

How to Select Publisher for Open Access Book and Article ? Problem of Choice or What Author Must Know

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1. Introduction

Monographs are a distinctive and important way for researchers in sensors, measurements and microelectronic technologies areas to communicate their work and establish their academic identity. It plays an important and diverse role in shaping the careers of academics. A candidate for appointment with a monograph published, or close to publication, was thought to look stronger in research terms than one without in those disciplines [1]. It is also true for early-career researchers.

In term of the importance, a good monograph is the equal of dozen good journal articles, and in many cases it is the most effective way of communicating several years of sustained research on a single topic. It is an indisputable fact that books plays a special role in the culture of research publications. It provides length and space needed to allow a full examination of a topic, with the aim to present complex and rich ideas, arguments and insights supported by contextualized analysis and evidence, which are not possible with journal articles or conference papers [1]. Furthermore monographs offer an effective way for the exploration and communication of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research that would not be possible to publish in a limited space of journal articles.

2. Why Open Access ?

A key aim of most academic authors to publish their books with a reputable publisher that can conduct high-quality peer review and get their book read by the widest possible audience. The most important limitation of the print monographs is access. Copies of an individual print monograph are necessarily finite in number, they are expensive and this limits readership significantly. Publishers cannot made minor corrections and updates to a print book – for these a new edition must be published and purchased.

Open access (OA) is entering steady into engineering sciences, and is now considered as an alternative to the traditional way of publishing monographs, proceedings, handbooks, textbooks, theses and articles. Through open access, the reach and impact of monographs can be substantially increased. This includes making them widely available in less economically developed countries [1].

Many of the benefits of open access generally [2, 3] and particularly [1] have described before, and do not need to be repeated and set out in great details here.

Here is main global reasons to publish open access books and articles:

- Increased return on public investments and eliminate public money losses due to carry out the same researches with the almost the same results;
- Increased visibility over the World. Researchers in developing countries can see your work;
- European Commission, Research Council and others mandate for open access publications of research results. Often, the open access publication is compliant with grant conditions;
- Quick publications accelerate the technical and scientific progresses.

But what is the benefit to publish OA book for authors himself? The answer is evident: the citations increasing, which sure, positively influences on the carrier development.

The author of the OA book 'Seeing Ourselves through Technology', prof. Jill Walker Rettberg has written: "I'm a public employee, so my research is paid for by ordinary peoples' tax money. It makes sense that my taxpayer-funded research should be accessible to everyone. Not just to scholars in rich institution in rich countries that can afford to paid skyrocketing prices for scholarly journals and books."... "I hated waited a year or two for my other books to actually be available." [4]. There is nothing to add ...

3. Requirements and Challenges

With the ever increasing number of open access publishers it is important to choose the right one. From one hand, a technical simplicity of creating books in pdf format and wide availability of Internet technologies caused many small, so-called "garage-based" publishers. From other hand, almost all established, well known traditional publishers report that it is increasingly difficult to find academic experts willing to review manuscripts, with informal methods such as web searches having to be used to find those to approach [1]. Tradition publishers also have problems in OA books dissemination [1]. In order to eliminate such problems and to publish an OA book by the best way and great impact, authors should know the selection criteria and the problems that arise when choosing a publisher.

3.1. What Authors Need and What Publisher Must Propose, but Sometimes Can't

3.1.1. Quality

Pre-publication peer review may be the undoubted gold standard, providing public assurance that the work has reached a quality threshold appropriate to the field where it is published. So, the peer review is a necessary part of research publishing. The setting up of prestigious editorial board with well-known experts from the appropriate area and panel of peer reviewers

is one of the most important criterion of publisher's reputation.

