The Journal Editor’s Definitive Guide to Digital Publishing
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Ushering your journal into the new digital publishing landscape

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The future of the digital journal publishing frontier
We are living in the “digital age” - it has a futuristic ring to it, doesn’t it? But, we’ve been in the “digital age” since the introduction of personal computers in the late 1970s. A less *Brave New World* phrase for “digital age” is the “information age,” and for journals this era of sweeping dissemination of content on the web brings massive opportunities to make research more accessible to interested academic and mainstream readers in more engaging ways than on traditional printed pages.

But, addressing the needs of the “digital age” can also be a source of confusion for editors and scholars. What aspects of digital publishing and dissemination should journals tackle first? There are many components of going from print publishing to developing a viable digital publishing model for your journal to consider.

As editors navigate the shift from print to online publishing, they’re also confronting the barriers posed by increasingly prohibitive publisher paywalls. Online publishing is the new frontier for open access (OA), and editors are working to understand what it takes to run a sustainable OA journal and how they can trade in the existing pay-walled journal model for OA alternatives. Digital publishing holds the key.

In this guide you’ll find:

- An overview of how the academic publishing landscape is changing
- The primary aspects of digital publishing journals should be focusing on right now
- How digital publishing is paving the way for open access to research

This guide will help you to gain your footing in the new digital publishing frontier and begin to explore the many opportunities technology brings to the age-old practice of scholarly journal publishing.
ESTABLISHING YOUR JOURNAL’S ONLINE PRESENCE
A growing preference for online journals

Printed scholarly journals just aren’t cutting it anymore. In the “information age” scholars expect to be able to access articles online. While debate remains as to whether scholars prefer online reading over print, there is no question that they are increasingly taking to Google Scholar and other online databases to conduct research. The 2012 Ithaka S+R US Faculty Survey of over five thousand faculty members at four-year colleges found that over 60% of participants preferred “searching for a particular topic” and “exploring references” online. Similarly, the 2015 MIT Library Survey found that more than 80% of the community preferred electronic journals, collections of papers, and conference proceedings. There’s no question that scholars are looking for content online.

Additionally, digital publishing offers opportunities for widely disseminating research that print journals simply cannot. By publishing online, entire journals and their individual articles can be searched for and found anywhere in the world in a matter of clicks. Journals that publish online can cut printing costs, creating opportunities to make research cheaply accessible or open access. As Amodern’s co-editor Scott Pound put it in a recent article, “online scholarly
publication is the natural and inevitable response to this crisis of scholarly and educational communication.” Rather than question whether we will segue from print to online-focused journal publishing, now is the time embrace this certain transition and find the best means of adapting to it.

To harness the power of online publishing, your journal obviously needs to have a web presence. “We already have a website” you may say. But, is your website geared towards the digital researcher? It’s important that journals avoid simply copycatting print practices on their publication websites, which unfortunately tends to be the default for many publications.

DEVELOP YOUR JOURNAL WEBSITE

Whether or not you’re ready to go all in and publish solely online, it’s vital for your journal to have a professionalized and user-friendly web presence. Designing a website is naturally very different than putting together a print journal layout, so if your journal does not have the resources to work with a professional web designer, setting up a website can be somewhat foreign. It can be easy to fall prey to print publishing tendencies, wherein your journal website becomes a static page of issues that link to lists of articles, which is not a very engaging digital reading experience. At the same time, you want to avoid adding too many components to your website that could
detract from your journal’s content.

In “Seven questions to ask yourself when you’re redesigning your journal’s website,” Scholastica co-founder and lead user experience designer Rob Walsh shares some pointers to help you start to plan out or reevaluate your journal website:

• Avoid adding sections to your website that you won’t be able to maintain, such as a “news and announcements” page that requires constant updating or an embedded social media feed you may forget to refresh.

• Communicate what authors need to know above all else. If your journal chooses to connect its website to that of a scholarly society, be sure that your journal’s “about” and “author” pages are easy to access from the homepage.

• Ask yourself and your fellow editors if your journal website honestly looks like a place you would come to find and browse articles - if not, it’s time to revisit the design.

