

## Read and Publish: What Can Libraries Expect?

Josh Horowitz

*Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)*, [jhorowitz@hq.acm.org](mailto:jhorowitz@hq.acm.org)

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## Read and Publish: What Can Libraries Expect?

*Josh Horowitz, Digital Library & Advertising Sales Director, Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), jhorowitz@hq.acm.org*

*The following is a summary of a presentation by Josh Horowitz at the Charleston Conference, November 7, 2018.*

First, I'd like to say thanks to AIP for organizing this panel discussion. I'm here to present ACM's perspective as a medium-sized society publisher on the current OA landscape and the trend of "Read and Publish" licensing. ACM is active in many industry OA initiatives and allows for Green OA posting without embargo for preprint versions of their articles, but rather than focus on these policies and activities, due to time constraints I would rather point everyone to ACM.org's Publications webpages for more information.

The current OA landscape presents great opportunity for ACM, but also significant danger. I'd first like to give a quick snapshot of ACM's constituent communities. ACM has a sustainability issue in that of about 2,700 institutions worldwide that subscribe to our Digital Library, only about one-third publish articles with ACM. Thus, the classic "long tail" sustainability problem is raised when the push for an APC-based revenue model increases. If the currently subscribing but nonpublishing libraries no longer pay for access, ACM must rely on the smaller group of APC-purchasing institutions to cover publication costs.

This said, the current "long tail" model is not ideal for ACM, because when viewing the all-important "cost per article downloaded" metric, it is clear the top research institutions are being subsidized by the many smaller, less research-intensive institutions. This can be seen by the fact that many of the top institutions are paying pennies per article while the smaller institutions are paying many dollars per article. This

model is not sustainable for ACM and has been long recognized as such. My view is it would be preferable if ACM could fully flip to a model in which 100% of its revenues are coming from the top research institutions. This would better align ACM's sustainability with its most active researchers and authors; the challenge, however, is how to make that flip sustainably. I would be curious if this is similar to the situation being faced by other publishers in the room.

In addition to having a better-aligned sustainability model, our internal studies have shown that OA articles vs. non-OA articles in the same journal (ACM has a mostly Hybrid OA model for its journals) show 1.5x to 3x more usage and 1x to 2x more citations. Thus, we believe that a widescale transition to OA is best for authors, best for ACM, and best for science.

The trick is in how to make this transition in a sustainable way. Beyond the organizational sustainability risk already mentioned, moving too fast to OA publications risks a loss in author submissions because many would be forced to pay for APCs without the funding infrastructure to fully support it. Finally, I believe there could be the danger that if the large commercial publishers see an opportunity to capitalize on funding infrastructure (which is not yet there but may be soon), they may flip prestigious journals to force the APC market to come to them, and thus lead to further pricing and editorial monopoly.

ACM is interested in talking to any libraries and consortia about hybrid R&P deals. We have had positive feedback in our initial discussions, and I am happy to discuss further with any interested parties here in Charleston. Thank you.