 112 (10.13%)

Number of articles

- Mean number of articles per year
 - 39 articles over all years
 - Cf previous study – mean 41 in 2004

What does this tell us?

- DOAJ overestimates the number of active OA journals by approximately 15%

Should publishers be worried about Open Access journals?

- Publication charges need to be set at a level which covers costs and makes enough extra for the journal's operations
- Or another source of revenue needs to be found
- Authors may not be willing (or able) to pay charges at that level
- Authors seem to prefer to publish in the journal that is most beneficial to their career (e.g. highest Impact Factor), regardless of whether or not it is OA

How can publishers experiment?

- An 'Optional OA' experiment, assuming the price is correctly set, has no risk – if authors don't take the option, nothing is lost
- Delayed OA is only risky if the delay is short enough to affect subscriptions; this depends on subject area, frequency of publication
- Therefore, OA journals are not really a threat to publishers
- Self-archiving, however, is much more worrying

THANK YOU!

sally.morris@alpsp.org