The Development of Library-Led Publishing Services at the University of Utah

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1 IN THIS CHAPTER

Theme

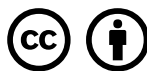Assessment & pilot publishing projects

Highlighted Services

Print, multi-media e-content, web-hosting

Software/Platforms Utilized

Booktype, Omeka, OmniUpdate, Pressbooks & Wordpress

Resources

Assessment model & online publishing platforms compared

In the last decade, scholarly communication has shifted. A lot. Not just from digital and networked technology, new information policies, or the open access movement, but also from a rise in publishing programs in academic libraries. As noted in a series of reports from the Association of Research Libraries (Hahn, 2008), ITHAKA S+R (Brown et al., 2007), the Scholarly Publishing Academic Resources Coalition (Crow, 2009) and the Institute of Museum & Library Services (Mullins et al., 2012), libraries "have begun to expand their role in the scholarly publishing value chain by offering a greater range of pre-publication and editorial support services" (Mullins, p. 5). This represents a new role for librarians as curators of traditional content and collections. However, when you think of them as builders of digital

libraries, similar skill sets and tools are more obvious: market analysis; needs assessment; project management; web design; layout; proofreading; robust technical infrastructure; metadata standards; good relationships with authors, creators, and vendors; copyright; and contract expertise. This chapter will describe the experiences at the Marriott and Quinney Libraries at the University of Utah in developing library-led publishing services.

Publishing Services Model

In the IMLS study *Library Publishing Services: Strategies for Success*, more than half of ARL-member libraries indicated they offer, or are interested in offering, publishing services (Mullins et al., 2012). According to the study, "the vast majority of library publishing programs were launched in order to contribute to change in the scholarly publishing system, supplemented by a variety of other mission-related motivations" (p. 6). Mission-driven rationale depends on sources of funding. Most publishing service units in libraries report the following as primary funding sources: library budget allocation, temporary institutional funding, and grant support. Many of these library publishers, however, expect a "greater percentage of future funding to come from service fees, product revenue, charge-backs, royalties, and other program-generated income."

At the University of Utah, we established a theoretical publishing services model based on these potential sources of revenue and funding, as well as the changing scholarly publishing landscape. Our model has three main components:

- Faculty needs
- Reader demand
- Feasibility

Faculty Needs

One example of change in scholarly publishing is supporting the scholar whose book does not have popular appeal or high sales potential. Some publishers have argued for a two-tiered scholarly publishing system in order to address the low-revenue-producing book. In a 1997 interview with August Fruge, long-time director of University of California Press, this idea emerged (Riess & Fruge, 1997). Fruge argued for on-demand publishing, envisioning the traditional book trade as one level of scholarly publishing, combined with a second, lower level of on-demand trade. This second level of publishing would be limited to brief prose and a bibliography and handled in the same way as dissertations. The publisher would prepare camera-ready copy, print a small run, and maintain the film so that "if somebody wanted one they could always print [it] off" (p. 107). Fruge argued that this is "really […] closer to a library service than it is to publishing," pointing out that "you have to make some effort to sell it" (p. 108). Our model focuses on this second level of book and seeks to address these two elements: on-demand publishing as a library service and making an effort to sell it.

Reader Demand

Making an effort to sell something, as Fruge phrased it, means understanding its target market and estimating potential reader demand. While library services may not be at the same level as the traditional book trade, determining reader demand remains an important element to any publishing venture. After all, if there is no readership, justifying the effort and expense to create a product becomes very difficult. Having not yet discovered how to accurately estimate reader demand, we rely on our experiences and common sense. Despite this, it serves a primary role of counter-balancing faculty need and informs our scoring model.

> ...determining reader demand remains an important element to any publishing venture

Feasibility

Library publishing services require the right skills, expertise, and technological infrastructure, especially when offering on-demand services. Many traditional library processes can translate to publishing: acquisitions, contracts, risk-taking, production workflow, distribution, and preservation.

In order to ensure success, we chose projects where we had existing expertise and infrastructure. For example, our competency in video digitization allowed us to address multimedia publishing needs. For print-on-demand that Fruge discusses, we already operate an Espresso Book Machine (Riess & Fruge, 1997). For long-term preservation, we can utilize our recently launched digital preservation program. And for web interfaces needed in publishing projects, we can rely on a web development team within Library IT.

Fruge indicated that the "dividing line between the author and the publisher—what they do—has to move over a step" (p. 108). This means the author, using today's word processing tools, develops a manuscript nearly good enough for immediate publishing. While libraries may have limited editorial expertise, they can use freelance editors to prepare final manuscripts, and using existing digital library infrastructure, publish and widely distribute the work in various formats.

