February 2013

Profile-Zac Rolnik

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2013) "Profile-Zac Rolnik," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 28.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6429>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

at NYU. We are also starting an occasional traditional journal when we see an opportunity in the marketplace — a new topic, a paradigm shift, a growing field — and still applying our same author copyright policies. Our first new journal, *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, edited by **Keith Krehbiel** at **Stanford** and **Nolan McCarty** at **Princeton**, was started in 2006 and accepted for coverage in the SSCI in 2007 going back to Volume 1.

ATG: You mention on your Website that now publishers “deploys a liberal and fair copyright policy.” What does that mean? How does it impact your authors? What about libraries?

ZR: I never understood why authors had to transfer their copyright to the publisher in order to get published in the academic/scientific marketplace. It was the authors’ intellectual property, and all the publisher really needed was a license to distribute the work. I realize that many publishers “consent to publish agreement” allows the author to retain many proprietary rights, but it often requires the author to request permission. Said permissions were often not cleared quickly, and it was inefficient. Furthermore, if an author was to reuse their content for teaching, why should they have to ask permission for using their own work?

ATG: What about libraries and other faculty? Does this mean that they would have to ask the author for his/her permission to use the work?

ZR: The authors’ institution and subscribing institutions have access with almost no limitations. An author is free to distribute their work to a colleague for research or teaching purposes. And there is nothing to stop someone from asking the author for the article — this happens all the time with journals. But if you wanted to teach from the article or reuse the article in any commercial setting, it is probably best to contact the author (for teaching use) and the Publisher for any commercial reuse.

ATG: Is print-on-demand a cornerstone of your business, or do you consider yourselves primarily a digital publisher?

ZR: We consider ourselves a publisher who offers our content in multiple formats. While our primary publications are digital, if a customer wants print, we offer print, and we do this via print-on-demand vendors. It works very well for us and allows us to satisfy the customers’ format needs.

ATG: Overall, can you comment on the new eBooks and print book formats that are emerging? Where does now publishers see itself fitting into the equation?

ZR: We tend to be more focused on the content first — what is in demand in the marketplace? Is there a need for this content? Do the authors and editors represent the best minds on these topics? Then we focus on format, giving consideration to the end users of our content. Since we are a small publisher we are not taking the lead technologically on new eBook formats, but we always try to comply

against the grain people profile

President and Publisher (and Co-Founder)
now publishers

P.O. Box 1024, Hanover, MA 02339

Phone: +1-781-871-0245 • Fax: +1-781-871-6172

<zac.rolnik@nowpublishers.com> • www.nowpublishers.com

Zac Rolnik

BORN AND LIVED: I was born and raised in Bayonne, NJ, spent two summers in an NSF high school biology program at **UT Austin**, went to college at the **University of Rochester**, and graduate school in Cambridge, MA. After spending a couple of years in Washington, DC, I returned to the Boston area and have lived here since with the exception of a two-year work assignment in the Netherlands.

EARLY LIFE: I was a science nerd, loved science fairs, biology class, and chemistry experiments.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: After receiving my Masters degree in Public Policy from **Harvard**, I worked for the U.S. Department of the Treasury in the Office of the Secretary. I had a good job but was not happy. A college friend worked at **Kluwer Academic Publishers** as an acquisitions editor and it sounded interesting. One thing led to another, and long story short, I spent 17 years at **Kluwer** including two years in the Netherlands. I left **Kluwer** as Vice President of Global Publishing.

FAMILY: I have known my wife, **Diana Murray**, for 29 years, and we have been married for 20 years. Our daughter **Olivia** is 15 years old and we have a six-year-old Belgian Shepherd.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I love to cook (and eat). Believe it or not, even with all my work travel, I still love to travel.

FAVORITE BOOKS: I’m a foodie, so probably something like *Map of Another Town* by **MFK Fisher** or *A Year in Provence* by **Peter Mayle**.

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Starting my own business.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I believe that the proliferation of scholarly information on the Web will increase the demand for information professionals (librarians, subscription vendors, publishers) to help information consumers (students, researchers, professors, professionals) find, evaluate, and assimilate the unmanageable level of data available to them. On the business side, this will continue to drive new entries into the market, often to be eventually swallowed up by larger players in the market. But in five years my guess is most of us will still be doing what we do in this interesting business we inhabit. 🐘

with the latest industry standards and adopt new delivery mechanisms to continue to meet our customers’ needs.

ATG: We notice that you have formed partnership with **Edward Elgar Publishing, Ltd** and **World Scientific Publishing** to market your products. How does that work? You mention that you will provide effective non-intrusive marketing for all our products. Please define non-intrusive marketing.

ZR: Both **Edward Elgar Publishing** and **World Scientific Publishing** were interested in our new publication model and are investor-partners in our business. Early on we used **EEP** for some marketing activities, but that has ended and in effect **EEP** is a “silent” partner in our business but sit on our board. We have a closer working relationship with **WSPC** in that we use one of their subsidiaries for our production work and they market and sell our content in their local markets in Southeast Asia.

By non-intrusive marketing we mean we

put a lot of effort into targeting our marketing to the individual receiving our message. We do not undertake a scatter-gun approach, sending out large mailings or mass emailings. We research our intended recipients and send them information only relevant to their particular interests. For example, a professor in Finance will not get any information from us pertaining to a journal in Marketing.

ATG: Your model seems more attuned to the needs of individuals. In fact, you have only mentioned libraries briefly in your comments. Where do they fit in? What percentage of your customer base do they represent? Are there librarians on your board?

ZR: Thank you, our model is attuned to the needs of the individual — the researcher or the student. We want to help the researcher do their research and the student to learn from the most recent research by making research accessible. At the same time, I do not think

continued on page 46