Scaling Up: Recovering Costs to Enable Mission-Driven Library Publishing

Welzenbach, Rebecca; Colman, Jason

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Scaling Up:
Recovering Costs to Enable Mission-Driven Library Publishing

Rebecca Welzenbach & Jason Colman
University of Michigan Library
Two truths (and a lie?)

Truth: We have reached the limits of our university base funding. If we want to grow, we need to find funds elsewhere.

Truth: there is money available, frequently in departments and units on our own campus. And amazingly, folks want to give it to us. But we need an appropriate way to ask for it and receive it.

Lie: That seems easy enough!
Plan

1. What should we do? (What have we tried already?)
2. How do we do it?
3. What do we have yet to do?
4. ....What should you do?
University of Michigan Press
In partnership with their authors and series editors, the Press publishes in a wide range of humanities and social science disciplines. With a rich history of publishing expertise, the Press leads in the development of digital scholarship and supports the dissemination of knowledge as widely and freely as possible.

Michigan Publishing Services
As experts in scholarly publishing, we provide a suite of publishing-related services to the University of Michigan to help increase the visibility, reach, and impact of scholarship.

Deep Blue
University of Michigan's permanent, safe, and accessible service for representing our rich intellectual community. Its primary goal is to provide access to the work that makes Michigan a leader in research, teaching, and creativity.
Michigan Publishing Services

As experts in scholarly publishing, we provide a suite of publishing-related services to the University of Michigan to help increase the visibility, reach, and impact of scholarship.

Books
Streamlined monograph publishing options designed to make high-quality scholarship available in print, eBook, and Web formats.

Journals
Affordable, efficient, integrated, born-digital publishing solutions for important journals in niche areas.

Digital Projects
Web-based collections that bring together research and primary sources to enrich diverse fields, from the humanities to medicine.

Course Materials
Services, including the Espresso Book Machine and other Print on Demand options, that help instructors enhance pedagogical impact.
FEATURED PUBLICATION

Feminist Studies

Feminist Studies publishes research and criticism that address theoretical issues and offer analyses of interest to feminist scholars across disciplines. Feminist Studies features theoretically sophisticated essays that make an original contribution and advance interdisciplinary scholarship regarding women and/or gender. In publication since 1972, Feminist Studies also publishes creative writing (poetry, fiction, memoirs), art work and art essays, book review essays, political and social commentaries, interviews and activist reports. Access to the online version of Feminist Studies is by subscription, and individual articles can be purchased on a pay-per-download basis.

http://quod.lib.umich.edu/f/fst/
Goals:

- Generate resources beyond our limited library funding;
- Subsidize OA projects with revenue-generating projects;
- Incentivize folks (especially but not only at U-M) to try open access by giving them a platform and support staff.
Goal:

Create a sense of value for our work and commitment on the part of our publishing partners
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<th>Task</th>
<th>Unit</th>
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<th>Rate</th>
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<td>if applicable), etc.</td>
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| Additional/Custom                   | Feature requests/ development       | Technology              | 0.00      | $27.00 | $0.00    |          |

| Estimated staff time                | costs to launch                     |                          |           |        |          |          |
| journal:                            |                                    |                          |           |        |          |          |

Some development may be needed—relevant to all publications, not unique to this one. Will work with PTG to plan this going forward.

This estimates only the initial set up and launch cost for Michigan Publishing staff. Does not include other resources or indirect costs (e.g., servers, lights), or staff time in other units (e.g., $849.00 Core Services)
What hasn’t worked well (for us)

- Subsidizing OA with revenue generating products
- A tier-based fee structure
- Charging external partners a significantly higher rate while waiving fees for UM-based partners
- Subventions
New goals: What do we want to do?

- Scale up sustainably
- Advertise services and recruit new offerings clearly and proactively
- Steward university resources well
- Ask our campus partners to invest/share the risk of taking on a publishing project
1. Find out how much it costs to do your work
2. Ask for that much money
So, how to get started?
Working with the Bureaucracy

- Be ready for invoicing to take extra time and effort
- Take advantage of programs like external Accounts Receivable
Recharge Rates

- A way of billing direct costs (e.g. salary) in your unit to other units, internal or external
- Required by Federal regulations for public institutions
- Might be called something else, like a “rebill”
What a Recharge Rate Looks Like (Fixed Menu)

Recharge Activity: XML Conversion
Performed by: Digital Publishing Technician
Salary: $35,000/year
Unit of activity: Article
Time spent per article: ½ hour
Times activity performed per year: 500 (250 hours)
% of FTE devoted to recharge: 12.5%
Recharge rate per article: $8.75 (internal) $11.38 (ext.)
What a Recharge Rate Looks Like (Hourly rates)

Recharge Activity: XML Conversion
Performed by: Digital Publishing Technician
Salary: $35,000/year
Unit of activity: hour
Hourly Rate: $17.50 (internal) $22.75 (external)
Hours activity performed per year: 250 hours
% of FTE devoted to recharge: 12.5%
Recharge Rates and your Budget

- Allocate portions of salaries to recharge account
- Attempt to estimate correctly
- If you’re off by more than ~3%, rebalance account at the end of each Fiscal Year (transfer funds in/out)
Setting up a Recharge sounds like a lot of work, and it is.

But there are intangibles, too.
Tracking Time, or How Do I Measure Effort Without Making Everyone Hate Me?
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Author Compensation

Traditional Royalties on Sales are problematic for OA + Print on Demand projects.

Instead, Michigan Publishing Services offers authors a percentage of Net Publisher Compensation (what we receive after printing/distribution/fees are taken out.)
Current Year Goals

Via Recharge, recover:

- 25% of our student and 100% of our vendor costs
- 30% of the Digital Publishing Coordinator
- 10% of the Director of Publishing Services
- 10% of the Print Services Manager
- 5% of the Front-end Web Designer
- 5% of an Accountant
What’s the story of library publishing at your institution, and are your business models consistent with it?