

# GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING E-JOURNAL TITLES

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Information technology has changed the way information is stored, retrieved and disseminated. The Internet, particularly WWW, as a new medium of information storage and delivery, represents a revolution, which would have a lasting impact on the publishing and information delivery system in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The publication of electronic journals has further brought significant changes in the global information process and reduces total dependent on the print journals. This article briefly describes the Guidelines for selecting electronic journals. Broad guidelines for selecting E-journals are described in the areas related to contents, Pricing ,reliability and accessibility of licence agreement etc. in conclusion authors have given a set of issues which a subscriber may consider before selecting a suitable options.*

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**Key words:** *E-Journals, Selection Acquisition*

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## **0 Introduction**

An increasingly important function of academic libraries today is to provide of information in electronic formats. Today, libraries are providing electronic access to a wide variety of resources, including indexes, full-text articles and complete journals. Journals play a vital role in the distribution of primary information. It was once generally assumed in academic area that books were for teaching and journals for research. This was always a very simplistic distinction and is certainly not a true reflection of current practice. The shift in recent years towards more student- centered learning means that most undergraduate students are required to use journals as a key resource for extended essays and other assignments. The number of scientific publishers who make their journals available in electronic form is rapidly growing. Journal users in the university community are keen to obtain access to these electronic

journals. There are various ways in which access to the electronic journals can be provided to users.

## **1 Electronic Journal**

Electronic journals may be defined very broadly as any journal, magazine, e'zine, webzine, newsletter or type of electronic serial publication, which is available over the Internet. Within this broad definition, the titles can be electronically accessed using different technologies such as the World Wide Web (WWW), gopher, ftp, telnet, email or listserv. Of course, virtually all-modern electronic journals are mostly available via the Web. In order to be included in the E-Journal collection an electronic journal must be available via the World Wide Web and must fall within the guidelines presented below. These guidelines are not presented in order of importance and it is the responsibility of the subject specialists to apply them in an appropriate manner. Not all guidelines apply to all titles.

## **2 Content Related Guidelines**

- ?? **Full Text of the current issue should be available directly from the web page.**
- ?? Full text of some or all-back issues should be available directly from the web page.
- ?? Subject content should support the curriculum, and/or faculty and student research, and/or local interests.
- ?? Articles should be peer reviewed or be reviewed by an academic institution or an organization with an established scholarly reputation publishing the journal.
- ?? Articles should be in English or another language that is appropriate for the curriculum or the discipline.
- ?? Anticipated use of the title should be high and within the discipline that the e-Journal supports.
- ?? Level of Content should be appropriate for the anticipated audience.
- ?? Content of the e-journal should complement or enhance the paper version of the title if a paper version exists.
- ?? Publisher or vendor should provide reliable archiving of back issues.

### 3 *Pricing and licensing related guidelines*

The Internet and electronic publishing developments provide an opportunity for publishers to re-think how they ‘package’ and disseminate scholarly information and explore new pricing and charging models. It also offers opportunities to broaden the nature and functionality of the journal, for example, through linkages to related information and the inclusion of multimedia features. In considering how to price e-journals, publishers naturally wish to maintain their existing position in the market and the revenues they have come to expect from print sales. Indeed, a number would see it as an opportunity to increase revenue through the new functionality that the electronic journal may be able to offer and the bundling of print and electronic versions. Many will wish to recover the investment they have made in recent years in developing electronic versions of their journals for users.

However, the economic climate does not allow for opportunities for significant revenue increases for publishers. Libraries continue to experience severe budget restrictions and face a crisis with regard to the maintenance of their journal collections. Additionally, libraries are often not ready to acquire the electronic only versions of titles and cancel print, at least until progress has been made with regard to long term archiving. Libraries are also making known to publishers their requirements with regard to e-journals: ownership of data how they would like to use the electronic information

#### 3.1 Pricing models in use

What are some of the models being used by publishers for pricing electronic journals?

The most common by used are:

- ?? print and electronic combined – at one price. Here the price for the electronic version is not shown separately and electronic is not available separately.
- ?? Print and electronic combined – but with a visible surcharge for the electronic version for example 10%, 20% . It is optional whether the electronic version is taken.
- ?? The electronic version available on its own often at the same price as the print or possible at a lower price.
- ?? Pricing for consortia. Library consortia are growing worldwide and increasingly approach journal publishers for consortia based pricing for e-journal access for their members. A number of major publishers have developed consortia pricing policies. Whilst for some the policy may fairly established for many the pricing for consortia is negotiated individually and agreements may be unique to a specific.

