

Introduction



Academic Materials

Activities and Interests

Work Projects

Benefits of Open Access



Background

I've always had an interest in the sciences - watching nature documentaries as a child, attending veterinary medicine seminars as a Zoology major, and reading neuroscience books as a graduate in Psychology.

From April 2008 to September 2011, I worked as an in-house production editor in the Laboratories of Radiation Oncology and Signal Transduction at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center where I assisted in the preparation and submission of manuscripts to scientific journals such as *Nature*, *Cancer Research*, and *Science* for publication. From witnessing the discussion of experimental design of oncological research in laboratory meetings, to the formation of data represented as line graphs and histopathological figures and consequent submission of the results proving a theory, the final acceptance in a high-impact scholarly journal affirms the importance in the sharing of scientific knowledge. It was there in the Spring of 2011 when I decided to enroll in Pace's MS in Publishing program to learn more about the STM industry.

In September 2011, I started my new position as Web Production Manager at Cancer Research Institute and as Assistant Editor of *Cancer Immunity*, the non-profit organization's open access journal that publishes research on cancer vaccines and antibody therapies for tumor cure. I am tasked with the challenge of not only managing the production of the journal from soliciting research articles, selecting peer-reviewers, copy-editing, publishing online, and archiving, but also in increasing its visibility in a niche market.

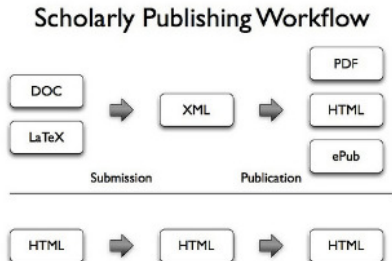
How ePublishing and Open Access is Changing the STM Industry

Importance of publishing in science

"Publish or Perish" - the mantra of many, if not all practicing scientists. Scientific publishing has always been a collaborative effort, with researchers maturing the hypotheses and discoveries of others to either substantiate or contradict the validity of experimental inquiry. Science holds little value unless work is published in academic journals, the primary avenue for reporting new evidence, sharing knowledge, and fostering discussion amongst scholarly peers. By publishing their work, researchers are acknowledged for their distinctive contribution to any project and are identified as the creators of ideas and practices that potentially benefit the field and society.

How electronic publishing changed the social dynamics of academic literature

In 1993, very few scientific, technical, and medical (STM) journals had an electronic version and yet, within the last decade, almost all have digitized their publications (Renear 828). With the advent of improved technologies and word processing software, as well as the ubiquitous nature of the internet, electronic publishing has reshaped how scholarly journals are produced and distributed and how it has redefined the literature's role in the whole scientific research process (Moghaddam 5). Although the essential functions of the scholarly journal have remained unaffected, the processes of "submission, discoverability, access, and archiving" have improved considerably (Aalbersberg 1). The variety of communication tools and devices such as e-mail, mobile phones, tablets, blogs and social media avenues has also extended the scope and value of modern research.



More importantly, electronic publishing has changed the social dynamics of scientific communication. The roles of the traditional system's players and activities have modernized what was previously a somewhat established relationship between author and publisher. The proliferation of sophisticated typesetting software has reallocated the formatting of text and artwork from publishers to authors (Wellman 8) and has provided them an increased role in the representation, production, and distribution of their own literature via the web. Research organizations, universities, publishers and libraries together now perform, to varying degrees, "all the functions of publication from authoring, reviewing, distributing, organizing, and archiving" (Wellman 8). Web search engines such as Google or Yahoo and other electronic archives outside conventional institutional libraries provide another important vehicle for exploring academic literatures (Wellman 8).

The future potential of interoperable electronic publications

The flexibility of the electronic publication allows scientists to include many elements that cannot be achieved in traditional paper journals such as full-text search capabilities on websites, and authoring tools and techniques that, with pioneering features on a number of technological platforms, would engage the scientific and non-scientific communities. By exchanging information between the two and more mediums, electronic publications can be designed and augmented with comprehensive technologies that are adapted to the social and economic realities of scientific publishing (Sim 1998).

Who should own scientific papers? The resolution: Open Access

When scientists submit their research manuscripts to traditional STM journals like *Nature* or *Science*, they are often required to transfer their copyrights to the publishers who manage and charge relatively expensive fees for copyright clearance, reprint, distribution, and repurposing permissions. When I worked at MSKCC, the then president Harold Varmus advocated for the Open Access (OA) movement, which allowed scientists to retain their rights and control how they wanted their research disseminated over the web. This ultimately fosters an extended collaborative network with other scientists and the general public's knowledge acquisition without high costs of subscribership. In response to copyright concerns, as co-founder of the more successful open access publisher, Public Library of Congress (PLOS), Varmus paved the rise for such journals to adopt the Open Access Creative Commons Attribution License, allowing users to freely download, share, copy, print, distribute, adapt, and commercialize the work, as long as proper credit is disclosed. This new model, of course, has grown exponentially popular in recent years, and is often enthusiastically supported by authors, but loathed by many publishers.

Now as Assistant Editor/Journal Manager of *Cancer Immunity*, an OA journal sponsored by the nonprofit organization Cancer Research Institute, I am not only responsible for the editorial and production tasks, but am also challenged with increasing its visibility and cultivating readership. Because our articles are available online, at no cost to the author or reader, any person interested in understanding immunology and immunotherapeutic cures in the treatment of cancer can readily access our content. This not only puts *Cancer Immunity* on the map amongst its competitors, but most importantly is a vital channel for sharing that scientific knowledge with little to no barriers.

Read more about what I do at [Cancer Immunity](#).

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Tags: electronic publishing, open access, publishing, scholarly, science, STM

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- International Association of Science, Medical, and Technical Publishers
- Knowledge Speak
- Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division of the American Association of Publishers
- Open Access Week
- Open Access (SPARC)
- The Journal of Electronic Publishing*
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- Totally agrees partnership with BMJ Evidence Centre for the shared decision making programme

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