3.1.2. Learned Societies, Professional Societies and Subject Associations

Brand has an important place in the monograph ecosystem, but not only from trademarks point of view. The most important is what the learned society, professional society or subject association is behind a publisher. Societies and associations are a fundamental part of the research ecology, providing a substantial intellectual, public and reputational good [5]. They have built international reputation for their disciplines over decades. The example of such brands are IEEE, IFAC, IFSA, IMEKO, etc. As rule, such societies and subject associations have their own publishing houses to publish journals, books and conference proceedings. But there are not many reputed societies and associations that publish OA books and journals. The involvement of established societies and associations in OA publications increases the credibility of the emerging OA system.

The best results and high impact from OA book publication can be achieved if such societies and subject associations serve for much targeted, highly specialized audience. In recent years, the occurrence of so-called "false" societies are observed. These "false" societies try to cover very wide area at the same time, for example, from social and economic sciences to engineering and legal sciences. Often it is created by "garage-based" publishers, who try to publish open access journals and books almost in every disciplines.

One more criterion of really value society and subject association is in which activities they are involved. In addition to journals and book publications, the reputed societies and associations organize various events such as conferences, workshops, symposiums, exhibitions, webinars, online and offline tutorials; they sponsor other related events in their area of expertise; participate in standardization processes; establish awards; disseminate relative information; serve their members, advertise, etc. The "false" societies, as rule, are limited only by journals and books publications.

So, the development of open access for monographs and articles will require the contribution of established publishers. The reputed societies and subject association provide an important quality and reputation dimension to the publishing process for many books series: by acting as a custodian of knowledge production in their disciplines [1]. In this way the societies and association play a nuanced role in maintaining the publication of important monographs and articles in their particular field [1].

3.1.4. Dissemination

A key benefit of open access is surely increased dissemination. If dissemination is good, the citations

will come. The potential readership for OA book is significantly large than the book-buying population. The important consequence of this is that outreach and dissemination of monographs become a necessary priority of OA books publisher. To provide open access to books (for example, through the publisher's web site) without active measures to disseminate is insufficient to maximize dissemination. Researchers have already reported that some high-quality open-access books is simply not cited because of it is more difficult to access. The dissemination is a bottleneck of many established publishers. However, the publishers, which belongs to societies or subject associations have a great advantage in comparison with other established publishers, including university press. For societies and subject associations in their role as publishers of long – standing and highly rated international journals, excellence underpinned by rigorous peer review was already a given [5]. They have extremely useful, much targeted and huge lists of contact details of their members and subscribers, collected for decades, while general publishers are using the contact details of their customers (buyers), collected mainly for commercial purposes, and sure, not targeted according such field as sensors. The lists of contacts, which are used by university press publishers as usually is limited by their own university members and staff (no inherent incentive to reach audiences outside the academic ecosystem).

3.1.5. Print Book Copies

The continued availability of print books will be strongly necessary, and prospective author should recognize that the availability of print books will be a necessary part of a selection open-access publisher. The academics claim that for serious extended work it is necessary or, at least, highly desirable to have a print copy of the book [1]. There are material characteristics associated with the print book: its layout, design and non-verbal content that often make it significantly more than the text alone [1]. However, so-called print-on-demand option is not enough. The print versions of open-access books from established publishers must be also available from big bookseller as *Amazon*, *Barnes & Nobles*, *Ingram* and others. It is a really good practice, when print books in *Amazon* store are available for purchase but the Kindle version of e-book is available free of charge. That's what is necessary for open access book !

3.1.6. Directories and Indexes

Some guides about how to publish an open access books propose to check at first some directories and indexes, for example, Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB). According to [6] only 33 % librarians and library staff are using the DOAB. As it was stated in [7] the DOAB is not completed. About 46 % of librarians learn about OA book titles through e-mails from publishers. It is a high probability does not find

several reputed publishers there, but there is a high risk to find several "garage-based" publishers. The same situation is with the open access journals' indexes, citation lists and data bases.

