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Periodicals Price Survey 2009: Reality Bites

Lee Van Orsdel
Grand Valley State University, vanorsdel@gvsu.edu

Kathleen Born
EBSCO Information Services

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As waves of grim economic news wash over state and federal governments here and abroad, libraries of all types and sizes are bracing for budget cuts the likes of which have not been seen in three generations. Unlike most financial crises, this one is ubiquitous, with all but a handful of states in the red and getting redder. Globally, the meltdown is playing havoc with currencies, and the cost of journals priced in currencies other than the pound, the euro, or the U.S. dollar have skyrocketed. Severe losses in endowment revenue, which in the past insulated materials budgets to a degree, have left even larger and wealthier libraries facing cuts.

A number of librarians expect the budget cuts to be permanent; others say funds will rebound, but the recovery will take years. Even if the recession is less severe than feared, experts say not to expect relief before 2012. In journals parlance, that's three renewal cycles from now—more than enough to stress publishers without deep reserves. For an industry that is already in the throes of reinventing itself, this recession will hit hard.

Despite stronger than expected 2009 renewals, the outlook for FY10 is so bleak that libraries and consortia have already begun invoking financial hardship clauses and asking to renegotiate licenses for bundled content midterm. In an unprecedented move, the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) issued a statement to publishers in January warning that double-digit budget cuts over the next few years are expected and calling for creative strategies from publishers who want to keep their business. The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) followed with its own statement in February, underscoring the need for publishers to take this crisis seriously.

Making open access mandatory

Some see in the financial debacle an opportunity to promote more open systems of scholarly exchange, and open access (OA) initiatives are clearly gathering momentum. Last year's unanimous OA mandate from Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences was quickly emulated by faculties from Harvard's Law School and from Stanford's School of Education. New mandates are under development at over a dozen U.S. colleges and universities. The mandate at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) went into effect in April 2008. Early numbers indicate strong compliance and high usage. In September,

Elias Zerhouni, then NIH director, testified that well over half of the articles funded by NIH grants were being deposited in PubMed Central, and 400,000 users were accessing 700,000 articles each day. The National Science Foundation (NSF) is considering a similar mandate. Lest one think the struggle is over, the publisher lobby is back in force, supporting legislation designed to overturn the NIH mandate and stop other agencies from following suit.

Nevertheless, publishers as a whole do seem to be making an effort to accommodate rising demand for OA-friendly practices, as evidenced in a report from the Association of Learned

REALITY BITES

In the face of the downturn, libraries and publishers brace for big cuts

By Lee C. Van Orsdel & Kathleen Born

and Professional Society Publishers (*Scholarly Publishing Practice, Third Survey 2008*). Some are moving aggressively toward OA business models, but most are taking smaller steps—liberalizing copyright transfer agreements or facilitating manuscript deposit into designated digital archives, for example. Thirty percent now offer authors an OA option, up from 9% three years ago, with author fees typically running between \$1000 and \$3000 per article. Just over half of publishers have long-term archiving arrangements for their journals, most typically with Portico or LOCKSS. On a less hopeful note, as the number of repositories and the practice of self-archiving have grown, large publishers have begun to restrict authors' rights to post final manuscripts on the web; more require embargoes if they allow it at all.

This year's Periodicals Price Survey will look at these and other issues shaping the journals marketplace. Three Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) databases—Arts and Humanities Citation Index, Social Sciences Citation Index, and Science Citation Index—provide the titles used in the study. In addition, we include data on titles in EBSCO's Academic Search Premier. The data are limited to prepriced titles (as opposed to standing-order or bill-later titles) that can be ordered through a vendor and are current as of February 5, 2009.