• Adopt a responsive mobile-friendly website design.

This last point, adopting a mobile-friendly design, is especially important. Today, mobile web usage is rapidly exceeding that of PCs, and while it may presently seem unlikely to you that many scholars will choose to read entire journal articles on their mobile or tablet devices, it is highly likely that they will be surfing the web on a mobile or tablet device to find and bookmark relevant articles to read later. Having a mobile-friendly design is also an important step to ensure your journal has a high Google ranking. Starting in April 2015, Google expanded the use of mobile-friendliness as a search ranking signal.

When working on your journal website, consider other journal and content sites that you enjoy visiting. What do you like about them? How are they able to present content in an engaging way? Make sure to incorporate those elements into your journal’s website.

The way your content is presented can make all of the difference in how often it is found, read, and shared. A great example of a quality journal website is that of Sociological Science. The journal uses its
website homepage to showcase new and popular articles, in addition to having an “articles” tab to access all of the journal’s content. *Sociological Science* also uses color and images to make its website and content more engaging, as well as a branded journal logo that viewers will remember. Hip to Google’s game, *Sociological Science* has made its website mobile friendly.

From finding ways to showcase journal content to using images and branding and having a mobile-friendly design, there is a lot to take in when it comes to assessing your journal website. Given all of the components of web design and yours and your editorial board’s limited time, you may find yourselves thinking “what we have now is good enough.” Don’t get left behind in settling for a basic webpage though, particularly if your website it not mobile ready! Now is the time to explore your options.

**SOME TIPS**

You’ll want to research and consider different journal website options such as:

- Purchasing a journal domain and having a member of your team or an outsourced development team build your site
- Using a standalone website builder like Weebly or SquareSpace
- Using a website provided by a peer review and journal publishing software platform like Scholastica
NEW OPTIONS FOR ONLINE JOURNALS: INNOVATIONS IN PUBLISHING ON SCHOLASTICA

Did you know that many journals are establishing an online presence in a matter of minutes with Scholastica?

Journals like Administrative Issues Journal are using Scholastica not only to manage their peer review process, but also to publish via the free webhosting Scholastica provides its user journals. You can easily update your Scholastica website from the Publishing Dashboard, where you can upload your journal’s cover and input publication information, instructions for authors, and your editorial board list. Upload PDF file articles and issues straight to Scholastica in a matter of minutes and they will appear on your website and be accessible in a web browser view as well as via download.

Scholastica will soon take its webhosting even further. We’re introducing a series of pre-designed website templates that your journal can choose from to have an even more engaging online presence. You can customize your journal’s website template adding the branding, colors, images, and style of your choice without the hassle of having to build a website from scratch or maintain a domain.

The first to adopt a Scholastica website design is Discrete Analysis, a “diamond open access” (free to read and free to publish in) journal launched by Fields Medalist Sir Timothy Gowers and a board of esteemed colleagues.
CASE STUDY: DISCRETE ANALYSIS LAUNCHES WITH A SCHOLASTICA WEBSITE

The Challenge:
In 2015, renowned mathematician Sir Timothy Gowers and a team of distinguished colleagues set out to launch a scholar-owned, open access mathematics journal to be called *Discrete Analysis*. Gowers and his team wanted to manage the journal on their own, without a publisher, and to make it free to read and free to publish in. They needed an affordable way to peer review and publish online, and a way to get their journal website up fast without having to worry about hiring a web designer or handling hosting.

Adopting Scholastica
Prior to the launch of *Discrete Analysis*, Gowers and his team found that Scholastica had the tools they needed to peer review their journal and publish via arXiv overlay. Gowers and his team chose to publish their journal using a custom website template made and hosted by Scholastica - an option that will soon be available for journals using Scholastica for peer review or that just want a custom website. Using the website template Gowers and his team were able to get their journal up-and-running fast, uploading descriptions of their arXiv articles that link directly to the articles on the pre-print server, adding their branding to the website, and uploading images to accompany each of their articles.

The Roll-Out
*Discrete Analysis* officially launched on March 1, 2016 receiving broad interest from the academic community for its scholar-owned, free-to-read, and free-to-publish-in model, as well as its modern website design. Gowers said for him, having a quality website that he and his team can easily manage on Scholastica is paramount to the mission of the journal.

