

CCC's RightsLink® for Open Access Helps BMJ Manage the Complexities of Open Access Publishing



Back in 2009, when BMJ first adopted Copyright Clearance Center's RightsLink® service to manage journal article permissions, the A-list publisher had no idea that CCC's technology solution would later play a leading role in their burgeoning Open Access (OA) business.

Deploying RightsLink helped transform the BMJ permissions process. Freed from the need to respond to thousands of routine, one-off copyright requests each year, the publisher's permissions staff could focus their time and effort on other high-value licensing deals.

The Challenge

Fast forward several years. As the OA movement increased in size and complexity, BMJ faced multiple challenges around the collection and management of Article Publishing Charges (APCs) for its growing portfolio of OA and hybrid journals.

In the absence of a commercially-available automated solution to streamline author transactions, BMJ filled the void by integrating PayPal® into their manuscript submission system. Unfortunately, that interim solution couldn't scale, and was unable to handle the complexities of OA transactions. As a result, BMJ had to impose time-consuming manual workarounds on its editorial team in order to keep the OA business running smoothly.

This situation was also negatively affecting authors. According to BMJ's Systems Coordinator, Raegel De Guzman, with the old system, "authors weren't able to get a proper receipt for their APC payments so they had no record of their financial transaction."

The Solution

Aware of the critical need for solutions to help publishers manage services for authors, in 2012 CCC filled the gap in the marketplace with an author services module from RightsLink. After evaluating offerings from EBSCO and Open Access Key (OAK), BMJ chose the RightsLink solution because of its previous success with RightsLink for the permissions side of the business.

"We wanted to cater to the business model of Open Access membership," explained De Guzman. "With this model, we offer membership programs to various institutions. These institutions then allow authors to take advantage of their membership and have the institution fund the Open Access portion of their research. This was the big picture—to have the kind of infrastructure that supports this business model as well as eliminates the manual intervention for the editorial office while providing clear oversight for the finance reports."

In February of 2015, BMJ launched RightsLink® for Open Access, CCC's next-generation author services solution. In fact, BMJ was instrumental in the development of this new product, sharing its vast publishing and Open Access expertise with CCC. It was essential for BMJ to use a publisher-centric solution that would not only meet the needs of their organization, but the needs of all stakeholders in the process — authors, institutions, and funders.

BMJ

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— Raegel De Guzman
Systems Coordinator, BMJ

About BMJ

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About Copyright Clearance Center (CCC)

Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), and its subsidiary RightsDirect are global leaders in content workflow and rights licensing technology. CCC solutions provide anytime, anywhere content access, usage rights and information management while promoting and protecting the interests of copyright holders. We serve more than 35,000 customers and 15,000 copyright holders worldwide, and manage more than 950 million rights from the world's most sought-after journals, books, blogs, movies and more. Since 2008, CCC has been named one of the top 100 companies that matter most in the digital content industry by EContent Magazine. Find out more at www.copyright.com/rightslinkauthorservices



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— Raegel De Guzman, *Systems Coordinator, BMJ*

RightsLink for Open Access has allowed BMJ to strengthen author relations by providing an excellent author experience despite complex business rules and requirements. This means BMJ has the ability to offer different pricing structures depending on author affiliation, handle pre-payments, and administer many of the nuances associated with Open Access publishing.

How it Works

RightsLink for Open Access is integrated with BMJ's manuscript production system. At the point of acceptance by the Editorial Office, the BMJ production system automatically deposits metadata—details about the author, manuscript, publication and more—into RightsLink for Open Access. This in turn, triggers a BMJ-branded congratulatory acceptance email to be sent to the author through RightsLink. When authors click on a link in the acceptance email, they are immediately presented with customized fee information based on their academic affiliation, membership discount, or promotion code, if applicable. The author can then request an invoice in one of seven currencies or opt to pay by credit card. CCC handles all billing and collections for BMJ, including payment reminders, and provides multilingual, global customer service and support—by phone and/or online.

Since introducing RightsLink for Open Access, BMJ has significantly increased its APC collection rate and greatly reduced the time it takes to receive author payment via credit card. BMJ also benefits from streamlined financial reporting. In the past, five BMJ staffers were focused on pulling data and running reports; now one person in finance runs all the reports required, and “it’s a very straightforward process,” according to De Guzman.

“In the past year, BMJ has launched seven new Open Access journals—including one that is wholly owned by a society. RightsLink for Open Access was key to winning that journal,” concluded De Guzman. “Without a doubt, RightsLink for Open Access has been an important factor in helping us get buy-in from societies and other stakeholders and has increased their confidence in our management of their Open Access initiatives.”

In addition to BMJ, many top scholarly publishers use RightsLink for Open Access to automate the collection of APCs. With RightsLink, publishers can test different models as their Open Access strategy evolves, automate author transactions without investing in new infrastructure, eliminate concerns about collecting OA revenue, and contain OA-related costs.

RightsLink Workflow



Note: **MMS** can be a production and/or other publisher system serving authors.

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