

Beyond Electronic Content: Widening Your Journal's Web Horizons

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The Why

Sue Deeley outlined the benefits of using journal Web sites innovatively. Continued widening of Web capacities builds revenue, use, and visibility. Journal activities related to the Web can include optimizing existing capacities and use, drawing on archives as sources of content, and expanding access to include the third world. Value can be added at three levels. At the article level, value is added through searchability, PDFs and HTML, linking, online publication before print, and supplementary information (for example, continuing-medical-education items, glossaries, database links, bookmarking, and PubMed links). At the journal level, there can be links to related journal content, indexes, improved navigation, community and portfolio links, and online-only content. At the portfolio level, journals can, for example, add links to content in other journals and to non-

journal services. Value can also be added by making more of existing content, for instance by selling articles or by repackaging them, either in content collections or otherwise.

Journals should take advantage of commercial opportunities. For example, not only can their Web sites contain advertising, but advertisements can be added to print downloads. Sites and online-only supplements can be sponsored. Free articles and sample issues can be used to market a journal. Among tools available for commercial purposes are banners and skyscrapers (static and dynamic), pop-ups, pop-unders, Web surveys, and e-mail marketing. Web pages can be created for key customer groups, such as librarians, authors, and advertisers.

In-house roles and responsibilities will change in the new Web environment. Skills will be updated, new author tools will be introduced, and resources will change. Is organizing information first for the Web and then for print the next step?

The What

Richard Lane outlined the historical context at *The Lancet*. This journal has a decade of full online content and an established audience of readers and customers, including full-paid subscribers, registered parties (free users), and online subscribers. What should be delivered online? First and foremost, the journal content; among other things, early online publication of selected original research, a dynamic home page highlighting new content, and interactivity with users. Core content can be enhanced by links to extra online material and reader comments, content collections, and weblogs and podcasts. The home page is the shop window of the journal. Online editorial plans should coordinate with external communication activity. Media coverage drives use, and use drives revenue.

The How

Greg Suprock explained how content has been unleashed "the *Nature* way" by podcasting, Web focuses, blogs, and more. Scientists are inquisitive, innovative, and active learners. The Web is a great sandbox for scientists, and publishers can play too. (1) Podcasting. Use existing tools: downloadable MP3s via RSS subscription (usually free) or Apple applications. Focus on journal or group strengths (content and technical capability), and outsource other key tasks (for example, interviewing and recording). Kindle editorial interest. Be accessible, not limited to podcast downloads. Create transcripts. *Nature* delivers a weekly podcast facilitated by an established UK scientific radio broadcaster. (2) Web focuses. Use subject-specific portals, topics selected by editors, and spinoffs of articles. A true information portal contains regular article content, news, analysis, dynamic content (for example, maps), novel features (for example, timelines), and archives. (3) Mashup/Google Earth. A mashup is a Web site or Web application that seamlessly combines content from more than one source into an integrated experience. Google Earth uses AJAX (Asynchronous Javascript and XML), an open interface called KLM (Keyhole Markup Language), and KMZ (zipped KML files). (4) Blogs. A blog is a community forum within a discipline that promotes direct interaction between, in the current case, editors or journalists and their readers. It is new ground for formal peer-reviewed publications. Blogs "the *Nature* way" include a separate dedicated "blogs" server. 