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The digital revolution and the future of scientific publishing – or –



Why ERSA's journal REGION is open access

Gunther Maier

REGION – the journal of ERSA

Volume 4, Number 1, 2017

REGION

The Journal of ERSA
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Table of Contents

Articles

The effect of house prices on business start-ups: A review and analysis using Swedish regional data Björn Berggren, Andreas Fili, Mats Håkan Wilhelmsson	1
Analysis of Freight Trip Generation Model for Food and Beverage in Belo Horizonte (Brazil) Leise Kelli de Oliveira, Rodrigo Afonso de Albuquerque Nóbrega, Daniel Gonçalves Elias, Bruno Gomes e Souza Corrêa	17
Creativity, Community, & Growth: A Social Geography of Urban Craft Beer Neil Reid, Jay D. Gatrel	31
Critical Performance Factors for Large World Cities - In Search of Qualitative Causal Patterns by means of Rough Set Analysis Karima Kourtit, Peter Nijkamp	51
Potentials and limitations for the use of accessibility measures for national transport policy goals in freight transport and logistics: evidence from Västra Götaland County, Sweden Anders Larsson, Jerry Olsson	71
Logistics sprawl in monocentric and polycentric metropolitan areas: the cases of Paris, France, and the Randstad, the Netherlands Adeline Heitz, Laetitia Dablane, Lorant A. Tavasszy	93
Revisiting the Boston data set - Changing the units of observation affects estimated willingness to pay for clean air Roger Bivand	109
Regional Public Stock Reductions in Spain: Estimations from a Multiregional Spatial Vector Autoregressive Model Miguel A Márquez, Julian Ramajo, Geoffrey Hewings	129

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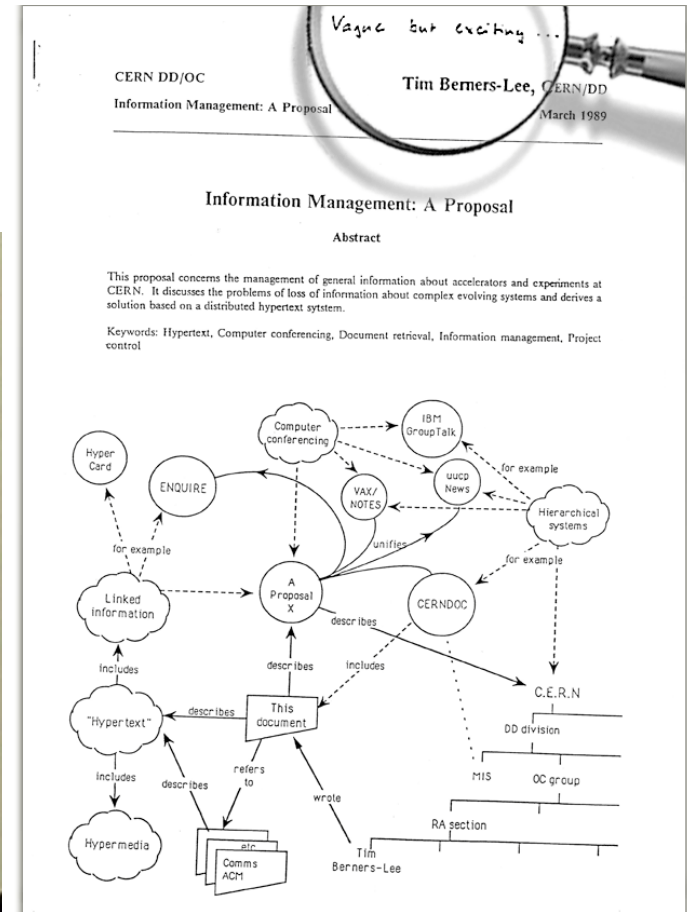
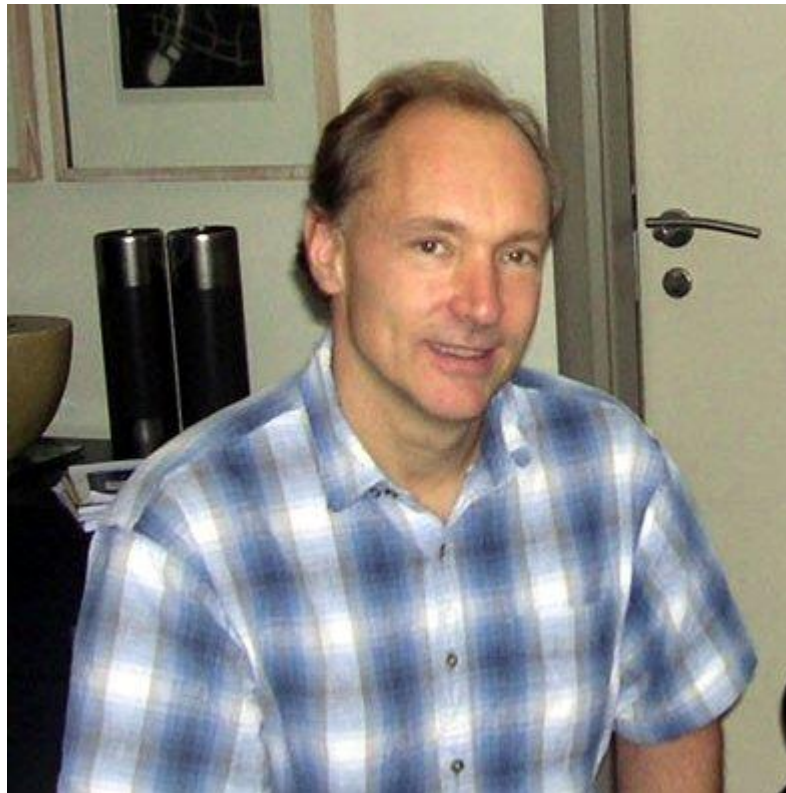
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Tim Berners-Lee and the World Wide Web