Lee C. Van Orsdel is Dean of University Libraries, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI, and Kathleen Born is Director, Academic Division, EBSCO Information Services, Birmingham, AL

TABLE 1 AVERAGE 2009 PRICE FOR SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES

DISCIPLINE	AVERAGE PRICE PER TITLE	DISCIPLINE	AVERAGE PRICE PER TITLE
Chemistry	\$3,690	Zoology	\$1,510
Physics	3,252	Math & Computer Science	1,472
Engineering	2,047	Health Sciences	1,401
Biology	1,980	Food Science	1,390
Technology	1,950	General Science	1,174
Astronomy	1,781	Geography	1,145
Geology	1,632	Agriculture	1,089
Botany	1,581		

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

How low will they go?

For some, the downward slide began this year when higher education budgets in many states were prorated and libraries experienced midyear cuts. State funding for library consortia also tumbled in a number of states—South Carolina's PASCAL lost 90% of its funding. Next year is expected to be much worse. ARL says most of its 123 libraries will lose funding next year. OhioLINK's Tom Sanville estimates that 75% of its members will see level or decreased budgets. Word on the street puts losses in the 5–15% range for FY10, that high or higher for FY11, with the possibility of additional cuts in 2012 and beyond.

Serving notice

The ICOLC and ARL statements to publishers are attempts to clarify the situation in which member libraries find themselves. Both warn against price increases, even at the inflationary level. In fact, they go further, calling on publishers to look to their own houses to reduce costs in order to seriously reduce prices. ARL libraries advise publishers to discontinue print runs if savings can be passed on to subscribers and as long as archives are appropriately protected. Both advise that libraries will forgo new features and products to keep prices down and suggest this is not the time to introduce new journal titles.

The largest commercial and society publishers are probably not at risk in this economic shakedown, but 54% of the publishers in ALPSP's survey produce five or fewer journals, and many of them will be in danger if cancellations escalate. Add to the endangered list those publishers whose journals price in foreign currencies and can inflate exorbitantly as a result, and we could be looking at a significant number of business failures worldwide. ARL invites worried publishers to consult with member libraries about new publishing models that might keep them afloat.

Rethinking the bundle

It is clear from the ICOLC and ARL statements that more consortia and libraries will need to renegotiate existing multiyear contracts for bundled content. The statements ask that publishers be flexible with price and terms while making every effort not to reduce content, saying bluntly that lost subscriptions will have little chance of being reinstated. ARL makes it clear that pricing structures that discriminate against larger institutions in order to discount prices for smaller ones will not be acceptable; nor will

research libraries be able to sustain subscriptions for the benefit of smaller institutions in a consortium. Looking to the future, they suggest that publishers segment or reduce bundles of content. Both statements caution that multiyear contracts will need clear opt-out clauses and, for some subscribers, terms will need to be shorter than one year.

Now what?

The ARL and ICOLC statements represent the views of their members, but they address concerns shared by virtually all libraries. The ball is now in the publishers' courts. Publishers may find it unacceptable to cease launching new journals. Currently, about 100 new peer-reviewed journals get started each year, primarily by larger commercial publishers. Over the last couple of decades, consortia deals have stabilized revenue for many larger publishers while requiring relatively little effort to maintain. About half the publishers in the ALPSP survey negotiate deals with consortia. Financial neces-

TABLE 2 AVERAGE PRICE PER TITLE BY COUNTRY 2009

COUNTRY	NO. OF ISI TITLES	AVG. PRICE PER TITLE	COUNTRY	NO. OF ISI TITLES	AVG. PRICE PER TITLE
Russia	51	\$3,712	Japan	70	\$410
Ireland	39	2,823	France	125	389
Netherlands	516	2,628	Australia	74	375
Austria	26	2,132	Norway	14	305
Singapore	22	1,608	Canada	102	298
Germany	452	1,571	Czech Republic	19	289
Switzerland	95	1,546	Spain	30	265
England	1,873	1,508	Italy	59	257
New Zealand	25	1,179	South Africa	24	199
China	17	1,013	Korea (South)	14	187
United States	2,593	961	Chile	17	87

AVERAGE COST OF AN ISI TITLE: \$1,302

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

sity is changing the landscape for most of their subscriber base, and these publishers stand to lose significant revenue if they can't close reasonably favorable contracts with their biggest customers. LexisNexis is an early case in point. In response to an appeal from SOLINET in January 2009, it agreed to waive its annual 2.5% annual increase, representing about \$400,000 in total savings to consortia members. Some will ask if that is the kind of concession ICOLC was looking for when it asked publishers to offer *real* price cuts—LexisNexis reported an estimated profit of \$735 million in 2008, an 18% increase over the prior year.

