Alternative formats for scholarly communication: Cambridge University Press’s new hybrid books and journals initiative

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Cambridge University Press

- An integral part of the University of Cambridge
- World’s oldest publisher, founded in 1534
- Today publish c.400 journals & 1500 books pa in print and digital
- 23 fully OA journals 4448 OA articles
- 2016 launched combined books and journals platform – Cambridge Core
Since the 17th Century books and journals have dominated scholarly communication.
And they have continued to dominate into the 21st century!

- Over 20,000 journals
- More than 2 million articles per year
- More than 200,000 new books each year
- Estimate 90% scholarly writing is either <10k words or >100k
Does it have to be this way?

• Lots of experimentation in new formats and business models – see today’s agenda
• In a digital environment the distinction between journal and book formats seems artificial
WHAT DO WE THINK ARE BEST FEATURES OF JOURNALS AND BOOKS?
Reasons to love the journal article

• Trust – rigorous QA
• Appropriate length to test discrete argument
• Speed of publication
• Innovation in and around journal publishing industry – wide variety of services to help authors, readers, librarians
• Visibility & discoverability (see above)
• Others?
Any disadvantages?

- Length constrains development of argument?
- Challenges for interdisciplinary research?
- "Reinforce existing paradigms" (Nobel Laureate Ken Arrow on leading economics journals)?
Reasons to love books

- Length allows authors to “join the dots” and develop wider ranging argument
- Mature reflection based on years of research & teaching
- More scope to accommodate interdisciplinary perspectives
- More scope to reflect on existing literature
- More scope to develop pedagogical aspects
- Others?
Any disadvantages?

- Big investment of time?
- Longer production schedules?
- QA inconsistent across publishers?
- Recognition by tenure committees?
- Inconsistency in indexing (Web of Science Book Index 60k titles)
- Less investment in innovation?
COMBINING THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS
Cambridge Elements

- Organised in focused series edited by leading scholars. Elements will build up over time to provide dynamic coverage of state of art research in a given field.
- Content typically 20-30k words.
- Combines personal, forward looking reviews of what is most important in literature with original insights.
# Cambridge Elements

## Best of journals
- Rigorous QA
- Organised in series
- Speedy publication
- Innovation – benefits from functionality of Cambridge Core platform

## Best of books
- 20-30k word limit gives more space to authors
- Combine original insights in context of more detailed literature review
- Pedagogy
Additionally

- Authors retain copyright
- Digital first publication allows use of video & audio files
- Potential for authors to update content on annual basis to ensure data and references current
- Wide variety of purchase options in both digital and print
Future functionality

- Enhanced data visualisation
- Executable code
- Altmetrics
- Annotation
- Relatedness
- What’s important for you?
Launching in 2018

• Over 40 series in Arts & Sciences
• First content published October 17 – free for initial launch phase
• Libraries – unlimited usage, perpetual access
• Individual purchase options in print and digital
• Open Access
  
  Green – Submitted manuscripts - Personal webpage, non-commercial repositories, and commercial social sharing sites
Gold – APC by agreement
Individual Elements available in html, pdf and print formats

https://www.cambridge.org/core/what-we-publish/elements