- March 1989 proposal
- To give researchers access to CERN results

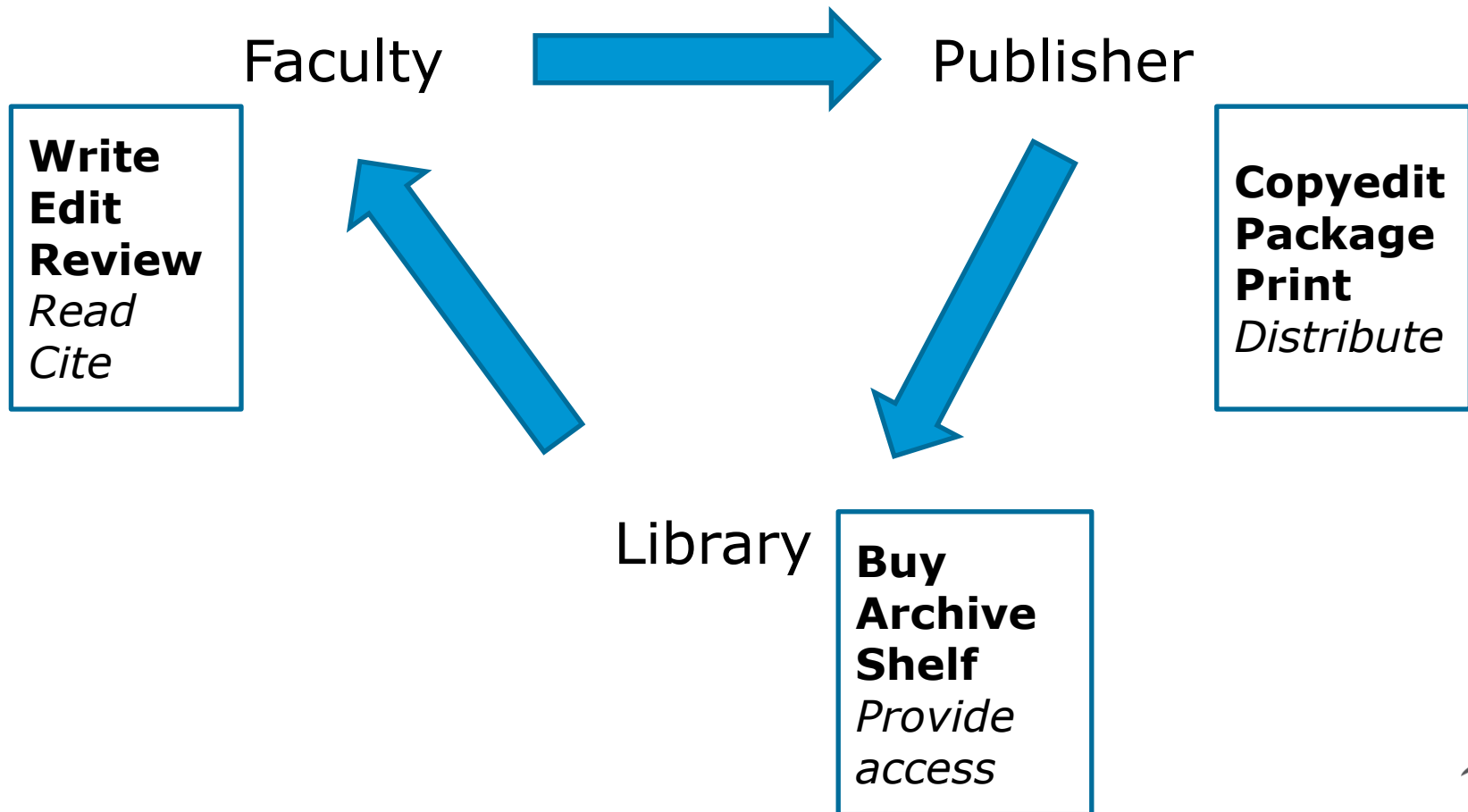


Researchers and the World Wide Web

- Researchers made available draft versions and preprints of papers
 - Continue earlier activities in the new technology
 - Seed activity for „**Green Open Access**“
- Some scientific organizations began experimenting with web based journals
 - Strong in some science disciplines
 - Seed activity for „**Gold Open Access**“

