Content Marketing Trends and New Ways to Generate Revenue

Speakers:
Tim Cross
Product Marketing Manager
Allen Press

Lettie Conrad
Manager of Online Product Management
SAGE Publications

Moderator:
Nan Hallock
Director of Publishing
Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening

Reporter:
Heather Grimm
Writer/Editor
Reznick Group, PC

The lifeblood of scientific publishers is the content of journals. This session discussed how that content can be harnessed for marketing and generating new revenue.

Tim Cross offered eight new ways to generate revenue, seven of which cost little or nothing to implement. The ideas are in three categories: offering different subscription models, using new channels to sell products, and repurposing existing content. Alternative subscription models can be used to supplement, and possibly encourage growth in, the traditional model. For example, publishers can offer shorter, online-only subscriptions (a good way to reach more students) or use patron-driven acquisition, whereby the library pays only for the content that patrons are using.

There are multiple ways of selling products. DeepDyve is an article-rental service with iTunes-like pricing, whereby users can rent or purchase articles—a good option for getting content into the hands of students. Articles or highlights can be recorded and sold on iTunes, potentially reaching non-traditional users. Another opportunity to sell products can be gained by offering free trials directly to libraries and faculty or giving out access tokens and thus allow users access to content; both kinds of offerings can expose new users to journals.

And publishers can repurpose existing content by turning journal articles into e-books or publishing new editions of existing books as e-books, selling commercial reprints as enhanced digital reprints, and optimizing Web sites for use on mobile devices. Although the latter is the only approach that comes with a substantial cost, opting to go this route is an investment in the future in that more and more people are reading on their mobile devices.

Lettie Conrad stressed the importance of content-focused marketing. Traditional marketing focuses on casting as wide a net as possible, often using such tactics as print and mail advertisements. If publishers combine advances in technology with the proper use of their content, they can target marketing efforts more effectively. For example, they can offer users single articles or article collections on specific topics as an alternative to a traditional journal. They can also use existing content as part of an effort to leverage social media or create their own specialized Web communities to find and engage users.

The rapid developments in mobile devices (such as mobile-ready Web sites, apps, and QR codes) can help publishers to extend access to existing content and special content to more users in more places and also help to unite print and Web channels. Other initiatives to consider are podcasts and “pocket articles” (small cards with information about an article distributed at an event, which can be sponsored for a new revenue stream and can save the cost of distributing full journal issues) made from existing content. In addition, technological advances make it easier to tailor marketing communications and allow publishers to recruit high-quality manuscripts, increase use, and promote membership, all of which help to keep more content coming in.

continued (from page 22)

scientists, but many have recognized its value. However, many scientists continue to perceive commenting, for example, as apart from their scholarly activities and something that is certainly not considered part of the formal article record.

He offered suggestions for Twitter campaigns. Keep in mind that users are young (half are less than 30 years of age) and want breaking news; the power of retweeting; and openness to new ways of using Twitter, such as posting electronic tables of contents. Facebook can be a unique way of showing a journal’s history through the “Timeline” format and has good built-in analytics.

Muenning said that you should lead your social-media strategies with your content, engaging users by curating content that is appropriate for them according to your social-media tool and audience. It is very important to highlight the integrity and excellence of the journal.

Offering several perspectives, the speakers in the session gave a current look at the efforts of publishers to reach audiences through social media. They emphasized creating realistic goals and recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each social-media tool. They also stressed the need to curate content that highlights the integrity of the journal and caters to a particular audience and setting. Perhaps the most important point was that with this knowledge and a little staff time, publishers of all sizes are able to delve into the world of social media.