

A Case Study in Open Access Journal Publishing at Syracuse University: Library and University Press Partnership Furthers Scholarly Communications

Yuan Li, Suzanne E. Guiod, & Suzanne Preate
Syracuse University

3

IN THIS CHAPTER

Theme

Working with a university press to host and manage journal publishing

Highlighted Service

Online journal hosting & publishing

Software/Platforms Utilized

Digital Commons by bepress & Open Journal Systems

Resources

Division of roles & duties between partners



Syracuse University is driven by its mission, “Scholarship in Action,” a commitment to forging bold, imaginative, reciprocal engagements with its many constituent local and global communities. These outward-looking engagements inevitably yield new forms of scholarship and new collaborative arrangements. To that end, open access (OA) journal publishing services are being developed at SU to meet the emerging needs of the campus community through a partnership between Syracuse University Libraries, Library Information and Technology Services (LITS), campus Information and Technology Services (ITS), and Syracuse University Press.

These services have been designed specifically to address faculty needs for new publishing venues, especially in interdisciplinary fields. The SU Libraries seek to provide faculty with non-commercial OA publishing venues, and the SU Press seeks to support research, teaching, and outreach at the university.

The SU Library launched its institutional repository (IR) in 2010 and started OA journal publishing services through its IR in 2011. As the number of faculty requests for e-journal publishing support increased, the SU Libraries began to explore a sustainable publishing service model, specifically the possibility of adopting an open source publishing system and collaborating with SU Press and ITS for complementary services. Two new OA journals are now in pilot stages under a joint library-press imprint, currently called Syracuse Unbound.

Using these two new OA journals—scheduled to publish inaugural issues during the 2013-14 academic year—as case studies, this paper will highlight the development of campus partnerships, share the implementation of publishing platforms and distributed workflows, and foster a discussion about innovative and collaborative strategies for SU Library publishing programs.

SU Institutional Repository and Digital Commons

In October 2010, SU launched its institutional repository, called SURface: Syracuse University Research Facility and Collaborative Environment. The repository was built using Digital Commons (DC), a system developed by bepress, which includes a journal publishing module. Through it, SU Library is able to provide basic publishing services for faculty, students, and researchers interested in starting a new e-journal, hosting and publishing an existing e-journal, or digitizing a print journal. Early projects included a campus magazine and an undergraduate student journal. The services we're able to offer through Digital Commons include hosting a standard e-journal site in SURface, migrating back issues to the site, helping to draft copyright guidelines, applying for E-ISSNs, helping with indexing and abstracting, and software training and demonstration.

New Demands

In 2011, the library was approached by the director of Imagining America (IA)—a national consortium focused on publicly engaged scholarship—with interest in developing a journal concept. The journal development team included a national group of IA scholars led by two SU professors in architecture and design. The result is *Public: A Journal of Imagining America*. This peer-reviewed journal required editorial expertise, sophisticated design, and user interface customization that the current DC platform was unable to support.

In early 2012, the director of the Syracuse University's LGBT Studies program reached out to the SU Libraries for support and guidance in publishing the *Journal of Diverse Sexualities*, "an open-access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to publishing scholarship, criticism, and commentary." This publishing model would encourage a broad readership beyond the academy.

Although this journal does not require the same level of customization as *Public*, it does require some design and editorial support and the ability to accommodate multimedia elements.

These requests exceeded our existing service capabilities. Subscribers to Digital Commons are allowed to host five journals without additional charges, but beyond that, a per-journal setup fee applies. This added cost could become a challenge for both the SU library and researchers, heightening the need to explore a different model for providing campus publishing support.

Open Source Publishing System Adoption

While Digital Commons provides a centrally hosted and maintained service, allowing libraries to focus staff resources on content acquisition and management, it is not fully customizable. The SU Libraries began looking for a system that was less expensive and more flexible, and as a result adopted Open Journal Systems (OJS), an open source software system developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), that is typically implemented, hosted, and maintained locally. This option offers hosting libraries flexibility and local control, but also requires dedicated technical staff and other resources (e.g., online storage). The best solution for a given library depends on a number of factors, such as the institution's size, technical capacity, and available resources. Working with campus ITS, the SU Libraries added OJS as an alternative to Digital Commons to meet the more sophisticated demands of these publishing projects. ITS provided server space for the OJS system and two pilot journals, as well as assistance with front-end design for one of the journals.

