

Réf. : BCU/JF

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General

We consider chapter 2, *The overview of the market for scientific publishing*, chapter 3, *Entry, prices, costs and quality* and chapter 4, *Scientific publishing in the electronic era: Insights from industrial economics* to be a very important piece of work, and we are grateful to the authors for the carefully done analysis. Although we observe all those features - especially the price rise by 300 % above inflation, which couldn't be followed by library budgets and the resulting "Serials crisis" - it wouldn't be possible for a single University Library to qualify and quantify these phenomena. The overview of the market mechanisms on which this evolution is based is of great help.

We endorse the assertion that higher citation counts of journals should be associated with lower average publishing costs, and we do observe that in practice, the opposite is true. As we are a Library buying publications in several languages when it comes to SSH, we are worried about the fact that actually **this evolution tends to be a barrier to entry for SSH journals, especially when written in another language than English.** Therefore we endorse the statement that in the present state the publication market is imperfect, and that some players may be able to influence the dynamic of the industry.

We also endorse the statements about bundling strategies. Our experience is that on one hand the users enjoy having access to the whole electronic portfolio, but on the other hand the pricing of contracts is complicated. **We experience cancellation problems and the lock-in effects daily.**

Concerning chapter 7 *Access to research outputs*, we are very interested in the development of the Open Access Movement. The Rectorat of University of Lausanne and the Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire Lausanne recently launched the SERVAL project¹, Serveur académique lausannois (institutional repository). **We endorse the statements of the authors about the importance of metadata standards, the relevance of the XML format for the future publishing process, and the usage of Persistent Digital Object Identifiers.**

¹ www.unil.ch/serval

Recommendation A1

Establish a European policy mandating published articles arising from EC-funded research to be available after a given time period in open access archives would be welcome. This would sustain efforts to introduce such mandates at a local level.

Recommendation A4

Doubts about perennial access to scholarly journal digital archives still remain a major concern for libraries when it comes to the question of cancellation of the print version of a journal. Further investigation about the feasibility/desirability of a European non-profit journals preservation organisation is therefore most welcome; promotion of business models for legal-deposit libraries is a key-feature.

Recommendation A5

For our project SERVAL we will use existing standards, but as mentioned in the study p. 84 “reliance on the Dublin Core that brings poor metadata and the disparity of the metadata harvested from heterogeneous repositories bring forward a challenge in terms of search and retrieval efficiency”. Therefore further research and development on interoperability issues seems necessary in order to build a working infrastructure of institutional repositories in Europe. In Lausanne, we follow with interest the work done by Dr. H. van de Sompel (linking) and Dr. J. Bollen (alternative metrics for impact measures) of the Los Alamos Laboratory.

Recommendation B1

As lack of transparency in bundle pricing is an important problem, there are some points in this recommendation we find very useful: Price of the electronic access should not depend on the historical number of print subscription; Libraries should have the possibility to choose among a variable dimension bundles; journals in a bundle should also be priced individually and prices should be made public. **But price shouldn't be directly linked to usage, as usage doesn't seem to be the first component of the costs.** We prefer a pricing based on number of staff and students.

Recommendation B2

Scrutinize future significant mergers: We fully endorse this recommendation.

Recommendation C2

For all the proposed topics (copyright provisions, economic analysis of alternative forms of dissemination, technological developments) further investigation should be commissioned.

We congratulate the authors for this important and useful study.

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