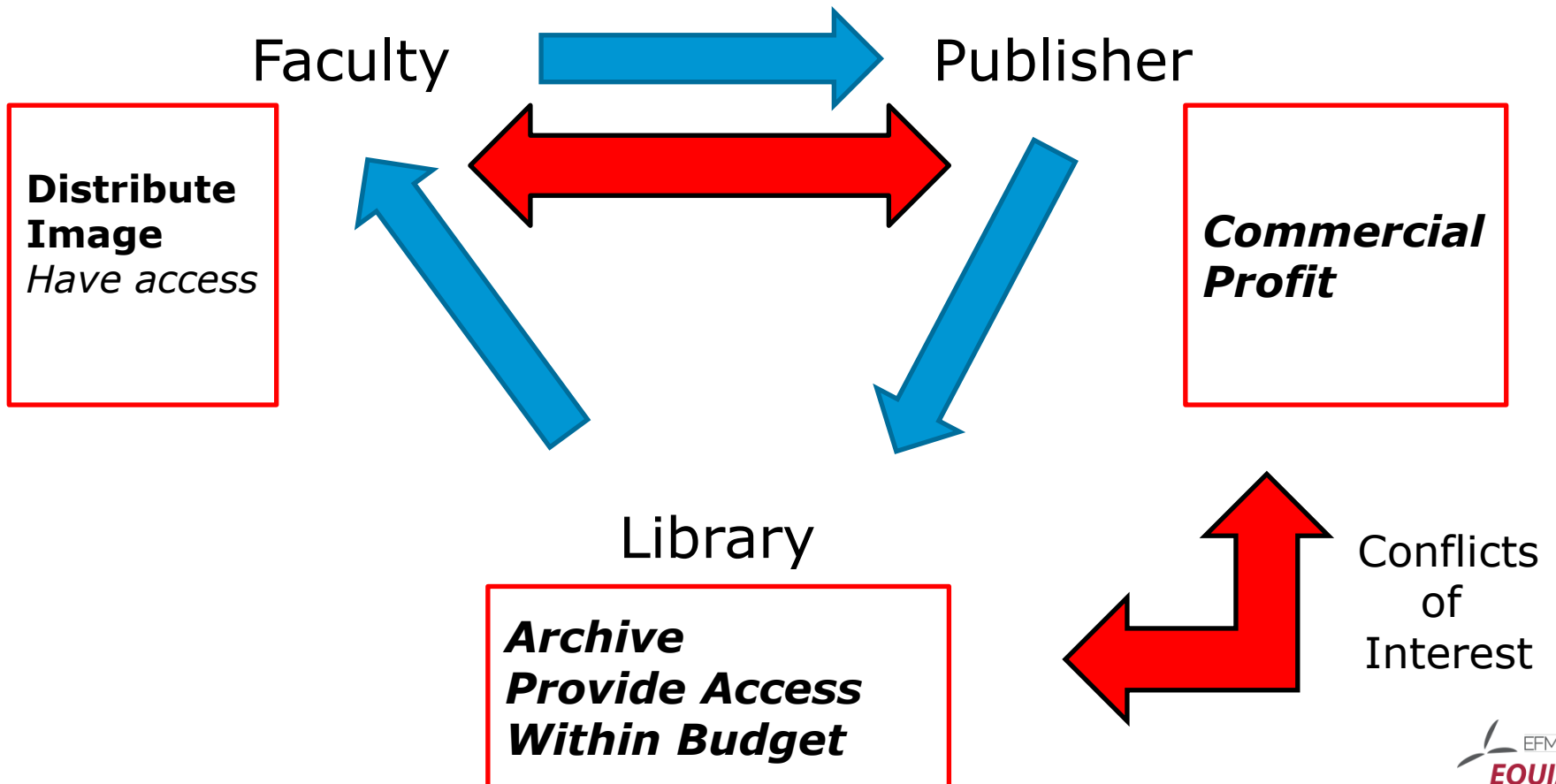
„Traditional“ Publishing

Functions:



„Traditional“ Publishing

Interests:



„Traditional“ Publishing

- The university side
 - Transfer of copyright from authors to publishers
 - Fragmentation in journals
 - Increase in numbers of journals (3.25% per year, doubling every 22 years; Larsen, von Ins, 2010)
 - High and increasing prices for journals:
 - Chemistry: \$3,429; Physics: \$2,865; Business: **\$820**
 - Annual increase in costs 1986-2005: **7.6%**
 - Libraries are expected to **buy more** journals at rapidly **increasing prices**

„Traditional“ Publishing

- The publisher side
 - In the 1960ies and 1970ies many commercial publishers have taken over journals from scientific associations
 - Strong concentration in the industry:
 - Reed Elsevier, Springer and Wiley account for **42%** of published articles
 - Large scientific publishers have a very high profit margin (2010; The Economist)
 - Springer: **33.9%**
 - Elsevier: **36%**
 - John Wiley and Sons: **42%**

„Traditional“ Publishing

- The socioeconomic side
 - Although they add „relatively little value to the publishing process“ (Deutsche Bank, 2005) commercial publishers
 - Form an **oligopoly** and