“We want to show that the cheapness of running the journal is completely compatible with high quality,” said Gowers. “I hope [scholars] will notice that the journal’s website is far better designed than almost any other website of a mathematics journal. Ours is easier to navigate and nicer than the websites of any other journals or commercial publishers I’ve seen. We’re showing that you can have an online reading experience that’s as high quality as print and you can do it without a publisher.”
Quantitative affine approximation for UMD targets

Assaf Naor, Sean Li, Tuomas Hytönen
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February 27, 2016

Editorial introduction

Quantitative affine approximation for UMD targets, Discrete Analysis 2016:6

Let $Y$ be a Banach space. A martingale difference sequence in $Y$ is a sequence of $Y$-valued random variables such that $E[d_i | d_1, \ldots, d_{i-1}] = 0$ for every $i$ (and $E[d_i] = 0$). Given $1 < p < \infty$, we say that $Y$ satisfies the UMD$_p$ property if there is a constant $C_p$ such that

$$E \left[ \sum_{i=1}^{n} \| d_i \|^p \right] \leq C_p^{p'} E \left[ \sum_{i=1}^{n} \| d_i \|^p' \right].$$

for every martingale difference sequence $d_1, \ldots, d_n$ and every choice of signs $\epsilon_1, \ldots, \epsilon_n \in \{-1, 1\}$. An unconditional martingale difference space, or UMD$_p$ space for short, is a Banach space $Y$ that satisfies the UMD$_p$ property for some $1 < p < \infty$, which can be shown to imply that it satisfies the UMD$_q$ property for all such $p$. It is easy to show that when $Y$ is a Hilbert space, it has the UMD$_p$ property with a constant of $1$: in the context of stochastic analysis, UMD$_p$ spaces can be thought of as spaces that have many of the good properties of Hilbert spaces.

All Articles

Probabilistic Combinatorics

February 29, 2016

A sharp threshold for van der Waerden's theorem in random subsets

Mathias Schacht, Yury Person, Hiếu Hàń, Ehud Friedgut

If you choose a random subset of the integers mod $n$, element by element, then the van der Waerden property appears very suddenly.

Editorial introduction

February 27, 2016

Quantitative affine approximation for UMD targets

Assaf Naor, Sean Li, Tuomas Hytönen

New bounds are obtained for the size of a ball in which an arbitrary 1-Lipschitz function between various Banach spaces can be uniformly approximated by an affine function.

Editorial introduction

Functional Analysis

February 27, 2016

Monochromatic sums and products

Ben Green, Tom Sanders

If the finite field with $p$ elements is coloured with $r$ colours, then some colour class contains many quadruples of the form $(x,y,x+y,xy)$.

Editorial Introduction

Arithmetic Combinatorics

A journal website on Scholastica
Truly digital journals need more than a great web presence - they need to give researchers a quality article reading experience too. For most journals the PDF remains the canonical online publishing medium. Since its introduction in the 1990s the PDF has evolved to better suit researchers’ needs over time.

How has the PDF changed in recent years?

While traditional PDFs could only be accessed via file download or by downloading a PDF reader application, today they can be embedded in web browsers, allowing readers instant access. In this way, the PDF has evolved to offer a similar experience to visiting a webpage. At the same time, the PDF remains true to its print-based roots offering readers easy-to-print articles so those who prefer to do so can still read on paper. PDFs can also be saved to e-readers, making them easily portable.

Of course, all PDF reading experiences are not equal. Digitally driven journals are introducing scholars to advanced in-browser PDF viewers with features such as the option to display accompanying files and images next to a PDF article. If you’re still just offering a file to download, you’ll want to set up a modern in-browser PDF reader. If you don’t have the time or resources to figure out the technicalities of this, software can help.

There are also drawbacks to publishing journal articles and issues in PDF. A chief limitation to the PDF is that it is not mobile-friendly, so trying to read a PDF on a mobile phone or tablet device is arduous. Additionally, PDF articles can be more difficult to index than HTML articles and they lack HTML functionality, including the ability to insert rich media, such as a video, into an article.

