Meeting Report

Report on the 2014 Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers international conference

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The conference organized by the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP) is known to be one of the most famous events in which scholarly publishers communicate through. ALPSP was launched in 1972 by 24 learned and professional society publishers. By 2014, the number of publishers had reached 315 from 39 countries. ALPSP’s mission is to connect, train, and inform the scholarly and professional publishing community and to be an advocate on behalf of the non-profit publishing sector. Its goal is to be the most impactful scholarly publishing association in the world, and thus to create a successful future for scholarly and professional publishers.

I was lucky to have a chance to attend the 2014 ALPSP conference, which was held from September 10 to 12 in London, United Kingdom (Fig. 1). There, I became aware of the importance of recent revolutions in scholarly journal publication. I would like to briefly summarize the meeting content in order to help my colleague editors on recent trends in scholarly journal publishing. I will also suggest some specific topics that can be introduced to scholarly journals particularly in Asia.

On September 10, the first keynote speech by Amy Brand, entitled “Innovation and its place in the changing scholarly publishing landscape,” was the most interesting. Amy Brand introduced two projects initiated by Digital Science (http://www.digital-science.com/), namely ‘altmetrics’ and ‘figshare.’ ‘Altmetrics’ is an article-level metric that measures articles’ use not only through well-known databases such as Scopus, but also through social network services; therefore, it takes the online impact of a published article into account. ‘Figshare’ is an online data publishing system that is easily searchable and citable. Data are stored in a cloud so that they can be accessible at any place and any time. There is no copyright on this data, as it is based on the Creative Commons License.

In “Plenary 1: customers as competitors,” Graham Stone, an information resources manager from the University of Huddersfield, presented on the potential impact of open access repositories and scholarly library publishing on ‘traditional’ publishing models. He suggested that researchers do not mind where literature is located on the Internet. In accordance with the expansion of open access channels, people want information to be available anywhere at any time; therefore, they do not always visit publishers’ websites to access the content of interest.
The use of an accessible repository or platform has therefore become more important to them. Since institutional repositories are maintained by the institutions’ library, the role of the library will expand. Additionally, libraries can help researchers to publish their research work in non-profit journals published by libraries, such as the *Journal of Huddersfield Student Research*.

Tony Horava, associate university librarian from the University of Ottawa, presented a unique model for supporting scholarly publishing. The University library supported the gold open access publication of three monographs selected by the University of Ottawa Press by providing the maximum fee per title, 10,000 Canadian dollars. One example of this phenomenon is "Homelessness and Health in Canada," which is freely available at http://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/30952. Another interesting finding is that, although those monographs are freely available via the Internet, there is still a need to print copies. A total of 864 copies of four monographs were sold for a total income of 30,633 Canadian dollars. The total number of page views was 2,930, while the number of PDF file downloads was 5,857. After suggesting the model of gold open access monograph publishing, Horava addressed the questions of how to further incorporate open access into the business models and strategic directions of university libraries, and how to apply the financial implications of open access for university libraries. It is rare to find open access book publishing, although open access journal publishing has become common.

On September 11, an industry update parallel session was held. Andrew Preston, co-founder of Publons, presented a report on his company. He explained that the most difficult task for editors is to find reviewers. Publons is a network of editors and reviewers that provides a model of peer review in which an editor uploads a manuscript file and Publons suggests reviewers by searching its peer review database. The review opinion may be either closed or open. After publication, a post-publication review can be added. A discussion is also opened for each published paper. According to certain criteria, reviewers receive tokens: for example, one point for being on Publons and two points for being open (i.e., the review content is published). A total of 1,095 journals were participating in Publons as of September, 2014. Since the review process takes the form of a non-profit, voluntary commitment to academic societies, the potential reward for reviewers could be an important point to consider in maintaining this community. As of now, peer review is not considered a research activity and is not rewarded in the same way as the publication of articles. I am not sure in what direction this system will progress in the future; however, changing the reward system is an excellent idea for scholarly communities. In addition, text mining, the Copyright Clearance Center, and Creative Commons License 4.0 were presented in this parallel session. These topics are either new or upgraded versions of well-known services in the field of journal publishing.

On September 12, “Plenary 4: welcoming the robots” was also an interesting discussion, the topic of which was text and data mining (TDM). TDM is a process by which to extract and analyze high-quality information. High-quality information can be obtained through a method of defining patterns and trends, such as statistical pattern learning. Classic text mining comprises text classification, text clustering, concept/entity extraction, and text summary. Gemma Hersh, Policy Director from Elsevier, revealed Elsevier’s new TDM policy as follows: “Researchers at academic institutions can text mine subscribed content on ScienceDirect for noncommercial purposes via the ScienceDirect API. Access is granted to faculty, researchers, staff, and students at the subscribing institution.” TDM is a changing environment for researchers, and Elsevier is the top publisher in terms of the number of journals that it

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**Fig. 1.** Photo in the 2014 Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers international conference room. From right lateral to left lateral, Ms. Hye-Min Cho, Ms. Eun Jeong Kim, and Dr. Soo Young Kim (author) from Korea.
Gemma Hersh introduced a UK copyright exception as follows: on March 27, 2014, the UK government published a Statutory Instrument, the legal instrument needed to introduce a copyright exception for TDM. The regulations enable those with “lawful access” to a work to make copies of it for the purposes of non-commercial TDM. The exception will apply to any literary work, including books, journals, and websites. The exception will not be applied to databases. This kind of regulation may be a turning point for researchers who wish to study TDM.

ALPSP is a meeting of publishers at which attendees’ points of view on certain topics may be different from those of attendees at other editors’ meetings, such as the Korean Council of Science Editors (http://kcse.org) and the Council of Asian Science Editors (http://asianeditor.org). In conclusion, open access, TDM, and new information technologies are important topics to understand in the context of recent activities and future directions in journal publishing. TDM may soon be introduced to Asian countries, including Korea, while information technologies such as Publons will be able to solve the problems confronted by small society journals.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

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