Industry snapshot

A recent "Survey of Academic & Research Library Journal Purchasing Practices" (Primary Research Group, 2008) captured the practices and attitudes of a sample of international librarians on the eve of the financial downturn. Over the last three years, academic libraries in the sample canceled an average of 177 journal titles each. About half of the spending on journals was done through consortia, and the typical library acquired about 54% of its journals in bundles of 50 titles or more. Spending on pay-per-view articles was negligible across all library types. About 90% of the sample libraries use one of two main subscription vendors, with 75% naming EBSCO

and 14% naming Swets. Levels of satisfaction with agents were generally high. Regarding journal pricing, ACS, Elsevier, and Nature drew the most ire, with more customers dissatisfied than satisfied. With regard to policy, the Institute of Physics stood out as problematic, with three out of every four subscribers disliking IOP's policies.

The state of openness

As economic times get harder, the rationale for open access becomes clearer. A major research study on the Economic Implications of Alternative Scholarly Publishing Models (www.jisc.ac.uk/publications) by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), released in January, estimates that British universities would save around £80 million a year by shifting to an OA publishing system. The study supposed that resources now used for subscription would be redirected toward the costs of journal publication and dissemination. It also concluded that significant additional benefits would accrue to business and industry as the result of greater accessibility to research findings.

WEB EXCLUSIVE The tables Cost History by Continent/Country of Origin and Cost History by Broad Subject are in the online version of this article at www.libraryjournal.com

Harvard's faculty passed its OA mandate last year out of commitment to the idea that a university's research should be shared with the public for the greater good of society. Some of the most prestigious higher education organizations in the United States have now taken up the cause. On February 12, 2009, the Association of American Universities, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, Coalition for Networked Information, and ARL issued a call for universities to begin taking active responsibility for the broad dissemination of the research produced at their institutions, outlining a range of strategies to ensure that happens. Five days later, Boston University's governing council approved a position statement that endorses open access, calls for the creation of an institutional reposi-

tory, and promotes five key faculty practices that will help the university begin systematically practicing open access.

Trendsetting

Society publishers from all disciplines are surprisingly positive in their attitudes toward OA and see its potential for increasing membership, according to a survey conducted by SAGE ("Meeting the Challenges: Societies and Scholarly Communication," Nov. 2008). Coupled with the good expectations, however, are concerns about how to convert to OA business models. Help may be forthcoming from the new Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, which debuted in October 2008. Founding members include BioMed Central (now Springer), SAGE, Hindawi, and the Public Library of Science (PLOS). Its purpose is to develop tools and standards, as well as business models, that support OA publishing.

Springer, the second largest STM (scientific, technical, & medical) publisher, became the world's largest OA publisher in October 2008 when it acquired BioMed Central (BMC), a pi-

TABLE 3 COST HISTORY GROUPED BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT

