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エルゼビアにおける出版活動

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Abstract

This article outlines briefly how Elsevier, a large scientific publisher has been committing itself to electronic publishing and services. The publications of Elsevier are so specialized that the publisher itself is rarely involved in translating and editing papers. For non-native English authors in Japan, Elsevier Japan can help them develop the English text of their paper by introducing them to the professional language services. As a publisher we aim to provide authors with more speedy, efficient, and reliable publishing procedures in the electronic environment.

本稿は、学術出版社であるElsevierが、その規模の大きさをもって、いかに電子出版とその関連のサービスに取り組んでいるかについての概要を簡単にまとめたものである。Elsevierの出版物は専門性が高いため、出版社自身が論文の翻訳や論文校閲に関わることはほとんどない。しかし、英語を母語としない日本に住む著者たちが、英語論文の推敲を必要とすれば、エルゼビア・ジャパンはいくつかの専門の英文校閲サービス機関を執筆者に紹介している。出版社としてElsevierは、より迅速で、効率的で、信頼のおける電子出版を研究者に提供することを目指している。

Elsevier – The Biggest Publisher and Its Full-text Database

Elsevier is a part of the Anglo-Dutch company publishing group Reed-Elsevier, which has 37,000 employees working world-wide. We are the biggest publisher in the fields of science, technology and medicine. Since its commercial launch in 1999, we have been developing an on-line publishing platform “ScienceDirect” that includes 17,000 scientific journals. The volume of this full-text database is equivalent to four million full-text articles, as of today. With ScienceDirect, we publish 250,000 new articles in 2.5 million pages per year, and the service offers linking out to articles from over 120 other publishers. In this way the authors who write for an Elsevier journal are able to make their works visible to 10 million individuals in the world research community.

Elsevier's specialized publications and changes in scientific communication

Elsevier publishes a wide range of products that covers various fields including medicine, life science, chemistry, mathematics, computer science, physics, psychology and economics. There are not only on-line services such as ScienceDirect but printed books and journals. The book collection includes the English edition of a highly successful textbook, *Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie* (1930) by Paul Karrer, the Nobel Prize winner for Chemistry in 1937. (The translated English title is *Organic Chemistry*.) Stanley Prusiner won the 1997 Nobel Prize for Medicine for his work on prions and self-replicating proteins as a mechanism of disease transmission. His early work was published by *Cell*, an Elsevier journal with a high reputation in the life science. Such works are highly specialized and truly advanced. Our primary research publications are peer reviewed and independently edited by acknowledged experts in their fields. The communication among those researchers is extremely important for smooth paper flow. Along with a technical progress in publishing media, the procedures for scientific communication during submission and peer review process have changed. In order to assist and conform to the changes, Elsevier has set up a web site called "Author Gateway" for authors who submit a paper to our journals.

Author gateway – a web-based service for authors

The Author Gateway is Elsevier's main online service for authors. It is an integrated web site that allows authors to obtain the information and tools they need to speed up the publication process, and to stay informed of new journal content and books from Elsevier. The functions of the web site are as follows:

Information resources for submission

These include the 'Guide for Authors' for each journal. Each journal has its own rules and guidelines for preparing papers for submission. It also provides a list of editors and editorial board members and a 'Guide to Online Submission'. If an author needs to know what kind of research is published in the journal he or she is considering, the author can browse the tables of contents and abstracts by linking out to the corresponding journal page on ScienceDirect. There are also general sections on copyright and artwork preparation.

Online submission

This service does not currently cover all of Elsevier's journals, but Elsevier aims to make online submission available for as many titles as possible in future. Authors are able to instantly convert the original file of a submitted manuscript into a PDF file. Through this site, authors obtain feedback from the journal editor and learn whether the paper has been accepted or not. The online submission tool will be upgraded over time to provide more sophisticated functions.

Peer review process

Elsevier's journals require peer review after submission, as is common for scientific journals. The normal procedure is as follows:

- An author submits a paper to an editor or editorial office, which is located outside our company in most cases.
- Editor-in-chief assigns a number of reviewers who are specialists in the fields of the submitted paper.
- The reviewers' reports are sent to the editor-in-chief.
- The editor-in-chief decides on how to respond to the author. Three kinds of decision can be made:
 - accepted for publication
 - accepted with minor corrections
 - rejected
- The author is informed about the decision.
- Any necessary revisions are made on the accepted paper.
- The complete manuscript of an accepted paper is sent to the 'Login and Production Department' at Elsevier.

Translating and editing scientific papers

We believe it is very difficult to translate or edit a paper that represents truly advanced science. This is because it will contain new and specialized findings that are often incomprehensible for most people. A paper may be readable for only a limited group of researchers in the world. Even for standard terminology and concepts, the translator or editor will require not only linguistic skills, but also in-depth knowledge of a subject. Elsevier's policy is therefore to leave the responsibility of editing to the author and the editorial office of the relevant journal, that is, to experts on the subject.

Elsevier electronic services

Elsevier can offer various services to authors via the internet:

Submission tracking

Each accepted paper that arrives at Elsevier is registered in our tracking system and its status is available for the author to view online, using the Author Gateway. The information provided includes: general production status (that is: in preparation, in proof, issued), date of publication, reprints dispatch date, and citation information (issue, volume and page numbers).

Articles in press

The section 'Articles in Press' in ScienceDirect contains peer reviewed and accepted

articles to be published in each journal. At the time of publication the in press version is removed from this section and the final version appears in the actual journal issue. There are two types of articles in press: uncorrected proofs and corrected proofs. The formers are articles that are not yet finalized and will be corrected by the authors. The corrected proofs are articles containing the author's corrections. Readers can view proofs online to enjoy access to new research much more quickly.

Multimedia publication support

Research often produces unprintable multimedia components that previously could not be included in printed publications. Such items include sound files, audio files, complex images, large datasets, and computer programs. These are available on ScienceDirect. This gives authors more flexibility and more opportunity to express originality.

Alerts

Various alert services are offered by ScienceDirect and Author Gateway:

- to the author when published
- to the author when cited
- to the reader when an issue is on-line.

These alert services can greatly increase the efficiency of research activity.

Activities of Elsevier Japan

Contributions to Elsevier's journals by authors from Japan represent approximately 10% of the world total. This overall figure comes after the figures for Europe and the USA. Much depends on the particular field. In physics and materials science, Japanese authors are more visible than in other fields. Authors from Japan tend to prefer submitting work to a 'Letter' journal or a 'short communication'.

The Editorial Department of Elsevier's Japan office was established twenty years ago. We provide a wide range of support activities in the course of submission to publication and serve as an intermediary between the author and our publishing/production unit. One of our important tasks is to maintain a list of selected editors and translators who offer professional English language services from both inside and outside Japan. Each service has its own pricing scheme and specialty, and this is noted in the list. We update the list by sending a questionnaire for feedback from authors making use of the services. Authors who wish to learn about one or more of the recommended language services should contact each service directly for a full description of the work offered, for prices and quotations, and to place orders and transfer manuscripts.

Conclusion

In the last decade we have seen dynamic progress in the information technology environment. We believe that electronic development will continue to have new impacts on journal functions and editorial procedures. ScienceDirect and Author Gateway, the two platforms described above, are expected to have important roles in these areas.

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Sources

Some of the text above is based on material from the following web sites: *ScienceDirect* (www.sciencedirect.com), *Author Gateway* (authors.elsevier.com), and company homepages in English (www.elsevier.com) and Japanese (japan.elsevier.com).

