Conclusion

Katherine Pitcher

Milne Library, SUNY Geneseo

T he case studies and interviews included in the *Library Publishing Toolkit* are library strategies for dealing with an important question, "How do we sustain our role in providing content to our users?"

As libraries and librarians of all types ponder that question, we are looking for models, advice, and a set of best practices to help us answer the question and move forward. We want to share our stories and gain practical strategies for developing services that sustain our role as content providers and developers, whether that role is as curator, host, or publisher. One way we can accomplish these goals is to collaborate and create community-based resources for sharing solutions and developing applications to provide new services to our users, as well as providing the opportunities for the formalization of skills and training in publishing. Many libraries are searching for best practices to improve services, but few document and record their successes in a systematic manner. Thus, the *Library Publishing Toolkit* itself becomes one example of a community-based resource, designed to share and disseminate best practices to the larger library and publishing community.

Many of the academic library case studies in the *Library Publishing Toolkit* were initiated through librarian recognition of the need for publishing strategies that align libraries with the institutional mission. We should be *"…aligning the value in our new publishing services with the strategic goals of the academic library and its home institution by diving head-first into open access business models and fee-based service provision…"*[1] In this respect, new business models are taking shape at all types of academic libraries, as the need for transforming scholarly communications becomes a priority.

At public libraries, too, the mission and role of the library as content procurer is morphing from simple content provider to new roles as community publisher and content developer, along with strong publishing and writing services to support this growing need. Thus, librarians recognize publishing as another strategy in developing stronger ties and collaborations with our communities, whether academic or public. Author and scholar services are developing at all

---

[1]   Mullins, J. L., Murray-Rust, C., Ogburn, J. L., Crow, R., Ivins, O., Mower, A., Nesdill, D., Newton, M. P., Speer, J., & Watkinson, C. (2012). *Library publishing services: Strategies for success: Final research report*. Washington, DC: SPARC. Retrieved from http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/purduepress_ebooks/24/

types of institutions, where librarians are *"...assuming responsibility for acquiring a comprehensive understanding of editor and author needs, along with the suite of value propositions..."*[2]

As libraries develop and share library publishing best practices, what are the next steps and future priorities? How do we sustain these new roles?

What we see in the future are bright opportunities for libraries to learn, to share, and to grow as libraries, authors, and readers. Specific to our next steps, we are looking to develop the next edition of the *Library Publishing Toolkit* within the following key areas:

Marketing: How will libraries promote their content to other libraries, to new readers, to their current audiences? How do public libraries promote their community's works? How do we get new readers? Some of the options worth exploring include documenting processes for ISBNs and MARC record creation and their distribution via WorldCat, Amazon, or other utilities, in conjunction with publicity and marketing support for these methods. There are opportunities, too, for libraries to share best practices on the myriad efforts to disseminate metadata for free e-book collections—what results from these efforts?

Distribution: How will libraries get their content to readers? What new distribution models are created in light of new library publishing operations? Future best practices may include library development and work with EPUB standards and other e-book platforms.

Author Services: In particular, in academic libraries, what are the scholarly communication models and services that libraries are providing to their authors (i.e., their faculty and scholars)? Are print-on-demand, open access, and hybrid publications driving a new service model for libraries? What are our communities demanding? With the dramatic growth of social media sites for videos and blogs, and self-publishing services for text, photos, and even audio, a place to be creative in social environments seems to be the answer. Services ranging from writing groups to digital media equipment checkout, and from referral services to support programs are adapting to these needs.

Curation: What level of curation do we add to the content being published? What kinds of service models can we create? What curation roles do we encourage in both authors and readers? Libraries have an opportunity to use their unique position as curation and preservation specialists to enrich future publications and resources, whether through organization and advice or by active participation in the creation and publishing of these products.

Transforming library roles and activities to leverage new publishing and service opportunities can enrich our communities and scholarly communications. Because libraries provide a resourceful, inspiring, and sustaining place for both authors and readers, libraries developing publishing serves communities in a holistic manner. Tradition and innovation in libraries provide a dynamic learning environment for everyone.

For the next edition of the toolkit, what tools and practices still need to be documented? How can we give our libraries the support they need to effect important change in their communities? Please join us at http://www.publishingtoolkit.org to share your library's stories, thoughts, documentation, and experiences for effecting that important change.

[2]   Ibid.