Publisher Profile-now publishers

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
(2013) "Publisher Profile-now publishers," Against the Grain: Vol. 25: Iss. 1, Article 33.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6434

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.
we have left out the library, and our policies are very customer-centric and focused on the library. These include our liberal licensing policies including being an early adopter of OER, our business model providing for unlimited concurrent access, unlimited downloads, no DRM to make things user-friendly, and perpetual access with no extra fees. We archive our content via Portico. And so on… But many of these policies are based on constant feedback we get from the library community.

When we travel, we spend time speaking with both the academics (authors/end-users) and librarians. Probably 20% of our time is spent meeting librarians. While the library is our most important revenue source, they are an even more important source of ideas and feedback. We also try to attend smaller, more focused library conferences like ACRL, ER&L, NASIG and Charleston. You ask about our “board”… We actually don’t have an advisory board per se. While we have lots of friends who advise us, we have never set up a formal board.

**ATG:** What is the access model for libraries that subscribe to your content? IP address? Does now publishers host its own content, or are there aggregators involved? Do libraries have to pay a role in hosting content?

**ZR:** Access is via IP authentication. We currently host our own content and will be moving to a new platform in the first quarter of 2013. We are pleased to be working with Semantico on this, who will redesign and reengineer our existing platform using their highly respected technologies Scolaris and SAMS. Scolaris will vastly improve our discoverability by providing intelligent, full-text search with rich taxonomy support for searching and browsing.

We have licensed our content to aggregators in the past, but question the value of offering our content through these channels going forward. On occasion we found our content sublicensed to other channels that may or may not have been beneficial to our business. As a result, we have terminated our licensing deals effective January 1, 2013, and we will see if we can expand coverage through our platform with Semantico.

I am not sure if libraries have a role in hosting content — is this really part of their mission? I do believe the libraries have a role (as do publishers) to make content discoverable. We as publishers need to make it accessible. We deploy certain technologies on our hosting platforms to make our content accessible to librarians and academics, which may work less efficiently if hosting of content was diffused across library hosts. But I am not a techie and could be missing something here.

**ATG:** Your content focus is on business and technology. Do you have any plans to expand your list into other subject areas? What can we look for from now publishers in the future?

**ZR:** We have been very deliberate in choosing the areas in which we publish. We were looking for robust research areas that were currently not being served by major review/reference publications. We feel that business, economics, computer science, and electrical engineering are active research areas with international markets. We are looking to expand both organically and through partnerships with other publishers or societies. Currently, all of the journals that we publish are new and started from scratch. While we would always look to acquire journals from societies and publishers, we find that most of the content available for sale is either of relatively low quality or gets bid up in price by the big publishers. So we focus on organic growth.

Some examples of new growth include expanding in our existing areas as well as launching journals in new areas adjacent to our existing product so we can best serve those markets. In 2014 we will start a new set of Foundations and Trends journals in energy including FnrT Energy Markets and Policy, FnrT in Electric Energy Systems, and FnrT Renewable Energy. In addition, we are selectively starting new journals in business and economics including three new journals in 2014 — Journal of Law, Finance and Accounting in partnership with NYU and Harvard Law School, Review of Behavioral Economics, and the Journal of Marketing Behavior with the European Marketing Academy.

Starting publications in a new area is relatively expensive. You have to hire a publisher, including all associated costs (travel, marketing, etc.) and it can take three years or more until you start to actively publish content — this can easily cost you more than $250k before you even start to see any revenue. So we have reached out to other publishers or societies who have an existing position in the marketplace to try and “franchise” the concept. We have just signed a deal with Brill Academic Publishing to establish a program of reference journals in some areas where they have a strong editorial presence — classics, international law, and linguistics. We are very excited to work with Brill in these areas since they have well-respected publishing programs in these areas and have a good reputation in the trade.

**ATG:** Why did you name your company “now publishers”? Is NOW an acronym that has special meaning? Does it have a special connotation or speak to what you hope to bring to the industry, researchers, and libraries?