University of Alabama Libraries

Journal Costs and the *Big Deal*
The Publication Cycle

Creation
Research gets proposed, funded, and reported on.

Evaluation
Academic works are evaluated for quality and edited by their peers.

Publication
A publisher provides editing, layout, and publication services.

Dissemination and Access
Works are distributed in print or online, through libraries, retailers, and the web.

Preservation
Copies or versions of the work may be saved for posterity.

Reuse
Works get read, cited, and recombined.

Courtesy of University of Winnipeg Libraries
Examples of Acquisitions by Large Vendors

1993 - Elsevier merged with Reed International (now RELX Group)

24 acquisitions – including Mendeley, Science-Metrix, Bepress, Plum Analytics, Social Science Research Network

Examples of acquisitions include: Chadwyck-Healey, Alexander Street Press, ebrary, EBL, ExLibris

Large vendors constantly acquire and trade journals from smaller society publishers
The Big Deal: All you can eat

Responding to the “serials crisis” in the 1990s, large publishers developed the “big deal” that could be compared to an “all you can eat” buffet.

• Benefits
  Adding large numbers of journals in packages at one time

• Consequences
  • Obtain journals that would never have been subscribed to otherwise
  • Inflation of 5-15% per year is normal
  • Cannot cancel individual titles
UA Journal Title Growth

FY1998: 14,123
FY2018: 98,869
The Big Deal

• Universities subsidize cost of expensive, low-use titles
• Titles can be swapped for equal value, but not cancelled
• Citations come from small fraction of package titles
• Inflation on Big Deals is unsustainable.
Elsevier Core and Freedom Collection

- Core Collection Contains 379 Titles
  - 10 Core titles have not been used
  - 67 Core titles have 20 or fewer article level downloads
  - 122 Core titles are $50 or more per article
  - 68 Core titles are $100 or more per article

- Freedom Collection Contains 1813 Titles
  - 366 titles have not been used
  - 1000 titles have 20 or fewer article level downloads
  - 1154 titles are $50 or more per article
Elsevier Profits

Larivière, Haustein, & Mongeon (2015)
Profits Margins

- Pfizer: 42%
- Elsevier: 39%
- Taylor & Francis: 36%
- Springer-Nature: 35%
- Wiley: 28%
Inflation Trend

Ongoing Materials | Big Deal | Elsevier | Trend

FY14: 88% | 44% | 19% | 94%
FY15: 83% | 47% | 20% | 47%
FY16: 99% | 47% | 20% | 47%
FY17: 107% | 50% | 21% | 21%
FY18: 101% | 51% | 22% | 25%
FY19: 104% | 53% | 27% | 27%
FY20: 108% | 59% | 32% | 32%
FY21: 112% | 66% | 36% | 36%
FY22: 116% | 70% | 39% | 39%
FY23: 120% | 74% | 39% | 43%
FY24: 124% | 79% | 43% | 47%
FY25: 128% | 83% | 47% | 52%
FY26: 133% | 88% | 52% | 52%
FY27: 138% | 94% | 52% | 52%
FY28: 144% | 99% | 52% | 52%

FY14 - FY28

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Consequences of the Big Deal

• No market competition

• Journal expenditures continually increase, but cancellation is not possible

• Fewer funds for other materials
  • Books
  • University Press and Society Journals

• Potential for content loss as vendors merge
Elsevier Core vs. Freedom

Elsevier (Core): 19% of Materials Allocation
Elsevier (Freedom): 6% of Materials Allocation, 1% of Total Journal Use

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## Elsevier Core vs. Freedom (CPU)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Cost-Per-Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports Management Review (Freedom)</td>
<td>$540</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>$0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Virological Methods (Core)</td>
<td>$7,903</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$987.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POPULAR RESOURCES

Big Deal Cancellation Tracking
Open Access


- Elsevier
  - UC system
  - Florida State
  - University of Oklahoma
  - West Virginia University
  - Temple University
  - Middle Tennessee State
  - Creighton University
  - 60 German Universities
  - Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP)
  - Max Planck Society
  - Bibsam Consortium (Swedish university consortium)
  - Consortium on Core Electronic Resources in Taiwan (CONCERT)
  - National Council for Science, Technology and Technological Innovation (CONCYTEC)

- Taylor & Francis
  - George Mason University
  - FinELib (Finnish university consortium)
  - University of Calgary

- Wiley
  - University of Oklahoma
  - University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
  - West Virginia University

- Springer-Nature
  - Caltech
  - West Virginia University
  - Kansas State University
  - Le Consortium Couperin (French university consortium)
  - Université de Lorraine
  - Université Laval
UC terminates subscriptions with Elsevier in push for open access to publicly funded research

As a leader in the global movement toward open access to publicly funded research, the University of California is taking a firm stand by deciding not to renew its subscriptions with Elsevier. Despite months of contract negotiations, Elsevier was unwilling to meet UC’s key goal: securing universal open access to UC research while containing the rapidly escalating costs associated with for-profit journals. The Academic Senate issued a statement endorsing UC’s position. Learn more.

Elsevier responds to UC on Twitter

Elsevier’s response to the University of California's announcement today.

Elsevier has first and foremost the interests of researchers and students at heart. More than 85 percent of UC researchers choose to publish for free, and when they want to publish for a fee, we provide various options for them to do so.

We also think the University of California is mistaken in its characterization of Elsevier’s stance. During the negotiations for a contract covering academic publishing and access to academic literature, we have put forward a unique model that supports CDL’s multi-payer open access request. It provides a clear path allowing every researcher to choose to publish for free or open access and provides a scaled path to reduce the costs for each campus library.

The proposal also provides every UC student and researcher with access to all journal articles published by Elsevier—articles they download nearly 1 million times every month. It is disappointing that the California Digital Library (CDL) has broken off negotiations unilaterally, but we hope we can bridge this divide with them soon.

3:39 PM - 28 Feb 2019

21 Retweets 20 Likes
What the University Libraries Can Do

• Resource cancellation inevitable if nothing changes

• Cancel package and negotiate for most-used titles

• Supplement collection with doc delivery and ILL
  • Reprints Desk
  • RapidILL
How Faculty Can Help

• Redefine concept of “top tier” and “leading” journals

• Revisit tenure/promotion guidelines

• Review and edit for journals with fair copyright policies

• Deposit publisher’s articles in UA’s IR

• Publish open access where feasible
Further Reading


