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Publisher Profile: Marcel Dekker, Inc.

Editor

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our oldest and most successful are the *Journal of Liquid Chromatography* and *Synthetic Communications*. Dekker is also proud of the fact that roughly a third of our journals are sponsored by a society or association, which adds credibility that the journal is a key resource in the field. Dekker welcomes society sponsorships, since it is the members of those societies who write and read the articles in those journals. With society support and cooperation, we are better tuned into trends and adjust accordingly.

ATG: You mentioned above that you are publishing eBooks. Are they viable? How would you compare the different approaches by publishers offering eBooks as separate publisher-direct marketing collections like Oxford Online, or in aggregations like ebrary or OCLC's netlibrary?

DD: eBooks are a key part of Dekker's

strategy of giving researchers what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. We have been developing an eBook strategy for our site for some time and are now on the verge of launching the first collection of 360 titles on dekker.com. We have been very active with eBooks and there are presently over 2000 Dekker eBooks available on netLibrary.

ATG: What are/were some of your milestones with digital content initiatives? Where are you today?

DD: Dekker first ventured into digital publishing in 1997, when we offered static PDF for select journals on the first version of our Website, dekker.com. Our new site, which launched in 2000, is light years ahead in terms of content, functionality, and searching. It currently offers customers instant access to all Dekker journals and encyclopedias in both HTML and PDF formats and features a two-minute fulltext preview of online content — not just the abstracts — prior to purchasing. We are confident that

the quality of our products is of the highest standard, and we're not shy about demonstrating it, even prior to purchase.

ATG: With all of the changes in the industry, would you say Dekker is moving away from traditional book publishing?

DD: The book business is still a core aspect of Dekker's strategy and will continue to be as long as they remain essential to customers. I think if anything, Dekker's book program has matured in a very healthy way over the years. In 2002 Dekker published over 200 new book titles. The majority of our books tend to be professional reference, and they are extremely comprehensive; we pride ourselves on their quality, quantity, and extended-usability. We are especially proud of our book program in the fields of Pulmonary Medicine, Separation Science, and Surface Science.

ATG: Any plans to deliver medical content to hand-held devices?

DD: Dekker has initiated a multi-pronged eBook initiative, which in addition to partnering with key eBook distributors, also includes the launch of a major eBook offering, Dekker Digital, on dekker.com in 2003. Plans to deliver appropriate content to hand-held devices are definitely in the works, but they will be shaped by the success of other Dekker eBook efforts and identifying how well our content suits the PDA market.

ATG: From the publisher's perspective, what is the value of digital content to academic librarians?

DD: I think digital content has enabled libraries to increase the breadth of their collections without concern for space limitations, and it provides a solution to archiving historical works. In this current economic climate of major budget cuts, digital content also provides a less expensive alternative and does not compromise the quality of material offered to patrons. In turn, digital content is proving indispensable to researchers, educators, and students whose needs for cutting-edge information are time-sensitive. As publishers of scholarly material, Dekker has witnessed this demand firsthand, which we have responded to aggressively.

ATG: Do you see search engines like Google as a friend or a foe?

DD: Both. Libraries and users benefit from search engines in that they serve as research tools that allow capacity beyond the confines of a library's holdings. Their navigation abilities in helping users pinpoint exactly what they're looking for are revolutionary. In turn, they are also a friend to Dekker, in that they direct a tremendous number of users to Dekker content and to the Dekker site.

Customization of distribution sites also helps facilitate this process. If a user enters the dekker.com from a computer at, say, UCLA, the site will recognize the user and display "Welcome UCLA member." The greeting notifies the user that their library is affiliated with Dekker and lets them know whether or not they have pre-existing access to a product through their institution. If the user finds that they don't have institutional access to a product, dekker.com gives them the option to view it on a pay-per-view basis.

ATG: And the cons?

DD: Well, despite the undeniable benefits, search engines present some obvious problems. First is whether Google users fit the profile of the typical premium content researcher. Next, out of the thousands

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publisher profiles encouraged

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No. Employees in US: 162

No. Employees in Switzerland: 8

No. Sales Representatives: 22

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