4. Open Access Journals

All mentioned above are true for open access journals and its publishers. There are popular directories, data bases, indexes and lists for open access journals and books: Directory of Open Access Books, Google Scholar, Thomson Reuters Book Citation Index, Elsevier Scopus and EBSCO Discovery. Among them, only the first two are free for end users [8]. Access to the rest is limited to subscribers only. What is even more important is that all of the mentioned services accept new records only from selected publishers (with the exception of Google Scholar) [8]. Unfortunately, today it is not possible to trust on 100 % even the most popular citation indexes and lists. As a rule, they still contain a large number of "garage-based" publishers and their open access journals but some established journals are not included in these lists so far. Why? There are at least three objective and subjective reasons:

1) The limited resources of citation indexes owners. In the era of electronic publications the number of open access journals and books are growing exponentially. The indexing - is a free procedure, which is still carried out by a limited staff;

2) The absence of objective criteria. The current, outdated criteria is fuzzy and was determined in the era of limited number of existing print journals only to help librarians to make subscription decisions [9-11]. But today, open access journals are free for download without any subscriptions. So, the impact factors and various indexes are become useless and can not to be used as an objective criterion for open access journals.

3) Competition. Last years some big citation indexes owners start to use the open access business model for their own books and journals. Other publishers who publish journals in the same area are now direct competitors, especially if they propose a reasonable publication fee.

Today's alternative of existing citation indexes can be highly specialized, branch journal and publisher lists, for example, IFSA List of Recommended Journals [12]. This list contains only 15 established sensors and measurements related journals. But this is a normal situation for such highly specialized, branch lists. And no any doubts that it contains only journals and publishers, which really has a great impact.

5. Publisher Selection Check-List

Authors' decisions about whom to publish with are driven by many factors, including ease of engagement, past experience, page charges, the role of learned societies and subject association in a particular discipline, etc.

Let consider a real publisher – *IFSA Publishing, S.L.* [13] and its eligibility to be an open access publisher for books and journal in sensors and measurements areas. It is easy to make such analyze with the help of the following check-list.

Example: IFSA Publishing, S. L.

☑ Type of OA Publications: Monographs, handbooks, textbooks, theses, proceedings, chapters in edited book series, technical references, guides and journal articles.

Comments: The maximum number of pages is not limited. Now you should not spend a lot of time and can eliminate additional efforts to put your manuscript in the limited number of page (for example, 350 pages). Create without limitations ! Separated chapters for the popular Book Series ‘*Advances in Sensors: Reviews*’ are also welcome. The one chapter publication in the edited book is much cheaper in comparison with the OA book in the whole, and is the same as for an open access article in the journal.

☑ Quality: International peer-review (single- or double-blind). Open access books are subject to the same high level peer-review, production and publishing processes followed by traditional IFSA Publishing’s books.

Comments: Managing Editor (ME) checks if the draft version of the book fits within the scope of the subject. If it does, the ME preliminary accepted a draft, the author is informed of the ME’s decision and the draft material is sent to two or four international reviewers. In case of disagreement (50 % accept vs. 50 % reject) the final decision is made by editor-in-

chief – an expert in sensor and measurement areas. The waiting period for review is from three to seven weeks.

☑ Editorial Board and Editor’s Knowledge of the Field: 14 editors from various countries and five continents; 100 Editorial Board members and 200+ voluntary international reviewers.

Comments: Many famous names of experts in sensors and measurements related areas from the editorial board are well known to the public: [14]. The Editor-in-Chief is also an expert in appropriate field with more than 30 years research experience, 170 publications, 9 patents and 9 books.

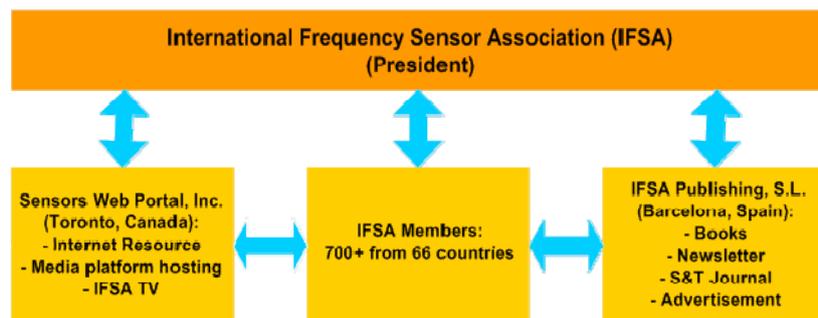
☑ Print copies: Available (hardcover, paperback or dust jacket hardcover). Authors will get free print (paper) book copy in full color. The print books copies are available from big booksellers: *Amazon, Barnes & Nobles, Ingram* and others.

