◆ PKP Project, Open-Source Software Helping Journals Around the World

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John Willinsky described the Public Knowledge Project (PKP) (*pkp.sfu.ca*), an initiative that has developed Open Journal Systems (OJS), open-source software for journals in need of a no-cost management and publishing solution that they can modify and maintain. (Open-source software has free distribution and modification. Examples include Linux, a free UNIX-type operating system; Apache; and FireFox.) PKP provides continuing support (answers to questions, analysis of problems, and fixes) and upgrades at no cost, with contributions from the user community. Journals download the software and install it on a Web server, and PKP offers a Web-server hosting option for a fee.

More than 1500 journals on six continents are using OJS to publish their content on Web sites, including supplemental data files. Password-access control was developed by Rowland Lorimer's group, which demonstrates that open-source software does not preclude subscription models or other forms of access control. The online manuscript submission and tracking system includes reviewing, editing, indexing, and archiving. There is also a conference-management system, Open Conference Systems, for managing abstracts and conference proceedings. Journals may customize the code as they wish. Although they all use PKP software, the journals' Web sites appear different and range from open-access to subscription models. Journals are encouraged to send their customized code back to the PKP developers and post questions and solutions for the more than 1000 people who make up the community of PKP journals. PKP evaluates the code for quality. PKP is available in 15 languages, thanks to code sharing.

In addition, PKP has regular code releases about every 6 months (versus the roughly 3 years for Microsoft's operating-system upgrades). Other open systems include Topaz, DPubS, HyperJournal, and a Druple plug-in for Web-site content management. There is a free online support forum where users may post questions; answers are often posted less than 24 hours later. Software installation does not require technical expertise, but server setup and maintenance do. One installation may support many journals.

PKP is funded entirely by research grants and is committed to the principle of public access over the long term. The revenue models used by journals that use PKP software are ecumenical. About half use a delayed-access model in which subscriptions are required for the most recent 6–12 months, after which content becomes freely available. That has enabled journals to both maintain subscriptions and increase readership.

Kevin Stranack described more specifics about PKP, and Lorimer described his experience in working with PKP. User accounts are role based and established by the software administrator, and they include standard journal roles. The manuscript-submission module includes author submission tools that enable authors to view submitted manuscripts, access submission checklists and metadata, upload submissions, and receive supplementary files, including data files and submission confirmation. Reviewers can agree to a review with one click. Reviewer guidelines and a reviewer Web form, submitted via a single click, are provided. Copyediting and layout can be completed within the system.

Open-source software to support stable or rotating advertisements is available and provides data on views and click-throughs. Blogging is available though a Druple interface. E-commerce (for example, for subscriptions) is available through a PayPal plug-in. Article metadata can be exported to CrossRef, for journals that deposit DOIs, or to PubMed. A Google Analytics plug-in is available. The use of SlideShare enables PowerPoint slides to be embedded within the article page. Video is enabled through blip.tv (*blip.tv*). Reading tools, including links to "About the Author", "Notify a Colleague", "E-mail the Author", "Add a Comment", and "Related Articles" are available as add-ons for PKP.

Planned enhancements include abstract, full text, and PDF access reports; reports of most viewed articles; a user-interface evaluation; article annotation; and Lemon8-XML to enhance the XML back end. Anyone interested may contact Kevin Stranack at *kstranac@sfu.ca*. 🔥