SCHOLARSHIP IN THE AGE OF IMMEDIACY

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Editor (since 1995):
Sociological Methods & Research
Sage Publications
Founded in 1972
Quarterly, peer-reviewed methodology journal
MY RESEARCH PRACTICES

• Except for invited articles, haven’t published in a peer-review journal since 1994.

• Haven’t gone to my university library in over 10 years.

• Spend $3-4k per year on books, mostly bought used on Amazon ($10-20 each).
• In 2009, 5389 institutional subscriptions
• 16-20 papers a year across 4 issues
• 80-100 submissions a year
• Currently 1 to 1.5 year backlog
• Impact rating: last year ranked 4th among all sociology journals, 2nd among social science methodology journals.
• No submission or publication fees for authors
• No compensation for reviewers
• Well-paid as editor
• Problem is getting timely reviews from limited pool of qualified reviewers
• General philosophy: If you have a good idea, my responsibility is to help you turn it into a published article.
CRITIQUE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE PUBLISHING

- TIME LAG – years between initial draft and publication
- LACK OF GOOD QUALITY FILTERS – reviews
- A HIGHLY DISJOINTED DISCOURSE
  - Years for comments to be published
  - Most commentary never submitted, much less published
- INFORMATION OVERLOAD - What to read?
A SMALL STEP: SMR WEBSITE

Goals

• Blog Format
• More than just Abstracts
• Comments
• Searchable Tags
• Ratings
GOALS

Blog format

More than Abstracts

Full text or preview pages

Comments

Variable length + type

Searchable Tags

Ratings
(Like Amazon, TripAdvisor)
NEXT STEPS

• Launch planned for May
  Targeted announcements to members of journal community

• Working with Sage on access issues
  Possibilities for posting full-text

• Expected challenges
  Effective promotion
  Incentivizing participation
THE FUTURE: Centralized Distribution?

Models of efficient content delivery

Amazon, itunes, Netflix, Orbitz, etc.

- One stop shopping, 1-click purchasing
- Comments, reviews + ratings
- Intelligent functionality: enabling rating, keyword, relative buzz searching;
  using viewing activity + purchase patterns to recommend content
CURRENT CONTENT DELIVERY MODEL

- Publisher
- Publisher
- Publisher
- Publisher
- Publisher
- Services like JSTOR
- Publisher websites
- Libraries + institutions
- User
AMAZON TYPE DELIVERY SYSTEM

1 stop content delivery
THE END