



ELSEVIER

# *COLLABORATION vs COMPETITION*

## *The Publishers' Dilemma*

Karen Hunter

Senior Vice President

CrossRef Annual Meeting

November 18, 2008

# *CHANGING RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT*

- More interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary research
- Greater inter-institutional research – among academic institutions, between academia and corporations
- E-Science
- Need for an infrastructure that supports collaborative research

# *EFFECT ON INFORMATION NEEDS*

- Looking for smooth search across a wide range of information services
- Looking for easy access to the primary sources – text and data
- Looking for information that can be easily integrated into work flows
- Looking for the ability mine text and data, do computational analysis
- Not looking to change approach from publisher to publisher

# *PUBLISHERS ARE VARIED*



- Small vs large
- Single domain vs multiple domains
- Well-funded vs barely making it
- Not-for-profit vs commercial
- Local vs international
- Technically sophisticated vs limited IT infrastructure
- Not everyone can or should do everything – the question then is how to let everyone participate in a way that is both cost effective and good for the user

# *COLLABORATION PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES & DILEMMAS FOR PUBLISHERS*

- Opportunities because there are
  - Needs to be met, and
  - Solutions to be created
  
- Collaboration dilemmas because
  - We do, in fact, compete
  - We have things we need to be very careful about under the law, and
  - Despite the desirable aspects of collaboration, competition (may) further the research community better by pushing innovation

# *HOW DO WE CURRENTLY DEAL WITH COLLABORATION?*

- Trade associations
- Customer collaborations
- Industry collaboration
- Commercial agreements

# *TRADE ASSOCIATIONS*

Examples:

- PA, AAP/PSP
- IPA
- STM
- AAUP
- ALPSP
- Lobbying and training are their principal activities
- Networking/conference opportunities

# *CUSTOMER COLLABORATION*

Examples:

- COUNTER
- Project TRANSFER
- CLOCKSS
- HINARI / AGORA / OARE
- [SSP]
- Shared efforts for social goods, standards and services important to customers and good public relations for publishers

# *INDUSTRY COLLABORATION*



Examples:

- CrossRef
- IDF
- Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) and some other RROs
- NISO
- Focus on unique services – things that they are best placed to do as neutral bodies

# COMMERCIAL AGREEMENTS



Examples:

- A & I services
- Google Scholar
- Bilateral service agreements (e.g. HighWire)
- Commercial products and services entered into because they make commercially sound sense for participants to collaborate

# *KEY QUESTION*



- What is best done by industry collaboration vs what best done by commercial agreement?
- At the heart of CrossRef strategic considerations

# *ASKED TO BE PROVOCATIVE, SO...*



- CrossRef should focus on important voids not being filled by commercial offerings – complementary, not competitive
  - orphan drugs analogy
- Limited resources should be focused on non-duplicative efforts
- CrossRef should evaluate new products and services with an awareness of possible competition with existing products and services

# *EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE SERVICES FOR CROSSREF*

- Reference Linking
- CrossMark – version of record
- CrossCheck – plagiarism detection
- All are services that need publishers working together but are difficult or impossible to offer on a purely commercial basis
- Not directly competitive with existing services

# *OTHER SERVICES*



- There are other services – existing or proposed – that may not fit this criteria
- That is why it is important to keep all CrossRef services, except the basic reference linking, voluntary (ability to opt out), not mandatory -- it is essential that it remains up to each member publisher to decide whether to participate
- Members – and the Board -- need to make decisions based on alternatives available, including those offered by commercial partners

# *CHALLENGE TO CROSSREF PUBLISHERS AND BOARD*

- Make choices based on what provides the best experience to the customer/user and spends CrossRef's limited resources best
- CrossRef does not need to grow in scope just for the sake of growing
- Arguably CrossRef should focus more on policies, standards and open platforms and enabling the means to collaborate rather than doing the actual collaboration activity – so standards for interoperability, text mining, ontologies, etc.

# *WHY BRING ALL THIS UP?*

- Because it is, indeed, a dilemma
- CrossRef is doing well and has creative, talented staff
- But budgets are not infinitely expandable and we need to look at what should be the priorities for 2010 or 2011
- Advocating one approach: don't do that which competes with well-established existing services
- Focus on filling the collaborative voids, not reinventing the wheel

## *IN CONCLUSION*

- There is a role for collaboration and a role for competition – both are in the interest of the community
- Not every project that publishers can do together is the best way of doing things -- sometimes groups of publishers trying to work together do a lousy job of implementing things
- So be selective and choose the best way to pursue appropriate goals
- Remember – an elephant is an animal designed by committee