

transitioning from self- publishing

George Kendall

Anesthesiology

- Note: I am not able to discuss detailed financial information in this presentation. I am not able to reveal the names of the publishers who submitted proposals.

outline

- Initial decision process
- RFP
- Reviewing proposals
- Publisher selection
- Transition

initial decision process

- Why would a society that self-publishes consider transitioning publishing processes to a commercial publisher?

a commercial publisher can offer:

- Reduction of production/editorial costs
- Guaranteed royalty and editorial office allowance
- Increased institutional and individual subscribers
- Enhanced marketing and journal visibility
- Increased advertising sales (online and print)

rfp process

- Set up timeline
- The RFP should
 - review history of the journal/society and structure of organization
 - outline current processes and procedures/asks publisher detailed questions throughout
 - detail make-up of editorial board and the editorial office
 - outline journal-related financials so the commercial publishing candidates can offer fair proposals based on current costs and revenue
 - be weighted
- You may want the society legal department to review the RFP, you will need the legal department to review the contract

important considerations

- Review contractual agreements society/journal may already have in place that could impact a future commercial publisher contract
- Review organizational chart to assess impact on current staff
- Make plans for transition internally, who will manage, who will be publisher's main contact
- Editorial control should remain with the society/journal/editors, not commercial publisher

reviewing the proposals

- Proposals should
 - address all questions outlined in the RFP
 - address areas mission critical to the journal/society (open access, web innovation)
- Drill down into the financial offering, is there a guaranteed royalty AND a separate additional Editorial Office allowance (which must be enough to cover the costs of Editor honoraria, editorial staff, and additional editorial expenses).
- Review innovations, product and business development section. Is the publisher forward looking?
- Research the publishing candidates. Have there been recent M and As? Who is the CEO, how long as the CEO been with the company, what is the staff set-up, who will be working on your journal. What competitor titles are published? Is there a firewall between your title(s) and the competitive titles? Ask questions if anything needs clarification

reviewing the proposals

- Does the presentation detail the online experience
 - Compare the proposed online platform to current platform
- Marketing plan, including author marketing?
 - Does the proposal include a full marketing plan?
- Media/press release program?
- Thorough print production/composition/copyediting proposal?
- Does the manuscript tracking proposal include upgrades as editorial office needs evolve?

publisher presentations

- Who does the publisher bring to the presentation?
- How does the publisher interact with the representatives from the society?
- How well does the publisher answer questions in a live setting?
 - Save a few tough question for the live meeting that were not in the original RFP, see how the publishers handle these questions
 - Don't get caught up in the sales pitch

selection and contract

- After the publisher presentations, the optimal choice will probably be clear
- The contract must be reviewed carefully to ensure that it includes most elements from the proposal, especially financials
- The contract must be reviewed by the society legal team, and it may be that lawyers from both sides need to meet
- Review particulars of the 'out' clause
- Beware boilerplate contracts (and proposals, for that matter)

transition

- Carefully plan and execute notification process
- Review online platform, and homepage design
- Publisher should write and distribute press release (stakeholders should review this)
- Build timeline for transition of certain processes
 - Marketing and development should begin early
 - Process for publish ahead of print should be crafted
 - Meet with transition team and publishing team
 - Review transition that needs to occur with the manuscript tracking/peer review system
 - Commercial publisher should lead the way on the transition

post-transition

- Should allow journal editorial staff to focus on what matters most, publishing great content
- Hold publisher accountable to timelines and quality
- Let go of certain processes
- Move from doing all processes to overseeing processes

thank you!

George Kendall

managing-editor@anesthesiology.org