SUBJECT	AVERAGE NO. OF TITLES 2005-2009	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2005	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2006	% OF CHANGE '05-'06	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2007	% OF CHANGE '06-'07	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2008	% OF CHANGE '07-'08	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2009	% OF CHANGE '08-'09	% OF CHANGE '05-'09
Agriculture	189	\$823	\$880	7	\$948	8	\$1,019	7	\$1,089	7	32
Anthropology	64	389	408	5	443	8	497	12	543	9	40
Art & Architecture	76	193	208	8	223	7	244	10	259	6	35
Astronomy	27	1,315	1,453	10	1,516	4	1,637	8	1,781	9	35
Biology	269	1,444	1,583	10	1,720	9	1,846	7	1,980	7	37
Botany	67	1,159	1,250	8	1,356	8	1,465	8	1,581	8	36
Business & Economics	453	664	702	6	750	7	808	8	862	7	30
Chemistry	240	2,799	3,017	8	3,241	7	3,458	7	3,690	7	32
Education	131	407	443	9	492	11	542	10	587	8	44
Engineering	354	1,530	1,637	7	1,753	7	1,877	7	2,047	9	34
Food Science	20	1,042	1,127	8	1,180	5	1,278	8	1,390	9	33
General Science	70	870	922	6	1,006	9	1,078	7	1,174	9	35
General Works	78	136	142	5	154	9	167	8	176	5	29
Geography	82	864	920	6	1,001	9	1,091	9	1,145	5	32
Geology	97	1,231	1,298	5	1,397	8	1,516	9	1,632	8	33
Health Sciences	1666	995	1,089	9	1,193	9	1,296	9	1,401	8	41
History	275	183	198	8	217	9	242	12	263	9	44
Language & Literature	346	173	184	6	199	8	221	11	231	5	33
Law	90	223	246	10	273	11	292	7	322	10	44
Library & Information Science	56	404	424	5	454	7	490	8	519	6	28
Math & Computer Science	225	1,165	1,223	5	1,305	7	1,394	7	1,472	6	26
Military & Naval Science	9	571	678	19	696	3	637	-9	679	7	19
Music	53	131	136	4	149	9	172	16	182	6	39
Philosophy & Religion	165	205	220	7	241	10	265	10	281	6	37
Physics	249	2,534	2,697	6	2,928	9	3,096	6	3,252	5	28
Political Science	88	365	402	10	445	11	496	11	539	9	48
Psychology	184	449	486	8	525	8	572	9	628	10	40
Recreation	25	226	241	7	257	6	295	15	383	30	70
Sociology	362	437	472	8	517	10	566	9	615	9	41
Technology	185	1,468	1,572	7	1,682	7	1,817	8	1,950	7	33
Zoology	134	1,039	1,124	8	1,236	10	1,390	12	1,510	9	45

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

Periodical Prices for High School and Small Public Libraries

Overall price increases for titles in EBSCO Publishing's Magazine Article Summaries Ultra are expected to be in the range of 3–4%. Table 4 provides historical price data for titles in the index.

TABLE 4 COST HISTORY FOR TITLES IN MAGAZINE ARTICLE SUMMARIES ULTRA

MAGAZINE ARTICLE SUMMARIES ULTRA	NO. OF TITLES 2005–2009	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2005	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2006	% OF CHANGE '05–'06	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2007	% OF CHANGE '06–'07	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2008	% OF CHANGE '07–'08	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2009	% OF CHANGE '08–'09	% OF CHANGE '05–'09
U.S.	259	\$72	\$77	7	\$81	5	\$90	11	\$95	6	32
NON-U.S.	41	156	177	13	190	7	230	21	233	1	49

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

ioneer in commercial OA publishing. Early this year, Springer and the University of California (UC) Libraries reached an agreement to experiment with a subscription model tried last year with the Max Planck Institute in Europe. Under the deal, articles written by UC faculty will become OA upon publication in Springer journals, and a PDF of the article will be deposited in eScholarship, UC's digital repository. The Planck Institute, meanwhile, signed a similar deal this year with PLoS.

The SCOAP3 project is approaching the 50% mark in commitments from libraries worldwide that support changing the publishing model in high-energy physics from toll access to open access. Under it, libraries will pay subscription fees into a common pool from which publishers of physics journals will be paid. The journals will be free to all readers upon publication. While most European libraries have signed on, some American libraries are afraid that the plan won't achieve either cost savings or sustainability. Proponents believe the project, to be launched in 2009, offers an innovative model for funding journals in this discipline.

Open opposition

The journals market remains divided on the issue of scholarly communications reform in general and open access in particular. At the heart of the struggle lies the issue of public access to taxpayer-funded research, for which the NIH mandate is the prime example. Over fierce objections from a number of commercial and nonprofit publishers, the NIH mandate was implemented last spring and has already achieved significant success. Opposition to it continues, however, led by members of the Association of American Publishers and the DC Principles Coalition.

