BACKGROUND

Every two years, the Journals Committee sends out a survey to learn more about the journal programs of member presses, the challenges and opportunities for journal publishing, how the committee can better serve the community, as well as what topics journal publishers would like to discuss with one another throughout the year and at the AUPresses annual meeting.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The 2018 survey went out to all 81 AUPresses institutions who publish journals and provided them an opportunity to share with the journal publishing community their ideas, challenges, and changes regarding journal publishing. The survey consisted of 32 questions and allowed for final comments at the end. Fifty-five journal employees from 41 institutions responded to the survey, which was a significant increase from the last survey.

SYNOPSIS OF THE SURVEY

A little over one fourth of the respondents (27%) work for presses that publish more than 100 journal issues per year. Another 27% publish between 20-100 issues per year. The largest portion, 36%, publish 20 or fewer issues per year.

More than 40% of respondents work for presses that publish 20 journals or more, and half of the respondents work for presses that have up to 3 FTE working on journals. This number is about the same as in the 2014 survey.

While the number of respondents’ presses reporting to the library has increased since the last survey, this press organization is still the minority situation (27% of respondents), while 63% of respondents’ presses are not part of the library.

When asked about the greatest challenges facing journal departments, respondents listed both internal and external challenges.

Internal Challenges:
- Lack of journals staff
- Collaboration between journals groups and other groups
- How to increase revenue despite a decline in subscriptions
- Prioritizing journals and lack of support from other press departments
- Having enough time to stay on top of technological advances that would help the program in various ways
- Financial support from internal business offices
- Handling permissions
- Limited resources and budgeting constraints, a lack of time and money to invest in new initiatives
**External Challenges:**

- Pressure for increased revenue at the same time as declining subscriptions
- Business model changes called for by Plan S and other funding bodies

When asked about their main sources of revenue beside subscription revenue, 90% of respondents listed aggregator royalties (JSTOR, Project MUSE, EBSCO, ProQuest) and 62% listed advertising.

For about one fourth of respondents the Journals program provides 25-50% of the overall Press’s revenue. For 45% of the programs represented in the survey, journals revenue provides less than 25% of the Press’s revenue.

The top priority for 63% of the survey’s respondents is increased marketing and visibility. Other high priority items include international sales, reducing expenses, and establishing new collaborations.

When asked about which external contributors are compensated for their work on a journal, 63% said that editors were compensated. Other external contributors who are compensated include authors, special issue editors, and peer reviewers, although many noted that compensation was not in the form of payment but rather in complimentary journal copies or membership in societies.

How do journals programs ensure that a diversity of voices is represented in their program? The most frequent response was that they seek to diversify the subject matter of the journals themselves, their editors, and their peer reviewers. Editors in turn seek out authors representing diverse perspectives.

For editorial workflow management half of respondents reported using an outside data management system, while some 24% use a homegrown database. Presses use a variety of software tools to manage workflows in production, advertising, etc. Software includes: Excel, Google Sheets, and outside data management systems from JPS and DFP.

A majority of presses do not offer pre-print or early release programs for journal content, but about one third of presses do.

Journals programs are heavy users (90%) of social media for marketing their journals (mainly Facebook and Twitter), but exhibits are the second most used approach. Email campaigns and print advertising are used about equally to one another.

AUPresses members: Interested in staying up to date on the opportunities and challenges facing journals programs? Make sure you’re subscribed to the AAUP-J discussion list via [http://www.aupresses.org/resources/for-members/discussion-lists](http://www.aupresses.org/resources/for-members/discussion-lists).