Today access to electronic information has to be licensed rather than purchased. Licensees have to negotiate with individual publishers/information owners directly as the unifying agents or aggregators have yet to fully transform their services into the new environment. Neither partly information vendor nor information purchaser is used to this new scenario

resulting in frustration and time consuming discussions and negotiations around the terms of electronic content licensing.

### **3.2 Licence Agreement**

The degree of access to and use permitted of an electronic journal depends heavily on the terms and conditions negotiated in the licence for that specific product. when a copyright owner sends a licence agreement it should be kept in mind that he is actually sending an invitation to negotiate the terms and conditions under which the product can be used. Most of the licences are written by lawyers and the technical language used puts many librarians off reading it. However it is important to understand what is being agreed to.

Generally a licence agreement consists of clauses that deal with:

- ?? The parties
- ?? Recitals
- ?? Interpretation of the Agreement
- ?? Definitions
- ?? Choice of law
- ?? The agreement
- ?? The rights granted under the licence
- ?? Usage restrictions
- ?? Term and Termination
- ?? Delivery and Access to the Licensed Materials
- ?? Licence Fee
- ?? Licensee's (Library) Undertakings
- ?? Implementation and Evaluation
- ?? Warranties Undertakings Indemnities
- ?? Force Majeure
- ?? Assignment
- ?? Notices
- ?? Dispute Settlement
- ?? Schedules
- ?? Signatures

Licensing agreement and copyright permits use of e-journal articles for interlibrary loan and electronic reserves.

#### **4      *Functionality related Guidelines***

These guidelines are for deciding on how to access electronic journals. Different publishers have different policies when it comes to providing access to electronic journals. Some publishers are willing to provide libraries with both bibliographic information and full text for local storage. This is done either by regularly sending CD-ROMs to the library or by making the material available via an FTP archive from which a library can download the files. Some publishers have their own sites at which end-users can access both bibliographic information and full text. In this type of access publisher gives the user a user name and password. An other possible way to provide access to electronic journals is through the web site of an intermediary.

Another way to provide end – users with access to electronic journals is by including links in the library catalogue. These links are added to the journal description. In most cases a link brings the user to the list of issues of the journal that are electronically available on a site of a publisher or intermediary. Access is thus provided at the level of the journal. This solution is of course only possible when the OPAC of a library has a web interface.

?? Interface is friendly.

?? Articles have hypertext links to additional data, e-mail addresses, full text of material cited, etc.

?? Site provides indexing or other types of subject access to the journal's content.

#### **5      *Technical related Guidelines***

?? Printing and downloading are available and easy to do.

?? Software needed to view the title contents is commonly used and available free of charge.

?? For titles with restricted access access is controlled by IP address or by IP address and a password that can be published in Mariner.

?? Access server is reliable and stable.

?? Currently recommended formats are PDF and HTML.

#### **6      *Conclusion***

All providers are looking at ways to add value to their products, whether they are the publisher of the content or the aggregator offering enhanced access. Publishers are speaking about adding links for color images (not practical in print journals), multimedia and expanded

Web sites with a community focus. Three of the four subscription agents offer an index to a broad number of journals, with document delivery complementing fulltext online. Libraries will need to determine which approach will best suit their needs. In reviewing the possibilities, libraries may wish to consider the following questions, as they examine their options.

1. How user friendly is the search engine? Does it provide for a basic and advanced level of searching? Does it index at the fulltext level or the header data (bibliographic and abstracts)?
2. Is there a way to narrow the search to those titles which are held by the library and does it indicate if the title is in a print and/or electronic format? Is a link to library holdings important and how will that work for your institution?
3. Are you intending to replace your print with the electronic version and is archiving a consideration?
4. What is the match between the titles, which are offered, and those that would best fit the needs of your users?
5. Are you looking for a large index to many titles, with accompanying document delivery (horizontal solution) or increased access to selected fields with additional source material included (vertical solution)?
6. What provision has been made for security (IP addresses or passwords) and how does that fit your environment?

The scholarly journal as we know it has been around for over 300 years and in this time it has barely changed. Now a revolution may be happening in the way scholarly communication is carried out, using the Internet. Electronic journals open up many exciting opportunities and potential for academic libraries also. They possess many advantages and also disadvantages. Librarians need to be able to identify and balance the factors that would make electronic journals a success or failure in their libraries.

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