SOME TIPS

At Scholastica we pinpointed areas of the PDF that could use some updating and introduced advanced PDF publishing options for journals including:

- A clean in-browser PDF viewer
- The option to upload and showcase accompanying article files and images right next to articles in the PDF viewer
- Built-in metadata parsing and Google Scholar indexing
THE FUTURE OF ONLINE JOURNAL PUBLISHING
THE ERA OF HTML ARTICLES AND THE END OF PRINT?

When thinking about the PDF format, one of the main words that comes to mind is print. After all, the PDF was designed to become the standard format for delivering final page layouts for print and making print-based content available to online readers. As we move away from reading in print, it’s becoming apparent that modeling online content off of the print reading experience is not the best way to make it digestible for digital readers. HTML is a much more logical format for publishing content online, including academic journal articles.

Moving from the PDF to publishing in HTML offers many opportunities to improve the reader’s experience. For example, HTML references can be made clickable so that readers do not have to scroll to the end of a page each time they want to view a reference. HTML articles can also easily be made mobile-ready, while PDFs cannot, and they offer opportunities like adding embeddable media to articles. There’s also countless ways to improve the look and feel of HTML articles using CSS stylesheets. As HTML has evolved over the last 10-15 years it has also come to encompass all the benefits once only attributed to PDFs, such as making articles easily downloadable, portable on e-readers, and printable.

Some would argue that the reason HTML has not yet overtaken the PDF in academic journal publishing is because it is not as easy to publish both online and in printed issues. Journals that publish PDFs use a print-centric design, whereas HTML articles published online are not generally styled to look like print. In reality, HTML can be made print-ready, though. Journals can make HTML articles print-ready by making a print CSS stylesheet in addition to their online HTML stylesheet and apply that to their content before printing.

Printing logistics aside, perhaps the more important question to ask is - will the age of print journals last much longer?
We can’t give you a definitive answer to this question of course, but we can say that we’re predicting the issue of journals leaving print publishing isn’t a matter of “if” but “when.” Scholars have voiced similar opinions, including Dan Cohen, founding Executive Director of the Digital Public Library of America. Cohen argues that digital reading will likely overtake print in the long-run citing research like The Pew Research Center’s 2014 report on reading and e-readers, which found that ebook use is on the rise among younger generations.

What factors coming into play could cause the shift from print to digital? Some hypotheses include:

• As modern scholars continue to move towards conducting research online rather than in physical libraries, they won’t need “print” journals, just access to articles that are “printable”
• Given that online research is oriented to searching for particular journal articles, journals may begin to publish individual articles rather than compiling whole issues thereby eliminating the need to print issues
• Market pressures to make content open access will steer journals to eliminate printing costs and favor affordable digital publishing alternatives

Many open access journals are already taking the plunge to become digital-only publications - but how do these journals benefit from publishing online?

Online journals can be run much more affordably than their traditionalist counterparts because they have no printing or shipping costs. For example, the journals in the above tips box rely on either small grants, reader donations, small submission fees, or below average article processing charges to operate. They use their income to fund online publishing software and/or web hosting (full disclosure - Journal of Applied Bioanalysis, Sociological Science, and Discrete Analysis use Scholastica).
We’ve talked about the many monetary benefits of publishing online, but what about the benefits for readers and scholarship more broadly? One of the primary differentiators between publishing in print and online is speed. What previously took print journals many days to publish and disseminate, online journals can make available in a matter of hours or even minutes, depending on the software they use. In digital publishing, one of the only factors holding back journals from making accepted articles available immediately is the time it takes to compile a full journal issue.

But, as we mentioned previously, with scholars moving to conducting search-engine based research on the web and seeking individual articles relevant to their research, the need for journal issues is becoming less apparent. In some sense, the entire idea of a journal issue is becoming a vestige of print publishing that journals could easily shed on the web.

