

GOING TO TENDER: CHOOSING YOUR PUBLISHER

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SELF PUBLISHING SOCIETIES



COMMERCIAL PUBLISHERS



WHY CONSIDER GOING TO TENDER?

- Revenues have been declining
- You are being pushed to “be lean,” do more with less
- Costs are increasing
- Institutional distribution and licensing are becoming increasingly complex and time consuming
- You want to expand your offerings, but can’t manage the risk
- You realize that publishing is not the society’s core competency

What will a commercial publisher offer?

What would we really “lose” if we partnered?

COMMON CONCERNS AND (some) MISCONCEPTIONS

- **Ownership**
The journal name and all content is owned by the society
- **Editorial Control**
Remains with the society (via the Editor-in-Chief)
- **Mission Control**
Strategic planning remains with the society
- **Brand Identity Online**
Journal becomes part of a collection of content
- **Nimbleness and Flexibility**
Loss of Control (perceived or actual)
- **Loss of revenue**
Revenue or Profit (surplus)

THE RFP

Match.com

***The RFP must include accurate
and complete information about
the journal and the business it
represents.***

THE TYPICAL DEAL

- **Publisher Provides Services**

Peer Review System; Copyediting; Composition; Production; PP&B; Online Platform; Postage; Fulfillment; Storage & Handling; Distribution; Marketing; Global Sales; Journal Management.

- **Publisher Provides Financial Support to Society**

Royalty on revenue; Grants to underwrite expenses of content development (staff, EIC, etc); Annual Editorial Board or Strategy Meeting.

There is no one-size fits all financial arrangement.

MAKING THE DECISION

It's NOT just about the money

- ***Culture and Personality***
- ***For Profit or Not for Profit***
- ***Big fish in a little pond or little fish in a big pond***
- ***Presence in market (discipline and related disciplines)***
- ***Platform & Technology – In house or outsourced***
- ***Communication Style***
- ***Guaranteed Return or Shared Risk***

WORKING WITH A COMMERCIAL PUBLISHER IS A PARTNERSHIP

VENDOR

- Service providers, such as a payroll service or cleaning service.
Suppliers, such as office supply store or specialty supply house.

Command and control.

Business Partner

- Does business on behalf of you.
- A “relational contract” that may evolve to address new problems and opportunities over time.

Meet often to coordinate and make joint decisions.

A SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIP

- *Speak a common language.*
- *Share your experience and expertise.*
- *Familiarity breeds benign neglect, inattention, casualness.*
- *Mistakes happen: Acknowledge them, fix them.*
- *Have a business discussion more than once a year.*
- *Have a strategy discussion more than once a year.*
- *Remember what you promised.*

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