Publishers' best hope of overturning the NIH mandate probably lies with a piece of legislation misnamed the Fair Copyright in Research Works Act, or the Conyer's Bill. First brought out last September, then withdrawn after hearings, the bill was reintroduced in February. The bill would not only upend the NIH mandate, it would stop other federal agencies from instituting OA mandates. Publishers are lobbying hard for passage, waving the usual flags—copyright violation, the end of peer-review and responsible science, potential economic losses in the publisher sector of the economy, etc. Countering those claims, 47 copyright experts went on record last September asserting there is no copyright violation associated with the NIH mandate, and 33 Nobel scientists wrote Congress saying that publishers were wrong to support the bill.

It is hard to believe that these publish-

ing articles with no connection to NIH funding. The mandate's success, in fact, may have influenced an advisory board of the NSF in December to recommend mandatory open access for all data, publications, and software coming out of the NSF.

With key open access visionaries like Harold Varmus advising President Obama on science and technology, it's also hard to imagine that this bill could be signed into law if passed. In the meantime, experts expect the Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPAA) to be reintroduced this year. FRPAA would expand the NIH mandate to most federal agencies that distribute significant research grants.

Horizon watch

As if the economic news for publishers isn't bad enough, Outsell, a market intelligence service, announced in its 2008 trends report that content is no longer

TABLE 5 2010 COST PROJECTIONS BY BROAD SUBJECT

	NO. OF TITLES	% OF LIST	2009 COST	% OF COST	PROJECTED % OF INCREASE	PROJECTED 2010 COST	% OF COST	PROJECTED OVERALL % INCREASE
ARTS AND HUMANITIES CITATION INDEX								
U.S.	399	39.5	\$56,888	24.8	7.0	\$60,870	24.8	7.0%
NON-U.S.	611	60.5	172,914	75.2	7.0	185,018	75.2	
SOCIAL SCIENCES CITATION INDEX								
U.S.	924	42.9	468,283	32.9	9.0	510,428	33.1	8.3
NON-U.S.	1,231	57.1	955,121	67.1	8.0	1,031,531	66.9	
SCIENCE CITATION INDEX								
U.S.	1,376	38.9	2,031,526	29.9	7.5	2,183,890	29.9	7.5
NON-U.S.	2,163	61.1	4,753,331	70.1	7.5	5,109,831	70.1	

PROJECTED OVERALL INCREASE FOR ALL ISI TITLES: 7.6%

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

ers will be successful at sinking the mandate. At this writing, over 500 journals have signed on with the NIH to deliver the published version of NIH-funded articles to PubMed Central on behalf of their authors. Springer has actually decided to deliver the entire content of Genomic Medicine to PubMed Central,

king in the STM information business (*Scientific, Technical & Medical Information: 2008 Market Forecast and Trends Report*, Nov. 2008). According to Outsell's analysis, knowledge dissemination is moving upstream, where scientists are using social networking tools to communicate peer to peer without the services of a

publisher and where barriers to access are increasingly unacceptable. In this climate, what the publisher produces—the final journal article—is more or less a footnote to the R&D process.

To avoid being sidelined, Outsell suggests STM publishers focus on services that help users manage the glut of content already out there. They see workflow tools and services as the subscription business of the future, citing Collexis, Nature, Elsevier, and BMJ Group as companies positioning themselves for this new future. The industry as a whole has a way to go—ALPSP reports that fewer than 20% of scholarly publishers offer any

form of Web 2.0 technology in association with their journals. Outsell's analysis is a startling twist on a market known for frenzied acquisition and consolidation of content over the last decade or two.

