
The Library-Press Partnership: An Overview and Two Case Studies

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ABSTRACT

This article provides an overview of the changing role of the library in scholarly publishing and the rising phenomenon of library-press collaboration. It examines, through a literature review and two case studies, how and why the library has taken on this new role in scholarly publishing and created partnerships with university presses. The case studies describe current library-press partnerships from the perspective of institutional context, publishing services, and respective roles and responsibilities. Authors also briefly discuss the possible future of the library-press partnership in scholarly publishing.

INTRODUCTION

Creation, publication, and dissemination of new knowledge lie at the heart of scholarly communication. While these functions have changed little over the past several decades, the emerging affordances of information technology are shifting nearly every established mechanism for scholarly communication. Scholars, publishers, and libraries are all re-evaluating their historic roles in scholarly publishing in light of transformative technologies and changing attitudes toward scholarship (Hahn 2008).

Over the past few decades, technological advances have created both opportunities and challenges in scholarly communication. While scholars have access to an unprecedented wealth of information, tools, and services that enable exciting new possibilities in scholarly inquiry and knowledge production, they struggle to find publishing venues for new research outputs, particularly works that incorporate nontraditional components, such as multimedia elements or 3-D models. Meanwhile, nonprofit and mission-driven publishers—especially university presses and small professional societies—are confronting challenges to their traditional business

model and processes. The transition from print to electronic publishing can be expensive and complex, and it can be difficult to find willing publishing partners and new revenue streams. The same issue is facing scholars seeking venues to launch new publications in niche research areas or new media formats.

Libraries, too, face opportunities and challenges in this new environment. They have been actively crafting their services to catch up with the ever-changing information needs of their community, such as digitization projects that made previously published or unpublished works in library collections available electronically. Evolving repository services that collect, store, publish, and disseminate scholarly works demonstrate the new capabilities of the library in information management and dissemination. As scholars and researchers confront gaps in traditional publishing systems, libraries are a natural service provider. Collaboration between scholars and libraries in academic publishing is a true partnership, with scholars taking the lead on the editorial process and marketing activities, and libraries providing services related to technical infrastructure, copyright advisement, and information organization (e.g., metadata, indexing, etc.).

Further, partnerships with university presses add another potential avenue for libraries that wish to offer scholarly publishing services, due to their complementary skills and assets. Libraries are among the best consumers of university presses' content, and academic libraries and university presses have a long tradition of collaboration (Neal 2001), though in the past this has predominantly taken the form of bilateral knowledge-sharing. As the case studies in this article demonstrate, many recent library-press collaborations highlight the potential of deep, ongoing collaboration to produce innovative services and publications. Despite their differences in financial goals, organizational culture, and even size, university presses are an obvious resource for publishing expertise as well as legitimacy (Butler 2013) when libraries experiment with a new role in scholarly publishing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Long before library publishing became mainstream, librarians and publishing professionals have written about the need for library-university press collaboration. Day (1995) pointed this out as early as 1995 in his article "The Need for Library and University Press Collaboration." Neal (2001) and Wittenberg (2001) described publishing initiatives at Columbia University, a pioneer in library-press collaboration. Both authors exhorted other libraries to take the lead in the inevitable reinvention of the scholarly publishing system. More recently, Okerson and Holzman (2015), who synthesized the most comprehensive report to-date of the history of publishing in libraries, highlighted library-press collaboration, writing that one of the overarching themes of their research "is the possibility and

desirability of increasing collaborations between libraries and university presses” (9). Okerson and Holzman are not the only authors to forecast a promising future for library-press collaboration. In 2011, Ivins and Luther advocated a role for libraries in sustaining small mission-driven publishers, such as scholarly societies, which have become increasingly keen on OA and digital publication. Walters (2012) employed a scenario-planning approach to describe potential high-level trajectories and evolving roles for library publishers, predicting that “cooperative digital publishing services established between several universities, their libraries, scholarly societies, and/or university presses” will become a predominant model (447). An influential report by Mullins et al. (2012) also advanced the pressing need for interdepartmental and interinstitutional collaboration in order to facilitate library publishing at scale. According to the AAUP’s *Library-Press Collaborations Survey Report* (2014), “collaboration between university presses and libraries is growing, and helps to point the way towards some best practices in developing these relationships.”