Faculty Needs Assessment at the University of Utah

In order to ground our model and establish a foundation for publishing services, we conducted a faculty needs assessment on our campus. First, faculty received an email inviting them to a web survey on publishing activities. The survey addressed past publishing practices, identified current publishing activities and needs, and gauged their interest in partnering with us. Fifty-seven faculty members from social sciences, sciences, law and the humanities

participated. Survey results indicated the majority published journal articles more frequently than invited chapters, book-length monographs, or textbooks (see Figure 1). Over three-quarters identified their research as interdisciplinary. When comparing their colleagues' publishing needs to their own, a majority described their colleagues as "maybe" having similar needs while others identified their colleagues as having needs similar to their own.
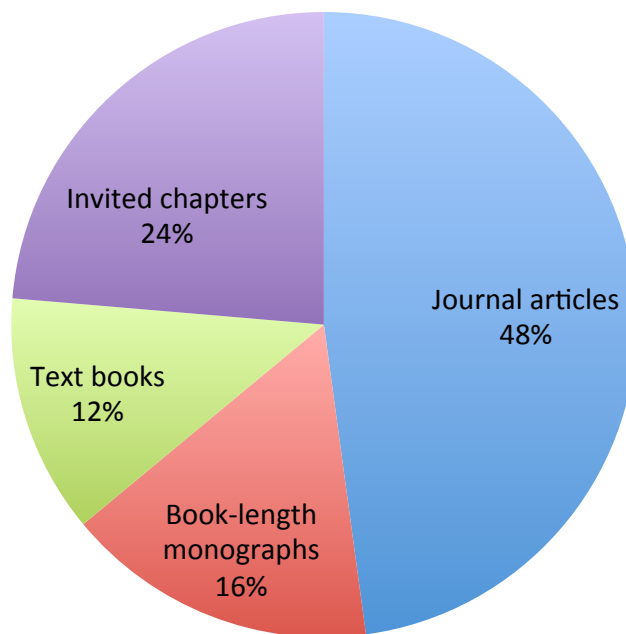
Figure 1

Types of Publications

Figure 1: Type of publication most frequently produced.

Nearly half of the respondents expressed interest in having their work available on the Web (see Figure 2). When asked if there were additional materials not currently supported by traditional publishing with their published work, a little over a third of respondents indicated there were. When asked to rank additional materials and/or services they would like to have included with their published work, a third of respondents indicated long-term preservation, closely followed by print-on-demand and the ability to add content over time as other top priorities (see Figure 3). Two-thirds indicated that they would consider taking advantage of platforms for web publishing provided by the library (see Figure 4). See Appendix A for the full survey results.
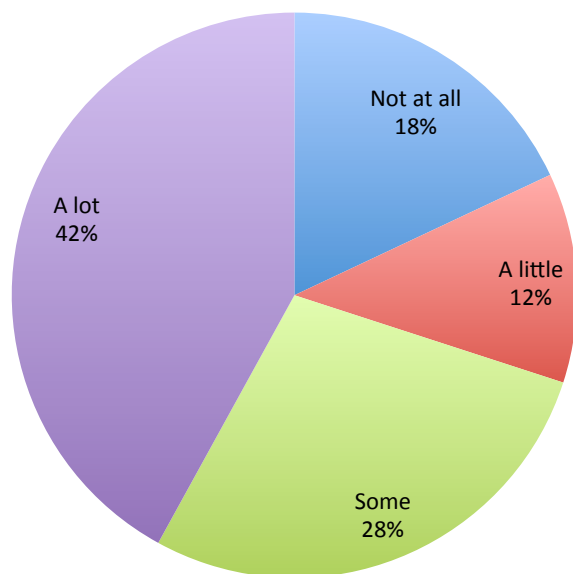
Figure 2