Library-Press Partnership

In addition to exploring open source systems, the library also sought a partner to assist with editorial consultation and production. Because SU Press had recently become administratively part of the library, SU Libraries administration viewed this as an opportunity for mutually beneficial collaboration. The library staff's skills in organizing, describing, managing, disseminating, and preserving scholarship and technical expertise in information management could complement the traditional publishing skills of a university press staff—peer review oversight, manuscript editorial management, design, marketing, and production.

For SU Press, the partnership offered an opportunity to collaborate closely with colleagues at the SU Libraries, to interact directly with SU faculty, and to offer its editorial and design services in a way that would support the dissemination of scholarship generated from within its host institution, a core value at the heart of the mission of most university presses. The partnership also allows the press to experiment with journal publishing without the additional burden of offering subscriptions and sales services. A partnership between the SU Libraries and SU Press to offer quality digital publishing services to faculty seemed natural, as both are charged with making available the intellectual output of scholars. The relationship also enables SU Press to take advantage of the SU Libraries' infrastructure and resources to contain costs.

Under the new partnership model, the SU Libraries provide more sustainable professional publishing services, including technical guidance and support; server space and administration; training and demonstration; digital preservation; E-ISSN application; DOI assignment; metadata consultation, abstracting/indexing services; editorial consulting, professional copyediting; and some design services. Together, building on the ITS infrastructure, the two entities offer a unique suite of scholarly communication services and support for SU faculty, staff, and students in response to the evolving needs of our research community.

The collaborative nature of this undertaking requires clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The roles and responsibilities are determined by a combination of project stakeholder input, available expertise, staff capacity, funding, and other specifications dictated by each journal's memorandum of understanding (MOU). Start-up costs are an important consideration, whether in real dollars (for server space, DOI registration, design consultation, Web programming, and editorial expertise) or in-kind staff time.

The roles and responsibilities are determined by a combination of project stakeholder input, available expertise, staff capacity, funding, and other specifications dictated by each journal's memorandum of understanding.

In our pilot phase, the roles are filled by staff from the campus and library IT, SU Press, and faculty departments. The OJS implementation process begins with software installation, server administration, and journal configuration. Campus ITS provides server space for each OJS journal and brings expertise to the interface development effort, while the library is responsible for software installation, server administration, full back-end configuration and minimal front-end customization, metadata consultation, and software training for faculty editors and SU Press staff. Once the software foundation is established, several workstreams emerge—technical, content, policy and procedural, editorial, and author support. SU Press staff has met regularly with the journals' faculty editors to advise on forming editorial boards, writing editorial policies, determining peer review procedures, and designing the look and feel of the journals. Professional copyediting and content layout will be managed by SU Press's editorial and production department. The workstreams are sometimes parallel, sometimes dependent, but all overlap at various points in the process and ultimately contribute to and follow a shared and sometimes complex timeline.

The following functional roles are represented in our pilot project and it is common for one stakeholder to assume several roles. Roles marked with an asterisk use OJS terminology to describe traditional responsibilities as well as elements specific to OJS software such as

workflow and system permission levels. This list could be used as a starting point for similar undertakings.