The early literature on library publishing positions it as complementary to the scholarly publishing activities of commercial and university presses. The 2000s saw a proliferation of articles and case studies advocating the use of the institutional repository to publish gray literature, electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs), and other original research alongside faculty preprints. Case and John (2007) and Royster (2008) further developed the case for leveraging the institutional repository to publish original scholarly and creative work that does not fit within traditional publishing models, laying the groundwork for library publishing as a distinct subfield with its own identity. A seminal report published by Griffiths et al. (2007), which examined the future of university-based publishing writ large, emphasized the potential value of libraries as publishers, but cautioned them against the peril of institutional repositories that turn into “attics’ (and often fairly empty ones), with random assortments of content of questionable importance” (28). The authors cited the need for cross-institutional collaboration to build economies of scale and develop a critical mass of content to attract authors and readers (30).

In many cases, library publishers have adopted a complementary role to university presses, publishing content that traditional publishers would not ordinarily disseminate. Library publishing initiatives upend traditional definitions of publishing and the boundaries between institutional repository programs and publishing programs. With a few notable exceptions, library publishers operate as fully subsidized units of the library, freeing them from the obligation to generate revenue. This model aligns well with libraries’ role as OA advocates, and also allows them to pursue more logistically complicated projects and publications that appeal only to a very niche audience. Whyte Appleby et al. (2018) noted that many libraries characterize their publishing activities as “hosting services,” par-

ticularly those that predominantly deal in gray literature, data, ETDs and other informal content.

Case studies also abound on libraries as OA journal publishers (De Groote and Case 2014; Sondervan and Stigter 2017; Perry et al. 2011; Georgiou and Tsakonas 2010). These journal publishing services offer alternatives to scholars looking for rapid publication solutions, permissive licensing, and the incorporation of multimedia. Even libraries that have decided not to launch full-fledged publishing initiatives find they may have other related services to offer that complement the services provided by other publishers. Bains (2017), for example, described a research study undertaken at the University of Manchester to determine feasibility and desirability of launching a journals publishing program. The results of that study convinced the library that providing training and support for authors and editors, rather than creating and publishing its own portfolio, was the better course of action.

Collaborations or coordination between libraries and university presses can take many forms. Some libraries have partnered externally with university presses on specific projects that would benefit readers both on and off campus. One example would be the collaboration between the University of Utah Library and the Oxford University Press on the Ethics of Suicide Digital Archive. Other libraries are exploring opportunities with their own university presses for their mutual benefit, such as libraries providing more open access books and presses having increased print sales. The University of Pittsburgh presented a perfect example of this kind of collaboration between libraries and presses, in which five hundred out-of-print press books were revived with online and print-on-demand access (Murray 2009). While many library-press collaborations are initiated by anticipated economic benefits, the partners increasingly find social, political, and technological advantages (Watkinson 2016). Several university presses have now come under the administration of their university libraries; by 2016, about 20 percent of university presses, according to the Eudocopia Institute, are situated within or report directly to university libraries (Straumsheim 2016).

A successful partnership between libraries and presses, however, entails much more than establishing reporting lines. Library-press relationships have met with a good deal of skepticism from the scholarly publishing community, and building a successful partnership, one that equally engages and benefits both parties, has proven difficult (Anderson 2013). As Esposito (2013) contended, “every way you look at the relationship between a press and a library, you come away with little or nothing to support an organizational marriage. Presses are great things, libraries are great things, but they are not better things by virtue of having been put into the same organization.” Healthy and effective collaborations require mutual understanding of not only the shared goals and values that unite libraries

and presses but also the very different drivers, cultures, and expectations that have developed in each field over decades (Roh 2014). Brown noted that collaboration is hard as presses don't see the world through the same lens as librarians. But that does not mean research libraries and scholarly presses cannot acknowledge these different lenses and work together to put some of their aims and interests into a common focus (2011). Despite the challenges, numerous published case studies demonstrate that successful partnerships are not only possible, but desirable. Examples include Purdue University Press (Watkinson et al. 2011), Penn State University Press (Eaton, MacEwan, and Potter 2004), and the University of Michigan (Courant 2010). The outcomes of successful partnerships are diverse, from intangible benefits like better communication and knowledge-sharing to concrete publications that could not have come to life without contributions from both the library and the press. Anderson (2013) noted that, at Utah State University, having the university press situated in the library makes the university a better place for students and scholars and makes the larger scholarly community a richer source of knowledge.