Interest in having work on web

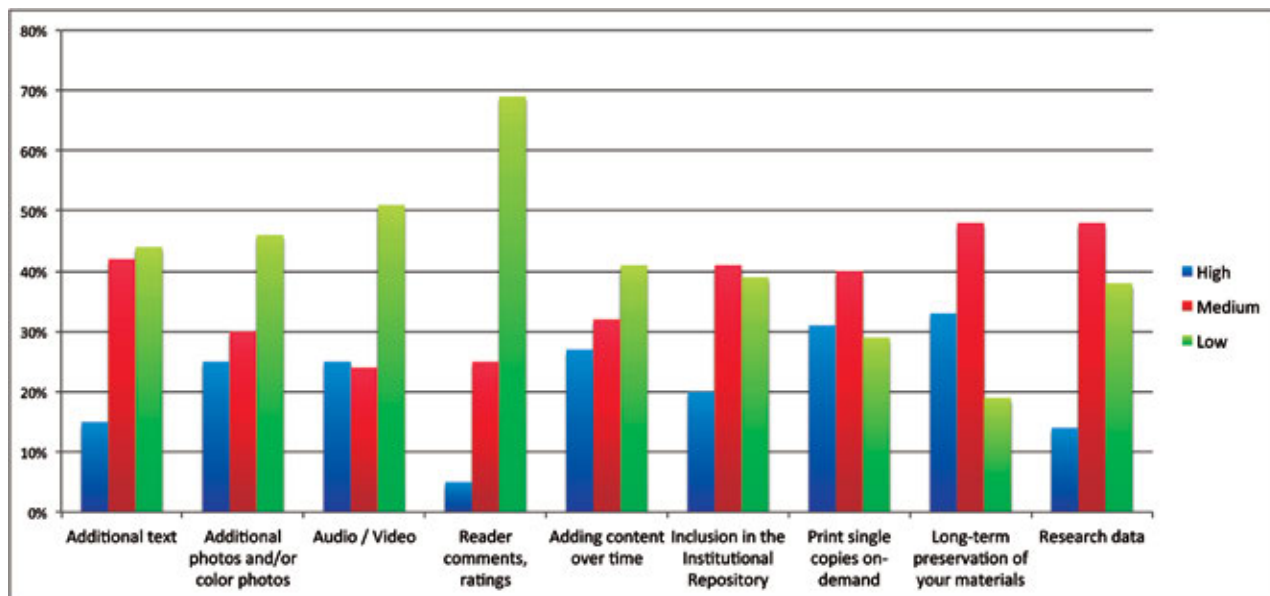*Figure 2: Interest in having work available on the Web.*

Figure 3

Figure 3: Need for additional services and materials.

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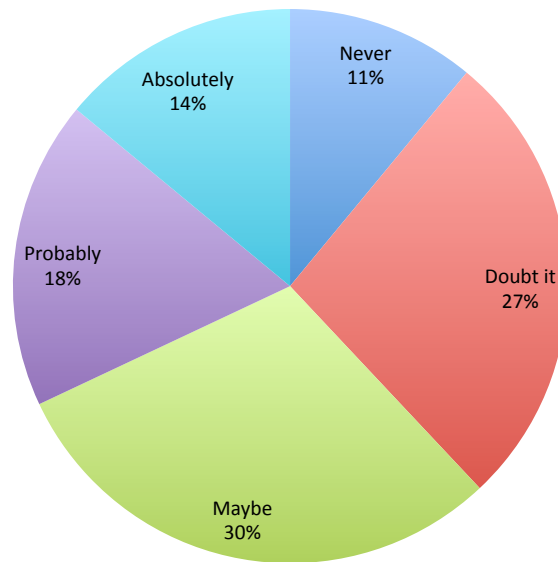**Would you use library publishing services if they were available?**

Figure 4: Likelihood of using library-based publishing services.

Forty percent of respondents were interested in a follow-up interview. These interviews became the basis for the second phase of our needs assessment. During this phase we provided each interviewee with more details about the library's interest in publishing services. We also asked them about their research interests and current publishing projects. Our questions addressed publishing trends in their discipline, determined if they had research results that were not being published but they wished could be, and asked what support they needed for publishing and for long-term preservation. Several faculty delved into the many possible angles of presenting their scholarly communications in a digital environment. The role of copyright in student and faculty works' accessibility on the Web was another area of heightened interest.

Through the course of the interviews, several opportunities for pilot projects emerged, each of which could address a specific need or set of needs. We selected a range of pilots to assess our capabilities to support different types of publishing projects. Whether the pilots succeeded or failed, they would collectively serve as a litmus test of our ability to provide independent publishing services.

We initiated a series of five pilot projects that utilized library resources, personnel, and expertise. The pilots included an online text-based sourcebook, choreographed dance pieces, an architecture thesis with supplemental multimedia, and an e-anthology of mixed media (text, image, video). Combined, they addressed the amalgamated types of publishing we saw ourselves offering: print-on-demand, web hosting, design, organization, metadata, and access.

Once the projects were launched, we examined several technological platforms that could provide infrastructure for publishing services. We assessed Booktype, Omeka, OmniUpdate,

Pressbooks, and Wordpress. We created small-scale prototypes for each and ultimately decided on Wordpress because it performed best in presenting the pilot projects and was scalable, extensible, and intuitive to use. For a summary of our findings on the software evaluations, please see Appendix B.