Some journals are already pushing boundaries and moving from publishing full issues to publishing individual articles on a rolling basis, including *Discrete Analysis*. In a [recent interview](#) with Scholastica, the journal’s editor-in-chief, Cambridge mathematician Sir
Timothy Gowers, explains the journal’s decision to publish rolling articles:

“If you have journal issues – you’re implicitly admitting that the old way of doing print was the right way, and what you end up with is a pale shadow of a proper print journal. I don’t want to be that, I want to be aggressively modern. I want to use the internet properly – when you’ve got something, you post it. We’re not pretending to be a traditional journal, we’re something else, which I like to think of as better than a traditional journal. I think having articles posted as they appear is one aspect of that.”

What are reasons your journal may want to consider publishing articles on a rolling basis? Here are a few:

- Your journal can attract more submissions from scholars looking to disseminate timely content to impact decision-making in economic, health, environmental, and social sectors (among others) which many funders are putting premiums on, including the Higher Education Funding Council For England’s Research Excellence Framework (REF).
- The sooner scholars can get timely content out, the sooner they can also begin to accrue proof of altmetrics impact, or article-level impact collated from a variety of sources on the web, which they can use in tenure and grant applications.
- Rolling publication of articles can be more efficient for many editors than compiling entire journal issues. Publishing articles on a rolling basis breaks up production work and helps avoid a backlog of articles developing. For journals who use their editorial board or graduate students for copy-editing and layout, preparing a single article can be less onerous than working on 6-8 articles at once as part of an issue.
FINDING WAYS TO RESURFACE AND LINK RELATED RESEARCH

Unlike print publishing, when research is published online it is not just available to individual readers in physical locations; rather, it is added to the massive network that is the internet where it can be shared, linked to, and discovered all over the world. Digitally savvy scholars can use the internet to draw connections between, and resurface, old articles, which we see many popular media publications do online in order to make their content more easily discoverable and extend its lifespan. For example, news outlets like The New York Times will often include a sidebar in article views with links to related content in order to bring those old articles back to light.

Melissa Terras, Director of University College London’s (UCL) Centre for Digital Humanities, has explored the benefits of resurfacing and drawing links between digital journal articles. In 2011, Terras began blogging and tweeting about the 26 articles she’d published up to that point, and in the process she found that downloads of the research she promoted increased greatly, in some instances by a factor of 100. Since this experiment, Terras has continued to write about her research articles on mainstream blogs and to share them on social media in order to expand their reach and help scholars find her articles over time.

Terras said she believes journals will need to help scholars in such efforts to make their content more discoverable as the rate of information being published on the web continues to grow. The 2.5 million new articles published each year, according to the 2015 STM Report, are creating greater competition for the
attention of readers.

One example of journals experimenting with content resurfacing is MIT Press’s recent BATCHES ebooks series. The press used altmetrics data to find its most popular published articles on particular topics and combined them to create curated ebook collections in order to resurface the articles and draw more readers to them.

When it comes to helping scholars link to and resurface their articles, online software can help. For example, Scholastica’s journal website hosting includes the option to add a built-in “blog” page to your journal website. Scholastica also features built-in social sharing for scholar users via The Conversation, where editors, authors, and reviewers who have a Scholastica login can post questions and comments that are visible to the entire Scholastica community.

SOME TIPS

Some ways journals can help scholars resurface and link related research include:

• Provide forums for authors who’ve published in your journal to talk about their research, such as a journal blog or social media feed.

• Offer authors altmetrics reports so that they can track the impact of their own online promotion efforts for the articles they publish in your journal.

• Repackage and highlight related research from your journal via online special issues or by keeping listings of journal content by topic area.
3

MAKING YOUR JOURNAL’S WEBSITE AND CONTENT DISCOVERABLE
Optimize content for search engines and scholarly indexes

By embracing online publishing, journals can immediately make their content available to more researchers on the web - but that doesn’t guarantee that scholars will actually find it. In order to develop a sustainable digital publishing plan your journal must factor in discoverability. To make your content discoverable by the widest range of scholars possible, you’ll need to ensure your journal has a metadata and keyword strategy (see more below) and that you take all necessary steps to get your content indexed by Google Scholar and other relevant scholarly indexes.