OVERVIEW OF LIBRARY-PRESS PARTNERSHIP

The changing landscape of scholarly communication and the advent of digital publishing have pushed academic libraries and the university presses to rethink their roles and to cooperate in creating new digital publishing models that better serve the emerging publishing needs from their campus and beyond. In June 2007, a summit on the library and the press as partners in the enterprise of scholarly publishing was convened by the California Digital Library, the University of California Press, the University of Michigan libraries, and the University of Michigan Press. Libraries and presses participating in the summit discussed how they might collaborate to forge new publishing structures that support existing and emerging forms of scholarly communication (Crow 2009). Library-press partnerships vary in form, size, and services based on the individual institutional context, the actual project, and unique needs. From the examination of the literature review and current practices, we observe that collaborations between libraries and presses may include but not are limited to the following: the library digitizing the press's backlist, the library hosting supplementary files for press books, jointly providing scholarly journal/book publishing programs, and jointly developing a publishing platform. There are many benefits to both libraries and presses in each type of collaboration. Here, we briefly review some of these categories.

Backlist Digitization

Many library-press partnerships start from digitizing a subset of the press backlist or out-of-print books and making the digital version available online through the library's existing digital collections infrastructure, such as

an institutional repository or digital collections management system. This type of collaboration leverages the skills and serves the individual interests of both partners. Libraries increasingly possess the technical infrastructure and skills for large-scale digitization and for hosting digital content, an interest in expanding their role in collecting and disseminating digital scholarship online, and a commitment to promoting open access publishing models. Presses, historically print-oriented, are looking for opportunities to test the water in digital and open access publishing. At the University of Pittsburgh, for example, the university press and library system worked together to revive five hundred out-of-print titles. The books were made available online through the library system for users to read and search the full text, and paperback editions were offered for purchase via print-on-demand through the Chicago Digital Distribution Center. According to Murray (2009), each partner had a distinct role in the project: "The press would clear the rights for books (the press generally had the rights to publish in paper, but not digital) while the libraries would digitize the books, mount them on library servers, and do the graphic design." This joint effort not only brought new use to out-of-print books but also resulted in increased print sales. The effort closely aligned with the campus's desire to promote open access publishing, and the support of the university presses gave more credibility to the digital initiatives (Murray 2009). Other examples of this type of collaboration include projects sponsored by the Humanities Open Book Program, a joint program of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Both Fordham University Press and Libraries and Wayne State University Press and Library system received the grant in 2016 and 2017 to digitize out-of-print books and make them available on the library's servers.

Supplementary Content Hosting

Another type of collaboration between libraries and presses also positions the library as a host for digital content. Instead of hosting the digitized backlist from the press, the library helps the press host supplemental digital files for their current publications. The press sometimes encounters challenges in dealing with extensive supplemental files, which provide important contextualizing material but cannot be included in print due to format or volume considerations. By collaborating with the library, the supplemental files are hosted online by the library in digital format and linked to the publication page on the press website or in the text of the publication. In the print version, the press only needs to include a link to the supplemental files on the library server. In some cases, the library also provides enhanced functionalities to the hosted content, such as cross-linking to the press website or other related resources and full text searching. One example of this type of collaboration is a joint initiative from the UMass Amherst Library and the UMass Press. For the book *Meetinghouses*

of *Early New England*, the library hosts over two hundred supplemental pages of appendixes and a bibliography. For the print edition of *Tidal Wetlands Primer*, the library hosts eighty-five high-resolution color figures and images and enables zoom functionality.

