How to flip a journal to (fair) Open Access

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Flip from *Journal of Informetrics* (JOI) to *Quantitative Science Studies* (QSS)
Starting point:
• Editorial system (EVISE)
• Open citations
• Open access

Overarching question:
*Why does the publisher make so many decisions for us? Why cannot we decide ourselves?*
How many citations are open today?

As of February 2019, the fraction of publications with open references has grown from 1% to 55% out of 43.2 million articles with references deposited with Crossref.

We encourage all other scholarly publishers to follow the example of these trail-blazing publishers by making their reference metadata publicly available. Please contact Crossref Support (support@crossref.org) for more information, or to let them know that you are ready to open up your reference metadata now. See also our list of responses to frequently asked questions.
Seven steps to flip a journal:

1. Establish a core team
2. Formulate a clear message
3. Discuss with board members and publisher
4. Make a strong plan
5. Choose a new publisher
6. Make a final decision
7. Organize the flip properly
Step 1: Establish a core team

- Editor-in-Chief
- Associate Editors
- President of scholarly society (ISSI)
Step 2: Formulate a clear message

- Open citations
- Open access
- Ownership
Step 3: Discuss with board members and publisher

- Joint effort of the core team
- Individual and collective discussions with board members
- Find out how much the publisher is willing to negotiate
- Be as open and transparent as possible
Step 4: Make a strong plan

- Ensure support from scholarly society
- Ensure legal and institutional support
- Try to find financial support
- Ask for advice; help from Fair Open Access Alliance (Saskia and Johan) was very valuable
Step 5: Choose a new publisher

- Choose between a publisher and a publishing platform
- Make sure the publisher is willing to follow the Fair Open Access Principles:
  - The publisher does not own the journal
  - All articles will be open access
  - APCs are low and transparent
- Negotiate APCs
Step 6: Make a final decision

- Organize a board meeting, including voting
- Provide room for differences in opinion; try to reach a decision that all board members are prepared to support
- Have a final discussion with the old publisher (perhaps they will change their mind!)
Step 7: Organize the flip properly

- Minimize negative consequences for authors
- Remain on speaking terms with the old publisher, so that the flip can take place in an orderly way
- Create media coverage for the flip to clearly signal that the old journal will be continued under a new name
Editorial Mutiny at Elsevier Journal

Following the footsteps of linguistics journal Lingua, the editorial board of the Elsevier-owned Journal of Informetrics has resigned and launched a rival journal that will be free for all to read.

By Lindsay McKenzie // January 14, 2019

The entire editorial board of the Elsevier-owned Journal of Informetrics resigned Thursday in protest over high open-access fees, restricted access to citation data and commercial control of scholarly work.

Today, the same team is launching a new fully open-access journal called Quantitative Science Studies. The Journal will be for and by the academic community and will be owned by the International Society for Scientometrics and Informetrics (ISSI). It will be published jointly with MIT Press.

The editorial board of the Journal of Informetrics said in a statement that they were unanimous in their decision to quit. They contend that scholarly journals should be owned by the scholarly community rather than by commercial publishers, should be open access under fair principles, and publishers should make citation data freely available.
Lessons learnt

• Proper preparation of a flip takes considerable time (about 1.5 years) and effort
• Having a strong core team and a good relationship with the scholarly society is essential
• Collaboration with FOAA has been very helpful
Main challenges

• Obtaining funding
• Being indexed in Web of Science and Scopus and getting a journal impact factor
• Journal impact factors are overrated
• We need a more pluralistic system for valuing journals
Group discussion

1. How to organize ownership? Through a scholarly society? Or some alternative approach?
2. How to choose a publisher or a publishing platform? What is the minimum service level that is needed?
3. How to deal with the challenge of WoS/Scopus indexing and the journal impact factor?
Thank you for your attention!

Do not hesitate to contact me for more information:
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