

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN ONLINE PROFESSIONAL CONTENT

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The status of the STM and professional publishing industry and market is analyzed, with a special focus on the Open Access initiatives, and on the new options for libraries and users, available with the migration from print to online.

The presentation includes data and material from the yearly article (titled: "Serial Wars") featured in the April 15, 2007 issue of Library Journal, examining current and future state of periodical pricing, and trends in the Publishing industry.

Initially the environment in the first half of 2007 is outlined, including the points of view of the different players, and their opposite visions (hence the title "Serial wars") of the new options available, specially the newest ones. The dramatic transformation brought worldwide from the fast migration from print to online has influenced the behavior of all players of the information world such as librarians, publishers, users, vendors, authors, and information specialists.

In fact, the serials market is living an increasing contrast and debate concerning the future of the traditional system of professional scholarly journals. Serials' prices continue to increase; the trend is towards bundled content sold to single organizations or consortia; and Open Access and Open Archives' initiatives are gaining ground.

The presentation also covers a summary of the market trends, and major players' positioning, as it is seen in 2007. The main initiatives from the publishers, the users, the subscription agents and the researchers are presented.

EBSCO, as the leading worldwide Information Services and Subscription agent, recognized during 2006 a major milestone in the history of the company, processing more than half of the subscriptions with an electronic component (online only and online+ print). More in general, serials agents and publishers keep investing and building infrastructure to manage online content, on developing and assisting digital archiving, while the support to the alternative to existing system of publishing way is rising as well. Open Access itself is no longer considered as subtext, but a real alternative identity to the existing system. EBSCO themselves include access to all Directory of Open Access Journals in their administrative, online catalogue, and online registration management tools and services.

The presentation ends with a summary of guidelines on how to design a flexible strategy to extract the best ROI (=Return On Investment) from the new opportunities that the new publishing and online content practices offer to the users, the librarians, and the researchers.