Journal/Book Publishing Services

An increasing number of libraries and presses have launched collaborative publishing services. Library publishing services launched solely by the library rarely provide the time-intensive services that represent the hallmarks of traditional scholarly publishing, including typesetting, marketing, graphic design, and print production and distribution. The level of service provision varies widely across the field, a trend that has given rise to questions about the distinction between hosting and publishing, or what Whyte Appleby et al. (2018) termed the “publishing-hosting spectrum” (10). On the other hand, publishing services launched jointly by libraries and presses lend legitimacy to the initiative and provide a more robust suite of services. This type of collaboration may be represented through the creation of a library-press imprint or a joint program, such as a scholarly publishing office. The services of the imprint or joint program include those offered by libraries, such as infrastructure, guidance on metadata and copyright best practices, indexing, provision of unique identifiers, and preservation services, alongside traditional publishing services from university presses, such as copyediting, graphic design, marketing, and print production and distribution. This type of collaboration generally has a focus on open access and sometimes with an option of print-on-demand. This type of collaboration helps the library to move forward their agenda in open access and allows the press to fulfill an important role in disseminating high quality scholarly content regardless of its market potential. There are many examples of this type of collaboration, including the two case studies elaborated in this article.

Development of Publishing Platforms

In recent years, library-press partnerships have gone beyond developing publishing services to the development of publishing platforms, designed to have a broader impact and benefit the overall library/press publishing practice and community. In 2016, through the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the California Digital Library and the University of California Press partnered together to develop a new open source, digital-first book production platform. “The project, called *Editoria*, will support a robust book production system for academic publishers and library publishing programs that seek a low-cost and efficient mechanism for streamlining their book-publishing activities. The platform will be open source and able to be configured for many different publishing workflows” (Mitchell 2016). Another example is the Mellon-funded project from the

University of Michigan Press and Library. The joint effort is “to create a shareable, open-source solution for born-digital complementary monograph materials as well as a working model that maximizes the publishing strengths of university presses and the preservation expertise of libraries to meet the growing needs of authors to durably connect their publications to related datasets, interactive information, video and other non-text based online content” (University of Michigan Press 2015).

Benefits of Collaboration

The benefits of library-press collaboration are manifold. At their core, these partnerships are an acknowledgement that securing a robust future for libraries and publishers requires a broader set of skills, a deeper pool of resources, and a more diverse set of perspectives than any one player can bring to the table. As Crow (2009) observed, “A mutuality of interests is critical to creating a strong alliance. In many cases, a library and a press will partner because each needs the other to advance its individual interests” (13). Although university libraries and presses are different in many ways, including their respective missions, one centered on the research and teaching needs of the institution and another on serving academics as a whole, it is still appealing for them to collaborate as they share an institutional culture, a commitment to serving the emerging needs in scholarly publishing of their faculty and students, and the understanding of the problems in the current system of scholarly publishing. By collaborating, university presses are allowed to pursue, experiment, and expand the digital publishing program that would otherwise go beyond their resources. Having the ability to pursue a new digital publishing model or develop new services can help presses cope with the changing market and shifting environment, manage innovation, and upgrade the competencies. Libraries also have their own motivation for collaborating with their universities’ presses. The most obvious benefit is to integrate the expertise and skills in traditional publishing into the library publishing services or program. In addition, partnering with presses brings reputation and validation to the library publishing program. Collaborating with presses also helps the library move forward their agenda on open access.

CASE STUDY: INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

The library-press relationship takes many forms; on many campuses they provide complimentary services or collaborate on innovative projects that leverage each partner’s skills. Indiana University provides one such example of library-press collaboration. The Indiana University Office of Scholarly Publishing is a collaboration between the Libraries and the University Press (IU Press), established in 2012 by Indiana University Provost Lauren Robel “to strengthen IU’s central missions of scholarship and teaching and create a model of effective, sustainable 21st-century academic pub-

lishing” (Indiana University 2012). Prior to the establishment of the Office of Scholarly Publishing, the IU Libraries Scholarly Communication Department was operating an open access journal publishing program, IUScholarWorks Journals. The first journal to be published as part of IUScholarWorks program, which used the Public Knowledge Project’s Open Journal Systems platform, was *Museum Anthropology Review*. The first issue was published on February 14, 2008.

