

In any human relationship, any scientific collaboration, any sharing of experience dictated by different worlds, situations and conditions, there is always a natural and, in some cases, desired integration, to achieve a common goal.

The meeting which took place a while ago, with a Publisher Relations Manager for EBSCO Information Services, together with Angela Mari Braida, the linguistic advisor of the Journal "Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage", constituted an unusually particular moment.

Particular, because it fully corresponded with the professionalism of EBSCO's local representatives to coordinate everything, with their no-less professional colleagues and management at the far-off EBSCO headquarters in the USA. EBSCO is not only a leading provider of research databases, e-journals, e-books, but also serves the research needs of academic institutions, schools and public libraries, corporations and government agencies.

This world, offered in a clear and knowledgeable way, has given rise to an unusual and unexpected kind of long-term collaboration which complements and integrates the topics and aims of the Journal "Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage". But only apparently unusual, because it actually converges directly with the two fundamental concepts that are the basis of the Journal's "mission": internationalization and interdisciplinarity.

That is why the following paper by the Senior Vice President, Donald P. Doak, seeks to highlight in a particularly significant way how information services, diffused by a seemingly geographically distant Center (i.e. Ipswich, MA, USA) in all directions and at an intercontinental level, can appreciably and without confines, symbolize an important form of informative contribution which is also scientific, as it brings together the objectives of the Journal.

I would therefore like to express my deep gratitude to Mr. Doak for the paper that follows, which I consider to be part of the ongoing fruitful relationship that exists between EBSCO and the Journal, also in relation to his highly qualified position as Senior Vice President Strategic Partnership International Content Licensing, as well as his long-standing affiliation and experience gained at the Company across the years.

My heartfelt thanks also go to all EBSCO staff who have contributed to this collaboration in different ways.

Editor-in-Chief

THE STEPPING STONE TO GREATER IMPACT FOR QUALITY JOURNALS IS “INFLUENCE”; IT IS ABOUT DISCOVERABILITY AND USAGE

Donald P. Doak*

Senior Vice President, Strategic Partnerships & International Licensing
EBSCO Information Services, Massachusetts, USA

Keywords: discoverability, visibility, usage, citation, impact

1. Introduction – about EBSCO

EBSCO Information Services (EBSCO) (Figure 1) – a division of EBSCO Industries, Inc., established in 1944, that has been serving libraries for more than 70 years – is the preeminent provider of online research content for libraries, including hundreds of research databases, historical archives, point-of-care medical reference, and corporate learning tools serving millions of end users at tens of thousands of institutions. As the leading provider of electronic journals & books for libraries, EBSCO manages subscriptions for more than 360,000 serials, including more than 57,000 e-journals, as well as online access to more than one million e-books. EBSCO is also the leading discovery service provider for libraries worldwide with more than 11,000 discovery customers in over 100 countries. *EBSCO Discovery Service™* (EDS) provides each institution with a comprehensive, single search box for its entire collection, offering an unparalleled wealth of content and relevance ranking quality [1].



Figure 1. EBSCO Riverside campus in Ipswich, Massachusetts, USA.

* Corresponding author: information@ebSCO.com

2. The importance of visibility and exposure of journal articles in the potential for impact

Of course, editors of journals want to see their articles have an impact on other articles, just as authors desire the same outcome. It is a measure of quality to see one important study cite another. Citation Indexes have showcased this for years. The manuscript acceptance (peer-review) process for top journals is rigorous, ensuring the desired level of overall quality and research value is present from the outset. But just because an article is strong, does not mean that it will have the desired impact. And it certainly does not mean that it will have that impact within a certain window of time. In order to facilitate and expedite the process of reaching critical impact in a world of information overload, we have to focus on the steps beyond the process of rigorous peer-review and selection - and into the critical phases that lead to usage. It is only when real usage of an article occurs that we will begin to see the potential for, and signs of, impact. In this way, article and journal *discovery* is the key to *influencing* impact - which comes through visibility, usage and, ultimately, citation.

