

A Decade of Change: Running a University E-Press

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In 2003, The Australian National University established the ANU E Press, an innovative publishing solution that was managed by the library. The vision was of a world-class academic publisher taking advantage of new emerging information and communication technologies, which was a major development for the university. It was a response to pressures within the existing model of scholarly communication. In particular, the establishment of the press derived from a recognition of the urgent need to find an effective mechanism for disseminating ANU scholarship that was of high quality but lacked a ready commercial market; a determination to lower or eliminate barriers to access inherent in traditional academic publishing; an acceptance that within the university the operational overheads of the conventional academic press were no longer affordable; and a realisation that emergent

electronic press technologies offered a feasible alternative to the conventional academic press in terms of cost and available infrastructure (Kanellopoulos, 2007).

Works are made available through two brands—ANU E Press (<http://epress.anu.edu.au>), a fully peer-reviewed program, and ANU eView (<http://eview.anu.edu.au>), which delivers less scholarly publications that are peer reviewed internally at the university. Both imprints publish books and journals electronically and in print. The online version (referred to as e-books) are published freely online, with printed copies available for purchase through a print-on-demand service.

The university's history in publishing is similar to that of many U.S. universities. The ANU Press, a traditional print publishing operation, existed until 1984. It ceased operation because of financial viability issues.

Discussions on forming an electronically based national university press began in 2001. In 2002, Mr. Colin Steele, University Librarian, and Professor James Fox approached Vice Chancellor Professor Ian Chubb to urge the establishment of an ANU E Press. This led to an initial draft of a scoping document by Colin Steele in August 2002, which was developed over the course of the year. It became a formal proposal supported both by Professor Robin Stanton (Pro Vice Chancellor) and Professor Malcolm Gillies (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Education). The proposal was accepted by Professor Chubb and he agreed to provide funding for \$1.2 million for three years under the condition that the Division of Information provide funding to support the press as a long-term program.

In the decade following, achievements have included approximately 5 million downloads, 60 titles a year, a well-established set of editorial boards and peer-review processes, changes in the technical platform, and the maturity to be a B-ranked publishing house (SENSE, 2012, <http://www.sense.nl/qualityassessment>). Significant change has occurred in the acceptance of open access publishing and open access policy reflecting a maturity in scholarly publishing.

This establishment phase was based on a high degree of advocacy and collaboration between the research community, the library, and leadership in a time of turbulent change in scholarly communication. A major factor in the current success of the press is the continued close collaboration with academics.

Reflections on Contributions to Scholarly Communication

After almost a decade of publishing, the ANU E Press has now reached a level of maturity which is recognized across Australian universities. Two of the Group of 8 (leading research-intensive Australian universities) have developed e-presses modelled on ANU E Press, the University of Adelaide (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/press/>) and Monash University Publishing (<http://publishing.monash.edu>).

The business model has been refined, with a publishing subsidy grant scheme (<http://anulib.anu.edu.au/about/library-committees/publications-subsidies-committee/>) introduced.

Subsidies are determined by the Publication Subsidy Committee and two rounds are offered throughout the year. Priorities for funding in 2012 were based on the following principles:

- Author/s are publishing with the ANU E Press.
- Priority is given to emerging scholars.
- Non-ANU E Press publishers must be recognized as quality scholarly publishers.

The subsidy can cover items such as copyediting, indexing, and copyright clearance costs of images for authors of ANU publications.

Business Model

Books and journals are published with:

- free access online in a range of formats, including PDF, HTML (view online), ePub and mobi: catering for iPad, Kindle, Apple products, and PC users;
- printed (softcover) copies available for approximately \$25. The production of printed copies is contracted out.

ANU E Press bears the costs of the:

- graphic design of the cover,
- publication of the work in the different formats,
- support of the editorial boards and advisory committee,
- running of the website, including the production, website, shopping cart facility, and administration, which includes reporting,
- marketing, promotion, and distribution,
- and dealing with all orders for print copies.

Authors find separate funding for:

- copyediting,
- indexing,
- any image or copyright material costs,
- and other promotional costs such as book launches.

A major factor in the success of the press has been the editorial committees. There are 22 committees covering all subject disciplines. They are very active soliciting proposals and encouraging early-career researchers.

Processes are focused on the authors. The members of the editorial boards work very proactively with academics to encourage the development of publication proposals. Within each faculty and research discipline, board members raise the profile of the press as a publishing option through meetings, seminars, and communication with individual researchers. If feedback is required to encourage a proposal to be better developed, it is undertaken by the author.