During the 2014 Association of American University Presses annual meeting, a panel titled “Meta Data and Discoverability” offered great steps your journal can take to start making articles more discoverable. Some immediate steps that you can take to make your content discoverable on search engines and in academic databases are:

- Ensure all your journal’s articles have descriptive titles that clearly reflect what the article is about - pithy titles are fun, but generally don’t correlate to common searches.
- Have your journal’s editors or published authors assign keywords to all articles. Be sure that these keywords reflect key article concepts (not simply the most commonly used words in the text) and include a mix of individual words about the article and common phrases for which people may be searching.
- Make sure each article webpage or PDF URL clearly reflects its content - the URL should contain keywords and phrases from the article.

For more specific tips to optimize academic journal articles for search engines you can also check out the OpenScience article, “Why and how should you optimize academic articles for search engines?”
Once you have a baseline keyword and metadata plan for your journal, you’ll want to research all of the relevant scholarly indexes and databases you’d like to be included in, such as the Directory of Open Access Journals or PubMed Central, and make a list of any additional steps you’ll need to take to be added to the index. Wikipedia has a list of major academic databases and search engines that you can use as a starting point.

For tips on how to go about getting indexed check out this interview with Roland Meesters, editor-in-chief of *Journal of Applied Bioanalysis*.

Your journal will also want to be sure to get Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for all of your articles, which is a requirement of many scholarly databases and indexes. If you’re not yet using DOIs, don’t wait to get them. DOIs are unique number and character codes used to identify journal articles on the web. Your DOIs will ensure that scholars can always access and link to the original copy of all articles you publish on the web. You can get started adding DOIs to your articles by visiting CrossRef, which is the official DOI registry for scholarly content.
MAKE SURE YOUR JOURNAL CONTENT AND WEBSITE CAN BE CRAWLED BY SEARCH ENGINES

What is “crawling” you may wonder? It’s how search engines, like Google and Google Scholar, find content to return in their search results. Crawlers, which are essentially tiny searching machines, use their search engine’s algorithm to scan the web for relevant content and add it to the search engine’s index.

You’ll need to ensure both your website and the actual articles on your website are being indexed, which require different steps for journals publishing PDF articles.

What makes a website indexable by search engines? You’ll need to research the requirements of the engines you care most about. For example, some of Google’s indexing requirements include:

- Sign up for a Google Webmaster Tools account
- Submit your website’s sitemap to Google Webmaster Tools
- Make sure your site content contains keywords and phrases people will likely search for to find journals like yours
- Fix broken links and add alt-text to images
- Make sure the robots.txt file on your web server is current so you don’t accidentally block Google crawlers

In terms of ensuring that scholars find and cite your journal’s articles, Google Scholar is perhaps the most important index. A preliminary finding of the 2015 Innovations in Scholarly Communication survey was that 92% of academics used Google Scholar. Open access journals should be especially cognizant of their Google Scholar status because, along with the Directory of Open Access Journals, it is one of the few indexes available to scholars at no cost, unlike other popular databases like ProQuest, which require subscriptions.

So what does it take to get indexed in Google Scholar?

Getting indexed in Google Scholar can prove a bit tricky for journals. As explained by Open Science in a recent article, in order to have your journal’s articles immediately indexed by Google
Another way that you can make your journal more discoverable on the web is by ensuring you always have fresh content on your journal website. That doesn’t mean you have to re-write each of your journal’s web pages all of the time. Rather, some ways you can keep your content fresh include: posting announcements on your journal website, showcasing featured articles, and blogging. Search engine crawlers will be more likely to come across, index, and re-index your website if you update it often. The SEO benefits of publishing new content are another reason to consider publishing articles on a rolling basis, as previously mentioned.

Scholar they must either be cited in articles that are already included in the index, or Google Scholar must recognize your journal website as a trusted source. As per the Google Scholar guidelines, in order to have your website considered a trusted source you must make sure it is configured following Google Scholar’s technical inclusion guidelines, and then contact Google Scholar to request to be added to the index.