Following the establishment of the Office of Scholarly Publishing, the Scholarly Communication Department worked collaboratively with the IU Press to develop new publishing services for the open access journals that they support. As part of this collaboration, the thirty existing IUScholarWorks journals were assessed based upon the IU Press’s criteria for academic rigor, review practices, and consistency. Of the thirty journals evaluated, sixteen were found to meet the established criteria and were invited to join a new publishing program: the Office of Scholarly Publishing Journals (OSP Journals). Of these sixteen journals, thirteen accepted the invitation. These OSP Journals were offered a range of enhanced publishing services free of charge, which are detailed below. Since the launch of the OSP Journals program in 2016, the number of journals participating has increased by nearly 40 percent. As of April 2018, there are eighteen OSP Journals, with several slated to come onboard in the coming months.

OSP Publishing Services

The Office of Scholarly Publishing frames its mission around the research needs of the university. The program is currently designed to support Indiana University and only accepts proposals from journals with an Indiana University affiliation. Part of the reason for this is the program’s provision of a full range of operational publishing services at no cost to the journals, with the exception of copyediting and print on demand. All OSP Journals have access to the following services:

- Publishing project management
- Copyediting and proofreading
- Composition and design
- Advertising, marketing, and promotion
- Indexing and discovery assistance
- Print on demand (POD)
- Fulfillment services
- ePub conversions

IU Open Journals

The counterpart to the Office of Scholarly Publishing (OSP) journal publishing program is Indiana University’s IU Open Journals Publishing program. This part of the program is designed to lower barriers to journal publishing and provide system-wide support for serial publication. Anyone

affiliated with IU Bloomington or one of IU's regional campuses can participate, including undergraduate and graduate students. The program supports several nontraditional publications, with unique content and review models. Additionally, as of spring 2018, there are ten IU Open Journals led by students at IU Bloomington or a regional campus.

With its emphasis on access, this branch of the program provides an incredible opportunity to educate students on publishing topics and open access. As an example, the scholarly communication librarian partnered with the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education to teach a one-credit-hour course to the editorial board of an IU Open Journal, the *Indiana University Journal of Undergraduate Research* (IUJUR) in fall 2017. This provided an immersive opportunity for students to learn about the OJS publishing platform and their journal's review process, as well as broader concepts, including copyright, open access funding models, and the labor and resources required to operationalize publishing innovations.

Respective Roles and Responsibilities

Generally, the respective roles and responsibilities of OSP partners are somewhat traditional. IU Press staff oversee several service offerings, including brokering print-on-demand and copyediting, providing graphic design advice, and managing monograph/ book subventions and consultations. The library spearheads conversations about open access, hybrid models, and the open source publishing platform Open Journal Systems.

However, at its best, the Office of Scholarly Publishing goes beyond centralizing disparate publishing resources into a single unit in order to increase efficiencies. It also provides a space for cross-pollination in order to shape each respective partner's approach. In short, the best work within the OSP happens when library roles and responsibilities blur with press roles and responsibilities (and vice versa).

An important example of this is when the OSP works as a team to manage complex negotiations with new journal candidates. Several journal candidates are considering flipping to open access and often have unique service needs for print-on-demand, copyediting, DOI creation, or maintaining a subscription list and/or their back issues. Conversations with candidates have prompted the OSP to reflect on what kind of open access we are committed to (and why) and what the value of the services we offer is. These conversations often also empower us to share expertise about copyright, OA models, and general publishing philosophy with each other.

Discussion of Possible Future Trends

The Indiana University Libraries/Press partnership has engendered several experimental projects that are emblematic of global twenty-first century publishing trends. The OSP Journals program has been piloting XML-first publishing for journals that can benefit from access to full text.