Functional Roles	Stakeholders			
	Faculty Initiator	SU Libraries	SU Press	Campus ITS
Project Managers	•	•	•	•
IT Analysts		•	•	•
Designers (logo, brand, interface)	•		•	
Metadata Librarian		•		
Policy Makers	•		•	
Copyright Consultants		•	•	
OJS Site Administrator*		•		
OJS Journal Managers*	•	•		
Editorial Board	•		•	
Managing Editor*	•			
Section Editors*	•		•	
Reviewers*	•			
Copyeditors*	•		•	
Layout Editors*	•		•	
Proofreaders*	•			

As we researched and developed services and software options, we identified specific stakeholder considerations in order to select the most appropriate platform for a given publishing scenario. Additionally, any resources faculty editors and other requestors bring to bear and their desired level of involvement in the process (as compared with a singular focus on the content) significantly impact the project direction. The capabilities and strengths of each system (OJS and Digital Commons) coupled with faculty needs and resources inform our workflows and the shape of our overall service model. As we investigate, test, and develop a sustainable suite of services, we find that a combination of priorities and other factors help us

to decide which platform to use for a given publishing project. The following questions assist in the articulation of requestor needs, priorities, and expectations:

- Is the journal new/born-digital or print-to-online?
- What is the timeline to launch?
- Will it be OA, delayed OA, or subscription?
- Are there dedicated staff/students available and at what time allocation?
- What staff expertise (e.g., editorial, design, technical) exists?
- Is there available funding and at what funding level?
- Does the journal require a personalized domain?
- Are there specific authentication needs (e.g., LDAP, Shibboleth, local, other)?
- Will the journal require an ISSN application/DOI assignment?
- What are the editorial, copyediting, and layout needs?
- What are the design and interface requirements? Does a logo, color scheme, or brand already exist?
- What are the file type requirements and support for ingest and output?
- What level of metadata consultation and creation is needed?
- What are the indexing requirements—OA, proprietary, or both?
- What kind of statistics/reporting options are desired?
- Are there additional tools and functionality needs, such as integrating a blog, wiki, user comments, tagging, etc.?
- What level and frequency of training is required?
- What level of technical support is required?

OJS was the right choice for this pilot program because of the sophisticated design requirements and user interface customization needs of one journal, including data extraction and manipulation, and because both journals would incorporate multimedia content.

Discussion

The library-press partnership has successfully helped our faculty to develop two OA journals and has allowed the SU Libraries to introduce enhanced publishing services to the campus community. The new service model has enabled us to overcome cost constraints on the number of journals we can publish and the customizations we can apply to the journal site, thereby better supporting faculty publishing needs. As our publishing services grow and mature, however, the need to discuss and develop a plan for sustaining these services increases. Possible approaches would include seeking new sources of funding to supplement the library's subsidy from our host institution, and developing fee-based service models for each journal

client. In order to justify a growing allocation of library resources to publishing services, the library must demonstrate the academic value of these services.

Fee-based service models can be developed in different ways. A tiered services menu, such as that used by Columbia University's Center for Digital Research and Scholarship (CDRS), could be implemented, and related costs could be shared with departments. Offering print-on-demand services could also be a possible channel for generating revenue. According to Mullins (2012), another possibility for a fee-based service model is to extend library service offerings beyond core campus constituencies—for example, providing publishing services to society-sponsored journals not affiliated with the institution, as in the case of Project Muse.

The demand from faculty and other campus constituencies for OA publishing outlets will only increase, and libraries must find efficient and cost-effective ways to meet those needs by drawing on existing resources, leveraging new and open source technologies, and forming collegial and reciprocal campus partnerships that will broaden the scope and improve the quality of its services. By using new technologies to make scholarship available to a wider audience, and by implementing and maintaining platforms for the open dissemination of peer-reviewed and carefully edited content, this collaboration between SU Library and SU Press advances scholarly communication and furthers Syracuse University's mission of "Scholarship in Action."

References

- Hahn, K. (2008). *Research Library Publishing Services: New Options for University Publishing*. Washington, DC: ARL. Retrieved from <http://www.arl.org/storage/documents/publications/research-library-publishing-services-mar08.pdf>
- Mullins, J. L., Murray-Rust, C., Ogburn, J. L., Crow, R., Ivins, O., Mower, A., Nesdill, D., Newton, M. P., Speer, J., & Watkinson, C. (2012). *Library Publishing Services: Strategies for Success: Final Research Report*. Washington, DC: SPARC. Retrieved from http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/purduepress_ebooks/24/