Sounds time-consuming, right? Unfortunately, it can be. But it is absolutely worth the effort and it’s a vital step for all digital journals in the future. You don’t have to deal with the hassle of getting indexed by Google Scholar on your own either. Journal publishing software, like Scholastica, can help. Scholastica is already considered a trusted source by Google Scholar, so all journals that publish via Scholastica journal websites are automatically indexed with no extra work on the part of the editors.
PROMOTE YOUR JOURNAL ARTICLES AND ENCOURAGE SCHOLARS TO SHARE THEM

In addition to actively taking steps to ensure your work is being indexed by online search engines, one of the best ways you can ensure your content is discoverable is by sharing it with the academic community. Your journal should be taking steps to promote its content on the web and to help spread promotional efforts undertaken by authors.

Among top reasons to independently promote your academic journal are making content visible to a wider audience, promising scholars who publish in your journal broader awareness of their work, and attracting more reviewers by increasing awareness of your journal. Some ways your journal can promote its content are:

- Maintaining a social media presence on Twitter, LinkedIn, or other networks
- Keeping a journal blog
- Posting video author interviews to your website via YouTube or Vimeo
- Starting a journal podcast and having authors as guests
- Building an email list of authors, reviewers, and readers to send journal updates
- Networking and word of mouth promotion

You can get article promotion inspiration for your journal by looking at how other publications are showcasing their content. Here are “7 Examples of Great Journal Promotion” to start with. If you’re a newer journal looking to grow your publication’s reputation, you can also check out Scholastica’s on-demand webinar “Growing Your Journal’s Reputation and Impact.”
HOW JOURNALS USE DIGITAL PUBLISHING TO LIBERATE CONTENT
Could the publisher become obsolete? Journals declaring independence, going online

In November 2015 the entire editorial board of Elsevier journal *Lingua* left its publisher because Elsevier refused to make the journal open access or lower its subscription fees. As other journals have learned in the past, despite being the minds behind *Lingua* and doing the bulk of the work for the journal, the editors could not take the journal from Elsevier due to a binding publisher contract. However, in the age of digital publishing the editors could certainly embark on a journey to launch a new journal on their own with no need for a corporate publisher to print or disseminate it - and that’s just what they’re doing. *Lingua*’s former editors are in the process of starting a new counterpart to their old journal called *Glossa*, which will be an editor-owned and online-only journal.

The tension between academics and corporate publishers over the rising cost of academic journals has been brewing for some time. Efforts by scholars, like *The Cost of Knowledge* and *Timothy Gowers’ expose* of Elsevier’s nearly 40% profit margins, continue to raise awareness among the academic community and mainstream public about the problems inherent in the traditional scholarly publishing model wherein often publicly funded research is being put behind prohibitive publisher paywalls.

The web is making it easier for scholars to publicly display and spread the word about leaving journals with high paywalls to launch open access alternatives. Could the actions of journals like *Lingua* spark a revolution?

It’s important to first note that journals declaring independence from their publishers isn’t necessarily a new phenomenon. Peter Suber, director of the Harvard Office for Scholarly Communication, Senior Researcher at the Berkman Center, Senior Researcher at SPARC, and Research Professor of Philosophy at Earlham College has been following journals leaving their...
The Open Access Directory (OAD) is a compendium of simple factual lists about open access (OA) to science and scholarship, maintained by the OA community at large. By bringing many OA-related lists together in one place, OAD makes it easier for everyone to discover them, use them for reference, and update them. The easier they are to maintain and discover, the more effectively they can spread useful, accurate information about OA. To see what we have, browse the table of contents below, browse the table of categories, or use the search box in the left sidebar. To help the cause, just register and start editing. If you have any questions, see our help section or drop us a line.

OAD is a wiki and we count on our users to keep these lists accurate, comprehensive, and up to date. Our goal is for the OA community itself to maintain the lists with little intervention from the editors or editorial board. We welcome your contributions to the lists, ideas for new lists, and comments to help us improve. Please contact us or use the discussion tabs on individual pages. The OAD is hosted by the School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College and supervised by an independent editorial board.

publishers since the late ’80s. His list of “Journal declarations of independence,” which is now a part of the Open Access Directory (OAD), shows some interesting trends among journals that have made the leap to publish on their own, including that the majority of journals declaring independence are in the maths and sciences, and most declarations of independence have in fact been from Elsevier. Despite finding patterns such as these among the journals, Suber said the sampling of 23 declarations is too low to make future predictions. However, he does see that with the advent of increasingly more affordable peer review and publishing software and the growing open access movement, more journal declarations are quite possible.