One example is *Studies in Digital Heritage*, a digital archeology journal that embeds time-based media and 3D models into their articles. Publishing their articles in XML enables readers to interact with embedded media. Publishing XML-first is substantially less resource-intensive when the articles are already encoded using the Journal Article Tag Suite (JATS). For journals that take advantage of the OSP Journals program's print-on-demand service, articles are encoded at no additional cost.

The Office of Scholarly Publishing has also been exploring the possibility of a new program to support open access books and monographs—tentatively called OSP Editions. This nascent service has leveraged the university's license for the Pressbooks platform and published affordable textbooks in collaboration with Indiana University faculty and central IT unit, UITs. These digital textbooks can be made available through Canvas, the university's learning management system. The OSP plans to continue work piloting digital publishing platforms to support open and affordable course materials.

The Office of Scholarly Publishing's commitment to both serving and educating the IU community about publishing issues is unique. In addition to bringing together disparate publishing expertise on campus, understanding publishing as an educational imperative is an important framing for the group—it informs the services, initiatives, and programming the group creates and provides.

CASE STUDY: SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Context and Business Model

Syracuse University Libraries launched its institutional repository, SURFACE, in 2010 to highlight and enable broad access to the University's extensive array of scholarly output. This venture provided natural opportunities for open access (OA) education and fueled discussions about how authors and researchers produce, distribute, and consume information. With institutional repository deposits underway, the Libraries began to explore a sustainable OA service model that would support campus publishing needs and offer an alternative to commercial vendors. Our approach followed a clear trend in higher education: leveraging skills and services distributed across campus units and combining them formally and informally on a case-by-case basis to enable publishing activities. Syracuse's initial dive into such a model pooled staff expertise from the Libraries, Syracuse University Press, Information Technology Services (ITS), and faculty from several departments, and prompted the adoption of an open source publishing platform (Open Journal Systems) to support two pilot projects. As a vehicle for these services, the Libraries and Press jointly launched an open access imprint, *Syracuse Unbound*, in 2013.

Today, the *Syracuse Unbound* imprint is an active alliance between Syra-

cuse University Libraries and Syracuse University Press in fostering open access endeavors through publishing workflows, platforms, and the institutional repository. Syracuse Unbound focuses on a few goals, loosely: collaboration, broadening the definition of open scholarship, and providing opportunities for OA publishing. In 2017, the Libraries' Department of Research and Scholarship (DRS) reorganized its scholarly communication unit; the new Open Publishing Services (OPS) offers a menu of services to support campus scholarly communication needs as part of the Libraries' vision for its nascent Digital Library Program (DLP). Currently, open publishing projects intended for inclusion in Syracuse Unbound are triaged and selected thoughtfully, in collaboration with the Press, though more publishing services may evolve over time as our capacity increases.

Services currently vary by project, but may include project management and consultation on the following: general OA education, best practices in OA publishing, platform recommendations and technical infrastructures (OJS, WordPress, Digital Commons, and other tools), peer review, copyediting, proofreading, design and layout, metadata, cataloging, copyright and licensing, marketing, identifier registration (e.g., ISSN, eISSN, DOI), accessibility production and compliance, and preservation considerations.

Collaborative Project Example

The first OA project to publish under the *Syracuse Unbound* imprint was a complex peer-reviewed multimedia journal, launched in 2013, and focused on the humanities, art, and design in public life. *Public: A Journal of Imagining America* continues to be edited by SU faculty and makes use of submission protocols through Open Journal Systems and the front-end graphic design capabilities of WordPress supported by staff from both the Press and Libraries. The next project published under the Syracuse Unbound imprint was a book titled *Triple Triumph: Three Women in Medicine*, highlighting the path-breaking careers of three women medical pioneers in Upstate New York. Initiated in 2017, this book project is likewise edited by Syracuse University faculty and housed in the institutional repository, and presents a strong example of successful collaboration. An initial contact by a faculty member for copyright advisement expanded into a full Syracuse Unbound publishing project. Participants worked closely to provide the following support and infrastructure to the book's editors: project management, graphic design, editorial guidance, and eISBN and ISBNs on the part of SU Press; and project management, digital file creation, discovery workflows (including DOI creation), metadata, accessibility, copyright, open-access licenses, and preservation on the part of SU Libraries. All parties worked together on marketing.