Reader Demand and Feasibility: The Scoring Model

In order to address reader demand and feasibility, we created a project assessment, or scoring, model based on the following criteria:

- Service to the university
- Alignment with future direction
- Revenue-generation potential
- Feasibility
- Longevity
- Audience/marketing plan/needs assessment
- Staff-time and resource commitment
- Equipment and software required

Design

These eight criteria were thoroughly reviewed and consolidated into four broad categories: Audience, Innovation/Risk, Feasibility/Cost, and Longevity/Impact. The categories were then weighted by assigning percentages to each in order to reflect its relative importance.

The weighted-average scoring model (Weighted Mean, 2013) is illustrated in detail below. The categories, listed in order of importance, assess the value of each project, based on the scores they received.

> Most important were new and innovative projects that address an unmet need within the community. We realized that these types of projects were inherently risky, but believed that innovation and originality generally outweigh any risks involved.

<u>Audience</u>   45%

- Marketing plan /needs assessment

- Service to the university

- Revenue-generation potential

<u>Innovation/Risk</u>   25%

- Novelty/unusual/creative/inventive/not something that libraries normally do

- Setting a new standard/delivering a new product or service/finding new customer groups

<u>Feasibility/Costs</u>   20%

- Staff time and resource commitment

- Equipment, software, purchases required

- End-of-project costs

<u>Longevity/Impact</u>   10%

- Sustainable over time or one-time impact

- Capacity-building/ability to lead to future projects

Audience: We defined audience as any member of the university community or the public as a whole. We considered Audience to be the most important of the four categories, as community engagement and revenue-generating potential were key factors to the success of a project.

Innovation/Risk: Most important were new and innovative projects that address an unmet need within the community. We realized that these types of projects were inherently risky, but believed that innovation and originality generally outweigh any risks involved.

Feasibility/Cost: Institutional resources, including staff time, equipment, and facility costs, were included, as were the resources required to carry the project into the future.

Longevity/Impact: Too often, projects are undertaken without considering long-term sustainability, or the project's potential to build capacity among its stakeholders. We considered the project's impact beyond the present, favoring those with the potential to meet these criteria.

To "score" a project, we simply rated each category on a five-point scale (1 being low and 5 being high), multiplied that rating by the category's percentage, and added up these individual category scores for the total project score, which is also on a five-point scale.

Implementation

We implemented the model by scoring each of the five publishing services pilots. From that point, we expanded the model's application to assess a larger number of revenue-generating projects being considered by a separate library committee. Our general project evaluation process is as follows.

Each pilot receiving a score of 2 or higher progressed to the expanded assessment phase. Anything with a score of less than 2 was rejected from further consideration. A score of 2 to 3.7 placed a pilot in the "maybe" category. In certain circumstances, these projects may be scored more competitively, depending on the overall quantity and quality of the projects being assessed at the time. Pilots with a score of 3.8 or higher were considered to have greatest potential for success and were moved into the development phase.

Each project needs a facilitator—referred to as a "wrangler"—from the committee to shepherd it through the scoring process. The project's author, or client, communicates the initial project idea via posting to an online "Idea Wall," which all committee members check regularly for new submissions. The appointed wrangler claims the project and facilitates committee meetings and scoring model activities. Clients meet with the committee and are informed of the scoring model results and the criteria used for assessing the project's potential. The wrangler keeps the client informed of the group's decisions and facilitates all communications.

If the project scores highly enough, it continues along a path to development and moves into a work queue. If the project has a low score, clients may address the project's deficiencies and submit it for a second scoring. If there is a disagreement between the client and the committee about the scoring, clients have the option to present their case to the library's Executive Committee.

Conclusion

In the near term, we plan to complete our pilot projects, some of which need finishing pieces from the authors. Two key learnings from our pilots have been to start with finalized content, rather than works-in-progress, and to have service-level agreements in place to guide our progress and contain the project's scope. This aspect will be reflected in our longer-term goal to move towards a tiered service model as described in the Publishing Services Model section.

The theoretical publishing services model, along with the scoring model, allow the Marriott and Quinney Libraries to strategically move forward with providing a relevant service to faculty, innovative products, and quality scholarly materials for readers.