 - Utilize the **inelastic demand** they face on both sides of their business
 - The high costs of journals limit access to the scholarly work
 - Packaging limits options for libraries and is dominated by corporate policy
 - **„Traditional“ publishing has become unsustainable**

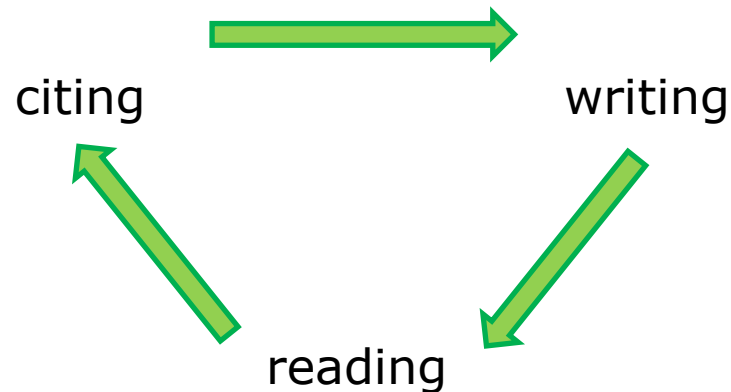
The Crisis of „Traditional“ Publishing

- Electronic media drives „traditional“ publishing into a crisis:
 - Electronic access is so much easier (tech. change)
 - Electronic distribution is much cheaper (cost change)
 - Live references via URLs (tech. change)
 - → **Move toward electronic versions of journals**
 - Structured electronic metadata for repositories
 - Structured electronic information about citations
 - → **growing** information **about** papers conflicts with **declining** access **to** papers

The Crisis of „Traditional“ Publishing

- Electronic versions of articles are difficult to control
- Easily copied, duplicated, transferred
- **Copyright** becomes essential for commercial publishers
 - Only when they own the copyright they can keep papers from leaking into the public domain
 - Originally, the copyright is with the authors.
 - Many universities issue mandates requiring their faculty to retain (some of) the rights to articles.