When the board approves a publication, ANU E Press staff work very closely with authors. The publishing agreement is very short and clearly written in plain English, and documents including templates are provided with strong support to assist in publication.

Publishing is a streamlined process, with clear instructions on what is required provided to authors. This includes information about the book and how the files are to be provided to the press. The press asks that all files be copyedited and styled (using the E Press template) before production commences. By streamlining these processes, the press is able to provide a turnaround time of between two to four months, as opposed to one to two years as with traditional publishers. Streamlined publishing ensures that the E Press can produce over 60 books a year at a low cost.

ANU E Press has developed a number of cooperative agreements with other organisations to publish a wide range of scholarly materials. The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), Aboriginal History Inc., and Social Sciences Academic Press (China) publish their works through ANU E Press.

Access to titles is convenient and easy. Readers come through Amazon CreateSpace, Google Books, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and the Directory of Open Access Books as well as standard search engines. Additional access can be found through the university's catalogue, the Australian National Bibliographic database, and the National Library of Australia's Trove service. Opening up access by providing bibliographic records to libraries has increased scholars' ease of finding titles.

Authors and readers report that the high quality, peer-reviewed process is one of the most important characteristics of the press. The press is recognised under the government's Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) scheme, which aggregates research income and research publications data submitted by universities each year (Australia Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education, 2012).

New Challenges

Changes continue in scholarly communication. Open access is undoubtedly the game changer of the decade. The peak body for Australian universities has called for greater commitment to open access:

Universities Australia believes that there is enormous public benefit in increasing access to the outcomes of all research, especially research that has been publicly funded. There are a number of logistical, practical and commercial issues that need to be addressed to achieve this goal and Universities Australia, with the support of government, is committed to making Australia's high-quality research output freely accessible to all (Universities Australia, 2013, p. 44).

Both major government funding agencies, the Australian Research Council (Australian Research Council, 2013) and National Health and Medical Research Council (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2012), now have open access mandates requiring open access publication of research outputs from funded research to be deposited into institutional

repositories. These policies shape revitalised engagement with researchers to increase access to research. The ANU E Press is rising to meet this challenge.

New technologies are also at the core of e-book production. In addition to responding to new readers by producing books in formats that can be read on Kindles and iPads, multimedia has been incorporated into works, such as audio-visual material included in *Sounds in Translation: Intersections of Music, Technology and Society*. It includes a variety of video and audio files that are essential to an understanding of the book's exploration of the idea of the "soundscape" and investigation of acoustic environments. Another example is the publication *Precedence: Social Differentiation in the Austronesian World*, which is accompanied by an hour-long documentary, *Contestations: Dynamics of Precedence in an Eastern Indonesian Domain*, that serves as a companion piece to the text.

And Next...

Scholarly publishing and the ANU E Press are facing a new set of challenges. While the ANU was an early e-book publisher, the industry has now matured, leading to a completely new set of issues. Maintaining a focus on scholarship and research means that only limited insights can be gained from looking to commercial publishing.

The emergence of popular e-book readers such as Kindle and iPads has led to greater use of e-books and has led to a huge increase in the number of e-books published throughout the world. It has created an environment where there is much greater competition for visibility. ANU E Press uses social media such as Twitter and Facebook. Not only are there followers on these social media tools, but tweets are available from the E Press homepage, significantly increasing awareness of new titles. Undoubtedly social media products and new access tools such as Flipboard and Zite will change in the coming years. Our focus is on solutions that adapt and deliver content to these new services.

Exploring the need for other published resources to support education developments...will create e-publications with richer and more complex content.

All ANU E Press titles are searchable through search engines, ranking highly with Google Book Search and Google Scholar. With over 100 institutions linking directly to ANU E Press titles, the global access to these e-books is considerable. Growing services to academic libraries to support easy access is also a focus, with Books at JSTOR our newest venture. Data/text mining will be an area for exploration in the coming years, as this has the potential to reach more readers and provide deep access to content.

Reviewing issues in 2013 has identified opportunities to expand into new areas of publishing, particularly e-textbooks, by using new technology in areas such as language skills. This will require the development of new skills in the publishing area and a new relationship with teaching staff to understand how online learning can be supported by the press. Exploring the need for other published resources to support education developments, such as massive open online courses (MOOCs), will create e-publications with richer and more complex content.

New forms of publishing are arising: for example, we see a rise of scholarly short monographs providing more immediate communication of ideas. And more forms will come. Our journey as an e-press continues to provide opportunities to reconceptualize the book in the modern scholarly environment.

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