“I’m sure that many editors are very frustrated but not quite to the point required to take these steps. Some of this frustration might eventually take the form of resignations and new journal launches,” said Suber. “Every time a journal declaration of independence takes place, frustrated editors at other journals will think about whether they should follow suit, because they will know it can be done.”
Scholars looking to start journals can also see the stories of other editors that have successfully launched their own publications, such as the former editorial board of Evolutionary Ecology that left the journal to launch their own green OA counterpart Evolutionary Ecology Research, and find inspiration to publish on their own.

A primary reason for scholars to keep journal ownership in the hands of editors rather than sign over journals to publishers is that once a new journal is put in a corporate publisher’s possession its editors will generally lose all rights to control pricing and distribution. Some journals like Discrete Analysis are seeing this and opting to forgo working with publishers and use software to affordably manage publishing on their own instead.

Other editors who’ve been able to use technology to launch scholar-owned and operated journals include:

- Roland Meesters, Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Applied Bioanalysis
- Ian Beilin, Editor of In the Library with the Lead Pipe
- Amy Vilz & Molly Poremski Co-Editors-in-Chief, The Reading Room

Are you considering launching an editor-run open access journal? Be sure to check out The Open Access Journal Starter Kit. This free ebook from Scholastica covers all the information you’ll need to get your journal off the ground, cultivate a readership, and attract submissions and reviewers during the first year of publication.
5

DIGITIZE YOUR JOURNAL IMPACT TRACKING STRATEGY
Chapter 5

As research moves online, scholars and journals are gaining greater opportunities for their work to have an impact both within and beyond academia than ever before. But tracking traditional bibliometric citations alone does not provide the full picture of digital research impact. On the web, research is not only being cited in papers, but mentioned in a wide-range of online communication. So how can journals keep track of and show the other avenues being used to share their research online from social media to links in blogs and news articles?

Altmetrics, a type of alternative level metric that captures activity surrounding research from a range of digital sources, is emerging as a solution to show the full range of research impact beyond citations alone.

Unlike the Impact Factor (IF) and other bibliometric impact indicators, altmetrics can be applied to nontraditional scholarly outputs. Additionally, altmetrics address an important logistical challenge of the IF: it can take months to years to generate article citations, especially for research in the humanities and social sciences. Altmetrics make it possible for authors to show that their research is being used long before it is formally cited.

Among reasons altmetrics are becoming a promising means of tracking article impact in the digital age are that they allow journals to:

- Track the dissemination of articles both in and outside the scholarly community
- Show attention and impact being generated by articles prior to their being cited
- Show research impact in real-time without having to wait for a score to be released, like that of the Impact Factor in the Journal Citation Reports

There are many steps your journal can take to begin tracking altmetrics, from the free option of setting up a Google Analytics account for your journal website to working with an altmetrics tracking company like Altmetric. The Evolution of Impact Indicators: From Bibliometrics to Altmetrics, a free ebook co-produced by Scholastica and Altmetric, provides information on the changing impact landscape and real-life use cases to help you start tracking altmetrics at your journal.
Looking to the future, we can expect many more innovations in scholarly journal publishing to come as the academic community races to meet the needs of researchers in the digital age. And we can expect cheaper and fully open access content to become more prevalent as the costs of digital journal publishing continue to decrease with affordable software. We may even see more and more scholar-editors taking digital publishing into their own hands like the editors of Lingua and Discrete Analysis.

We’re entering a new paradigm in this not-so-futuristic “digital age,” wherein the power to disseminate academic research is moving away from print publishers and back into the hands of scholars and editors. On the web, scholars can take a greater role and even the lead in setting the stage for journal websites and article publishing in the future. Will we soon enter an age of digital-only journals? It’s hard to say. But what’s certain is that now is the time for your journal to begin to develop its digital strategy. We hope this guide will help you along the way!