Strategies for 2010

Amidst the national and international financial crises, the journals marketplace is navigating new waters. Many libraries, including some of our largest research institutions, say massive cancellations are already in the works. It seems certain that most libraries will have less money to spend than they had in 2009. Publishers have been asked to roll back prices so

libraries can keep valued content. Based on past records, some will remain intractable, absorb cancellations without making price concessions or renegotiating licenses, and wait for a better day. Others will deal in the hopes of keeping content in front of users until library budgets recover and prices return to prerecession levels. In recent years, price increases for journals have averaged 7–9%. Despite pleas for pricing mercies, we don't have any information at this point that suggests those averages won't hold for 2010. The conservative budget manager will plan on increases in that range in the coming year. ■

Periodical Prices for University and College Libraries

Price projections for 2010 are in Table 6. While there is a chance price increases could be in the 5–6% range, the safer strategy is to budget conservatively in the 8–9% range until prices for 2010 are set.

TABLE 6 2010 COST PROJECTIONS FOR TITLES IN ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER

ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER	NO. OF TITLES	% OF LIST	2009 AVERAGE COST PER TITLE	% OF COST	PROJECTED % OF INCREASE	PROJECTED 2010 AVERAGE COST PER TITLE	% OF COST	PROJECTED OVERALL % INCREASE
U.S.	1,359	40.2	\$531	31.2	7.5	\$571	30.8	8.9%
NON-U.S.	2,019	59.8	1,171	68.8	9.5	1,282	69.2	

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009

TABLE 7 COST HISTORY FOR TITLES IN ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER

SUBJECT	AVERAGE NO. OF TITLES 2005–2009	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2005	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2006	% OF CHANGE '05–'09	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2007	% OF CHANGE '06–'07	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2008	% OF CHANGE '07–'08	AVERAGE COST PER TITLE 2009	% OF CHANGE '08–'09	% OF CHANGE '05–'09
Agriculture	70	\$714	\$782	9	\$854	9	\$921	8	\$1,005	9	41
Anthropology	30	335	376	12	419	12	463	11	516	11	54
Art & Architecture	39	217	244	13	271	11	292	8	320	9	47
Astronomy	16	1,687	1,811	7	1,974	9	1,987	1	2,142	8	27
Biology	100	1,210	1,338	11	1,505	12	1,639	9	1,785	9	48
Botany	25	1,080	1,230	14	1,339	9	1,443	8	1,512	5	40
Business & Economics	109	298	318	7	347	9	382	10	423	11	42
Chemistry	67	2,419	2,602	8	2,842	9	3,062	8	3,282	7	36
Education	222	336	370	10	409	11	442	8	478	8	42
Engineering	190	927	1,006	8	1,098	9	1,199	9	1,363	14	47
Food Science	14	398	451	13	490	9	499	2	541	8	36
General Science	42	566	612	8	666	9	714	7	775	9	37
General Works	74	97	106	10	115	8	122	6	127	4	31
Geography	42	438	463	6	546	18	638	17	691	8	58
Geology	26	783	760	-3	829	9	878	6	938	7	20
Health Sciences	752	740	824	11	913	11	1,000	10	1,099	10	49
History	233	197	219	11	240	9	267	11	290	9	47
Language & Literature	121	165	184	12	199	8	214	8	233	9	42
Law	86	313	340	9	368	8	404	10	443	10	41
Library & Information Science	58	154	157	2	170	8	189	12	196	3	27
Math & Computer Science	143	1,028	1,109	8	1,193	8	1,304	9	1,404	8	37
Military & Naval Science	22	244	245	0	273	12	288	6	320	11	31
Music	22	150	168	12	179	7	198	11	214	8	42
Philosophy & Religion	169	198	227	15	252	11	275	9	306	11	55
Physics	103	2,326	2,501	8	2,857	14	2,979	4	3,229	8	39
Political Science	75	338	384	13	426	11	455	7	490	8	45
Psychology	85	459	514	12	555	8	607	9	689	13	50
Recreation	13	178	201	13	214	7	242	13	258	7	45
Sociology	232	312	365	17	401	10	442	10	477	8	53
Technology	71	970	1,050	8	1,148	9	1,243	8	1,356	9	40
Zoology	46	773	801	4	868	8	951	10	1,064	12	38

SOURCE: LJ PERIODICALS PRICE SURVEY 2009