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APPENDIX A – Full Survey Results

1. Are your academic publications typically: (click all that apply)			
Journal articles		51	89%
Book-length monographs		17	30%
Text books		13	23%
Invited chapters		25	44%
Other, please specify		6	11%
2. Do you consider your research field interdisciplinary?			
Yes		44	79%
No		12	21%
Total		56	100%
3. Are there additional materials, not currently supported by traditional publishing, that you would like to include with your published work?			
Yes		19	36%
No		34	64%
Total		53	100%
4. How interested are you in having your work available on the web?			
Not at all		10	18%
A little		7	12%
Some		16	28%
A lot		24	42%
Total		57	100%

5. How high/low is your need for including each of the following as additional materials in your publications?			
Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	High	Medium	Low
Additional text	8	23	24
	15%	42%	44%
Additional photos and/or color photos	14	17	26
	25%	30%	46%
Audio / Video	14	13	28
	25%	24%	51%
Reader comments, ratings	3	14	38
	5%	25%	69%
Adding content over time	15	18	23
	27%	32%	41%
Inclusion in the Institutional Repository	11	22	21
	20%	41%	39%
Print single copies on-demand	17	22	16
	31%	40%	29%
Long-term preservation of your materials	18	26	10
	33%	48%	19%
Research data	8	27	21
	14%	48%	38%

6. Are you currently researching/writing a work for publication?			
Yes		50	89%
No		6	11%
Total		56	100%

7. If "yes" on question 6, do you need technical assistance, equipment, or facilities to create multi-media materials?			
Yes		12	24%
No		37	76%
Total		49	100%

8. If "yes" on question 6, would you take advantage of a technological platform and/or other services for web publishing provided by the University Libraries?

Never		5	11%
Doubt it		12	27%
Maybe		13	30%
Probably		8	18%
Absolutely		6	14%
Total		44	100%

9. If "yes" on question 6, would you be willing to offer your publication as a pilot for new services offered by the University Libraries?

Yes		21	50%
No		21	50%
Total		42	100%

10. What is your academic department?

57 Responses			

11. Are your publishing needs typical of other colleagues in your department?

No		7	12%
Maybe		33	58%
Yes		17	30%
Total		57	100%

12. Would you further assist us with a face-to-face interview?

Yes		27	47%
No		30	53%
Total		57	100%

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APPENDIX B: 5 Softwares Assessment, January 2012

Omeka: http://omeka.org/

Although Omeka has features for managing exhibits, videos, images, and document viewing, it is not that intuitively designed. It's not readily apparent how to integrate its features in a seamless way. In the production workspace, features appear in separate tabs/functions so it isn't obvious how one coordinates and manages the blending of these features to produce an object containing multiple file types. Omeka has a learning curve. It's simple to add files; however, the trial and error would come in experimenting with the variety of displays. It would seem that this flexibility would be a good thing, but it only served to make Omeka even less intuitive.

Pressbooks: http://pressbooks.com/

Pressbooks is designed with a book format in mind and handles image files relatively well with some minor caveats. The layout favors a portrait- as opposed to landscape-oriented book, which works better with displaying images. There are multi-faceted options available for customizing individual images that would assist in improving image display. However, for the purposes of the pilot, no image adjustments were performed. As Pressbooks is meant for the traditional text-heavy book, it is not quite as versatile as one would like when it comes to representing interactive multimedia. A bonus of Pressbooks is its ability to export to mobile devices, including the iPad and iPhone, and (with a little extra effort) adding it to a Kindle library.

OmniUpdate: http://omniupdate.com/

OmniUpdate has six or so basic display templates to work with. It has the versatility you would want for a website but wasn't adequate for presenting a non-traditional publication. We ran into issues with using images and videos. Due to these constraints, the pilot in OmniUpdate was cut short.

BookType: http://www.sourcefabric.org/en/booktype/

Booktype does not currently manage videos, although it has been reported this functionality is under discussion in Booktype's user forum. Booktype includes five different "publish this book" formats: Book, e-book, Lulu.com, Screen PDF, and Open Document Text. Each publication method includes additional configurable settings. E-book was selected, and among the setting options were iPad, Kindle, and General. General was used as a default for the pilot. Booktype has the ability to customize headers, fonts, etc.; adds a custom CSS; and retains basic formatting in Word documents but not in PDF text documents.

Wordpress: http://wordpress.org/

The Wordpress pilot included text, images, and videos. Because of the Web version's 250MB file limit, Wordpress was installed on a local server. The Wordpress platform is intuitive, extensible, and stable. Wordpress plugins have been useful in managing different aspects of the pilot, including producing printable PDFs and screening spam aimed at comment strings. There are several plugins that support adding, organizing, and presenting images in galleries and slideshows. Wordpress allows for the .mp3 filetype and is compatible with YouTube.