The Reputation Link



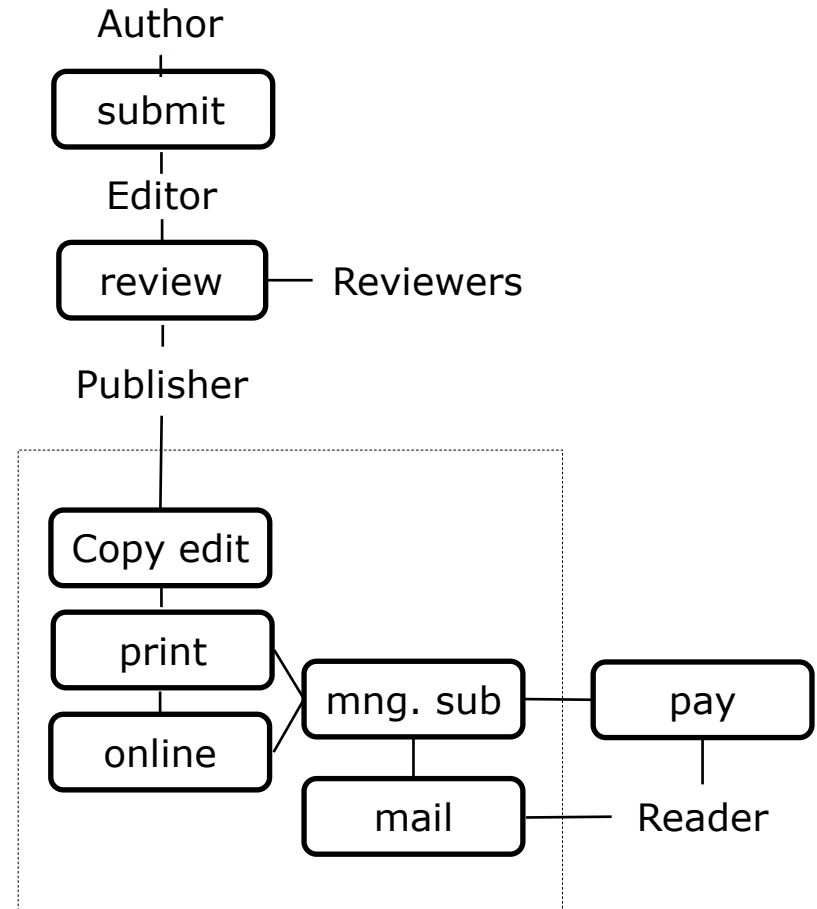
- **Citation indices** as an indicator of reputation
- **ISI Thompson** (WoS) and **Elsevier** (Scopus) acts as gatekeepers for reputation
- Declining percentage of journals included

The Drivers of Open Access

- Public research funding institutions require Open Access (e.g., EU)
 - Research generated with public funds should be available to the public for free (don't pay twice)
- Government bodies require Open Access
 - Again: don't pay twice
- Universities
 - Mandates: Faculty should not just give away their copyright
 - Libraries: reduce costs for journals
- Faculty
 - Want their work to be as visible as possible

Gold Open Access is cheaper

- Open Access saves on
 - Printing
 - Mailing
 - Subscription management
 - Payment collection and management
- Only costs
 - Copy editing
 - Server hosting



The Institutions of Open Access

- Directory of Open Access Journals
 - Quality controlled directory
- Crossref
 - Database for stable article URLs
 - Links in reference lists
- Creative Commons Licensing
 - Legal framework for open access w/o copyright transfer
- Beall's List

The main benefits of Open Access

- Open Access (more readers)
 - Non-academics
 - Developing and poorer countries
 - All disciplines
- The author keeps control over her work
 - Self use
 - Define how others can legally use the results (commercial or non-commercial, attribution, etc.)
- Libraries save costs
 - Subscriptions
 - Access control

Forms of Open Access

Green Open Access

- Papers are published in the traditional form in a journal
- Author is allowed to place a copy of the paper on the homepage and/or in a repository
- Repositories exchange material, make it searchable, etc.
- Key issue: **copyright**

Gold Open Access

- Papers are published in free electronic journals
- Sometimes (less than 50%) the author has to pay
- OA journal provides the usual services (peer review, copyediting)
- Key issue:
 - **reputation,**
 - **business model**

Forms of Open Access

- Not everything **called** Open Access **is** Open Access
 - Publishers „offer“ Open Access options to authors for a fee
 - Although the paper is (should be) available for free it is still sold to libraries as part of the journal package
 - Publishers charge twice for the same article
 - Fortunately, these „hybrid forms“ of Open Access are not very successful

Predatory Open Access journals

- Low entry barriers and author fees lead to new market entrants
- Many offer only low or even no quality for a substantial fee
- Beall's List of predatory journals and publishers

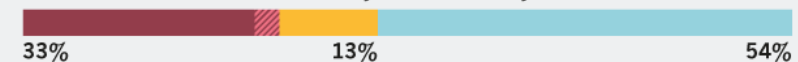
WHO EMBRACED THE FAKE?