While the stories of the careers of Brangham, Numann, and Weinstock were a motivating factor in selecting *Triple Triumph* for the Syracuse Unbound imprint, the global impact of the publication has surpassed expect-

tations. *Triple Triumph* published in print and digitally—in PDF, accessible PDF, ePub 3.0, and Kindle formats—under a CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 license. With 3,506 downloads since August 31, 2017, access to the book spans twenty-six countries and includes 161 downloads of the accessible (ADA) files, in addition to two print runs. The project ran smoothly and provided a learning opportunity for planning future library-press collaborations. Key participants responsible for that success include the publishing librarian, SU Press’s director and design editor, the Libraries’ digital initiatives librarian, its Accessibility Unit, Information Technology Services, director of communications, subject librarians, and principal cataloger. Our takeaways were these: collaboration in project management is key; clarity of roles, responsibilities, timelines, and project management workflows are essential; and publishing projects that are meaningful and match our shared mission are invaluable.

Reflections on the Collaboration/Conclusions

Collaborative work on both the journal and book projects provided positive, educational opportunities for both partners, offering exposure to and understanding of our respective cultures, philosophies, business models, challenges, and strengths. We discovered that developing the most natural, least forced partnership arrangements and interactions should happen, ideally, at a project level rather than at the program level. While university presses and libraries serve similar constituencies and share similar missions to disseminate scholarship and increase accessibility, our day-to-day activities—those that absorb the majority of our time and focus—are quite different. Further policy refinement is needed to define our scope and capacity to customers. While redundancy between the partners is acceptable, it remains important to understand the roles and responsibilities of both partners so that we offer a realistic menu of services that we can genuinely support. These exercises likewise underscored the extant importance of aligning our program and services with the strategic planning goals of the Libraries and the University. We are also learning to refine selection criteria and are simultaneously expanding our understanding of what constitutes scholarship through a value-based analysis. Further, we found that opportunities for collaboration with or outreach to more untapped “markets”—digital humanities practitioners and others—become more apparent through discussion. Given our overlapping missions and desire to make common cause with institutional partners, Syracuse University Libraries and Press look forward to future opportunities to expand our OA services and to collaborate on successful projects.

LOOKING FORWARD

Library publishing is one of the notable transformations that the library is making in light of the changing landscape of scholarly communication.

There is an emerging consensus that basic publishing capabilities will become a core service for research libraries (Hahn 2008). By partnering with the university press, libraries can leverage complementary contributions to provide better, more comprehensive, and transformative publishing models. Libraries bring new models to the table to fill gaps, such as nontraditional publishing in data, gray literature, and digital humanities projects, and fulfill the library mission of access and stewardship. Libraries provide a home for scholarship that would not otherwise be available to the world and address critical service needs in publishing by providing alternatives that offer less restrictive terms that can accommodate new forms of scholarship and complement existing services to support teaching and learning (Li 2018).

Library publishing represents just one manifestation of libraries' transformation from service providers to research partners, from knowledge keepers to knowledge creators. However, publishing services will require broader institutional support to thrive. Libraries have taken the lead in launching new services, but will require new and ongoing resources from institutional leadership to build effective capacity to grow in scale. Robust institutional funding forms a cornerstone of library publishing's identity, allowing libraries to adopt platinum OA business models, take on experimental or logistically complicated projects, and fulfill their mission of providing broad, unfettered access to knowledge.

The library-university press relationship represents one of the most promising avenues forward for scholarly communication as it leverages the library's strengths in infrastructure, campus relationships, and knowledge management, with the press's expertise in acquisitions and editorial work, marketing, and its existing reputation and prestige. Over the long term and at scale, library-press collaborations can result in a landscape where high-quality scholarly content is available to all in a range of forms and with different levels of curation and review.

It is our hope that in the future, libraries and university presses, as publishing agents and partners with scholars and academic societies with the support of institutions and funders, will help to create a more sustainable, open, transparent, and effective scholarly communication system.

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