Comments: IFSA Publishing, S. L. is one of the first publisher in the World who has started to print sensor related books and journal in full-color.

☑ Connection with Learned or Professional Societies and Subject Associations: International Frequency Sensor Association (IFSA).

Comments: IFSA has organized in 1999. It has more than 700 IFSA Members from 66 countries. In addition to publication, the activities include events organization and sponsorship, information dissemination, membership, standardization, tutorial and training courses, advertisement, etc. The structure of association is shown below.

The Structure of Professional Society



☑ Long Reputation: 17 years

Comments: Took more than 17 years of strategic and sustained effort including 16 years of *Sensors & Transducers* journal publication and IFSA Newsletter. It means, that IFSA start their publication activities before the open access appearance.

☑ Dissemination and promotion: Greatest dissemination impact due to a broad range of promotional tools that could be used to increase OA book’s visibility.

Comments: Specific promotion campaigns are used. In addition to post on the publisher’s web site (Sensors Web Portal - a primary Internet sensors

related resource with 2500-3000 visitors per day), the information about OA books and journal are included into IFSA Newsletter (ISSN 1726-6017), which is delivering to 54,000+ subscribers over the World and *Sensors & Transducers* journal (ISSN: 2306-8515, e-ISSN 1726-5479), which is publishing since 2000 and delivering to the same number of subscribers.

Social networks are used: LinkedIn (Sensors Professional Group, 2,900+ members for the end of June 2016); Twitter and Facebook. Books also promoted during the events (conferences, symposiums, workshops, training courses, exhibitions, etc.) organized or sponsored by IFSA. Cooperation with e-book distributors and with big booksellers as *Amazon, Barnes & Nobles, Ingram* and others. The IFSA holds the biggest, continuously updated and checked branch list of contacts in the World with academia and industry members from sensors and measurement areas: 54,000+

License: Creative Common license CC-BY.

Comments: OA articles and books are available online immediately after publication (without an embargo period). The author keeps copyright to the publication, but gives users the right to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search in or link to the full-text without compensation.

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IFSA Publishing, S. L.,
Parc UPC-PMT, Edificio RDIT-K2M,
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08860 Castelldefels, Barcelona, Spain
Tel.: +34 696067716
E-mail: publisher@sensorsportal.com



Comments: Many "garage-based" publishers do not specify their real physical address and even, the country. Others use a special service of legal offices, for example, in the USA, where the legal office situated, and a lawyer hired by publisher responds to phone calls addressed to the publisher.

Price: The publication fee is very reasonable and lower in comparison with the other established publishers. The price is fixed: it is constant regardless of the number of pages.

Comments: Please contact about details by e-mail: sales@sensorsportal.com for details.

Addition Services: And at the end, some addition bonuses from the publisher. Why not ?

Comments: 1) Authors will get one tablet 'Fire' from *Amazon* (Quad-Core processor, 1.3 GHz, 1 Gb RAM, 7" (17.7 cm), 1024 × 600 screen resolution, Wi-Fi, 8 GB) free of charge:



2) Authors benefit from the IFSA Membership Program. IFSA Publishing books and articles charge an open access fee at the beginning of the publication process. The payment IFSA Members receive a 10 % loyalty discount on this publication fee.

Conclusions: Due to the criteria satisfaction and unique features, the *IFSA Publishing, S.L.* is well suited for open access books and articles publications.

I hope, all mentioned above, including the check-list, will be useful for prospective authors as well as established citation indexes, lists, databases, catalogs, collectors and policymakers to help them to determine a reputed publishers for OA books and articles.

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