Journals deemed predatory were much more likely to accept a fake, subpar candidate as an editor.

■ Accepted ■ Accepted, but later disputed ■ Rejected ■ No Response

PREDATORY TITLES

As assessed by librarian Jeffrey Beall



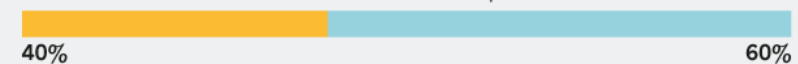
TITLES ON THE DIRECTORY OF OPEN ACCESS JOURNALS (DOAJ)

A whitelist for open-access journals



TITLES INDEXED BY JOURNAL CITATION REPORTS (JCR)

A whitelist that calculates impact factors



120 titles

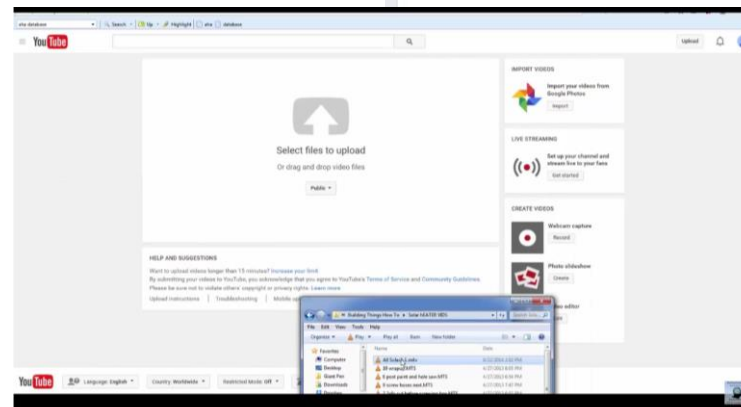
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Sorokowski et al, 2017



Facing the competition

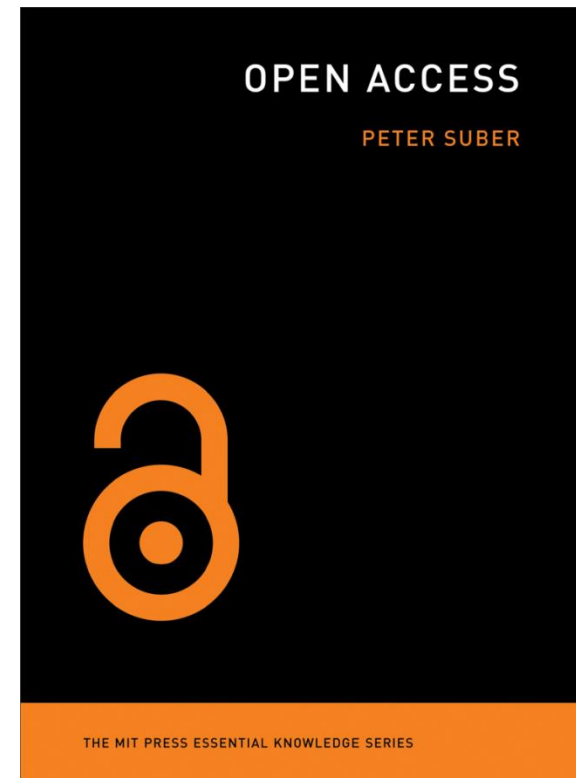
- Journals compete for good articles
- Authors own their work (strong position)
- Use the new technology for marketing
 - Social media networks
- Use the new technology for the publication
 - Links, interactive graphs and maps
 - videos
- Use the reputation of established scholars



REGION Video 4: How to Upload a Video to YouTube

Summary and conclusions

- The future of scholarly publishing is electronic and open access
- Not a question of whether but only when and how
- It is in the interest of researchers and of universities to push for green and gold open access



<http://bit.ly/oa-book>

Summary and conclusions

- Practical advice:
 - Go for Open Access (publishing, reading & citing)
 - Think – Check – Submit
 - Think – Check – Review
 - Think – Check – Engage
 - Never ever pay for publishing
 - View citation indices critically