

CCC's Rightslink: Helping Publishers Implement STM Permissions Guidelines

By



Ken Okaya, product manager, Copyright Clearance Center

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For more than four decades, the International Association of STM Publishers (STM) has served as the voice of scholarly and academic publishers. As a global organization actively engaged in a variety of copyright and legal issues, STM has taken a leadership position in the development of policies that recognize the importance of intellectual property owned by STM publishers. In this role, STM provides thought-leadership and guidance that informs the policies of publishing and licensing organizations around the world, including Copyright Clearance Center.

Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), a not-for-profit licensing organization, has been a trusted partner for STM publishers, licensing print and digital content for more than 30 years. CCC and STM share a common goal of protecting the valuable intellectual property of STM publishers.

As part of its mission, in March 2009 STM issued the revised STM Permissions Guidelines for copyrighted materials, which facilitate routine permissions requests between publishers who sign on to the agreement. They provide a specific framework through which requests for small portions of text and a limited number of illustrations can be granted at no charge to participating publishers. The new guidelines, which apply to both book and journal content, greatly simplify the permissions process for reusing content from print and digital editions of STM titles.

CCC offers STM publishers a unique licensing tool called Rightslink, which allows their customers to request and obtain reuse permissions at the point-of-content on an automated, 24/7 basis. Customers decide how they want to use the content based on the publisher's own business rules and Rightslink automates the purchase process, generates the license and passes royalties back to the publisher. Rightslink allows publishers to adhere to the new STM guidelines in an automated fashion by tracking the number of graphs, figures and charts that an individual STM signatory has requested to reuse from another STM publisher - streamlining the transaction, making it seamless for both parties.

Rightslink has been adopted by many leading STM publishers including Elsevier, Springer, John Wiley & Sons, Nature Publishing Group, Sage Publications and Taylor & Francis. Since deploying Rightslink in 2007, Elsevier has been able to more efficiently process the 4,000 permissions requests they receive monthly, freeing staff from handling thousands of tedious permissions requests so they can spend more time on other activities, such as pursuing new contracts.

"The STM Permissions Guidelines are crucial to facilitating the publishing process for STM members and encourages them to more freely share their content amongst themselves," said Mark Seeley, senior vice president and general counsel for Elsevier, and Chair of the STM Legal Affairs/Copyright Committee. "CCC's Rightslink offering can help facilitate the use of the STM Permissions Guidelines by automating permission requests, reducing costs and eliminating delays."

Detailed below are ways in which Rightslink can help STM publishers implement each of the individual guidelines featured in the new STM Permissions Guidelines.

- **Guideline 1: Quantity limits for gratis permissions**

Rightslink enables publishers to carefully track the limitations on free permissions established in this guideline such as up to three figures/tables from a journal article or book chapter, no more than five figures from a whole

book or journal issue, etc.

- **Guideline 2: Exceptions and exception-handling**

Recognizing that the quantity limits will not necessarily apply to every situation, Rightslink can accommodate publishers who wish to charge each other rights fees if the need arises.

- **Guideline 3: Author or artist permissions**

In the event an author or artist who holds the copyright has specifically requested the right of approval Rightslink can be designed to address this special circumstance.

- **Guideline 4: Application to all media (including electronic) & means of distribution**

Rightslink can list multiple type of use options and customize them to each publisher's business rules, allowing the publisher re-using the work to more accurately demonstrate how they are planning on using it and providing the publisher supplying the content with a better means of tracking how their content is being used.

- **Guideline 5: Further editions**

With Rightslink, any permission granted for a first edition of a published work can be automatically applied to subsequent editions of that same work, including later editions in other languages.

- **Guideline 6: Complimentary copies**

In this guideline, publishers agree not to request a complimentary copy of a newly published work, except in limited circumstances of a special request, Rightslink can manage and clear the free copies requests when the special circumstances arise.

- **Guideline 7: Proper credits**

Rightslink can quickly and easily provide the bibliographic information that should be quoted when content is republished.

- **Guideline 8: Prompt response to express permission requests**

As an automated, online service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, Rightslink can play a major role in ensuring requests for permission are responded to promptly.

Beyond aiding publishers in their implementation of the STM Permissions Guidelines, Rightslink offers all rightsholders, regardless of the type or format of what they create and distribute, an additional source of revenue and the ability to provide all their customers with an easy-to-use interface that offers a consistent user experience 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. In addition to the numerous STM publishers, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Economist, Time magazine and many others in various publishing disciplines have chosen Rightslink to be their point-of-content licensing solution.

The new STM Permissions Guidelines support the dissemination of information to aid in the development of science and scholarly research, but do so in a way that values and respects the copyrighted intellectual property of STM publishers. The guidelines create an efficient system, based on mutual trust, by which permissions can be granted for the reuse of both print and electronic content.

Working with STM Publishers, CCC integrated their Rightslink functionality with the STM Permissions Guidelines to enable publishers to set their own pricing so that permissions requests can be granted with "no charge" orders from other publishers, support flexible pricing for the reuse of words, portions of text and full-text reprint permissions requests, accommodate tiered pricing across users or articles, manage permissions by use over time and more. CCC will continue to work with STM publishers in the future to meet their business needs and help solve the unique problems they face.

To learn more about how CCC's Rightslink solution can make it easy to implement the new STM Permissions Guidelines by deploying a cost-efficient automated system, interested publishers should send an email to

rightslink@copyright.com, visit www.rightslink.com or for those going to The Frankfurt Book Fair attend the Rightslink Forum Innovation presentations scheduled for 14 October at 13.45 and 15 October at 10.00 or visit CCC in the Digital Marketplace Hall 4.2, Stand H430.

About the Author

Ken Okaya is a product manager for Copyright Clearance Center, the world's leading provider of innovative licensing solutions for the seamless sharing of knowledge and a member of the International Association of STM Publishers. For more information, please visit www.copyright.com.

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