Fundamentally, if an article is not read or used, it will never be cited. So the potential for impact is influenced greatly by the actual statistics surrounding usage. And usage is governed in large part by the ability to not only discover a given article, but to gain seamless access to it. In this way, broad visibility is critical to gain necessary *exposure*, which can be described as the combination of Discoverability, Access and Usage. Understanding and capitalizing on opportunities for exposure is critical for a journal to reach its potential in terms of impact and value. But unilateral exposure can create unintended consequences when channel partners are not fully aligned with the needs and concerns of journal publishers. For example, there is tremendous exposure to be had through partnerships with subscription agents who work to add value to libraries who subscribe to a given journal. They can ensure automated accuracy of holdings information when e-journal packages change, and as a result, ensure that linking remains strong. This is a large part of the "access" piece. If a user finds an article from a journal, but the link to the full text is not accurate or pushes the user to the volume or issue level of a journal and not the actual article they were seeking, the chance for influence is lost as user frustration and abandonment occurs.

3. Full text databases offer a means to increase exposure

Full-text databases (Figure 2) are another means for greater exposure. The model itself is such that libraries gain great value (i.e., number of journals included in relation to cost), while journals gain visibility. Partnering with more than 14,000 publishers, EBSCO showcases more than 260,000 journals, rendering them searchable and retrievable with the same ranking criteria. EBSCO databases are among the most trusted source of information for researchers. However, that model is intended as a supplement to journal subscriptions, and not a replacement for the journal subscription. When full-text database providers are not also subscription agents, there can be misalignment of interest that leads to negative consequences for libraries and publishers. As such, it is critical, when considering potential avenues for exposure, that publishers, as well as editors-in-chief, look to partners that support all areas of their business - from

journal subscription services, to full-text databases, to discovery services - and the means to enhance linking and the overall user experience.

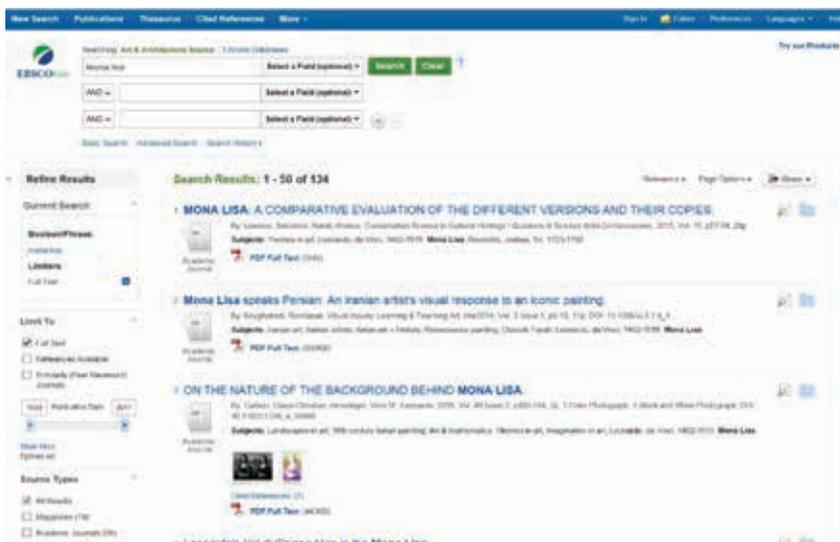


Figure 2. A search in the Art & Architecture Source full text database.

4. The case of Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage (CSCH)

It is these calculated partnerships that can make or break the desire to gain the exposure that will lead to influence and impact. Take, for example, *Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage* (CSCH). Its mission is to circulate knowledge on a global level not only among academics but also across archives, government agencies, and researchers at large. This desire for wide accessibility of quality literature for purposes of knowledge dissemination and enhanced discipline-specific scholarship is critical for most providers. But the success level varies greatly from publication to publication. Of course, there are a lot of factors at play, but exposure is showing itself as a major variable in this equation. When reliable information teams with aspects of exposure and ease of use, researchers benefit, and the upward swing ensues. *Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage* has experienced just this.

The journal decided to develop a well-rounded partnership with EBSCO Information Services (EBSCO) with the goal to maximize exposure and usage. EBSCO is a journal subscription service, a full-text database provider, and a discovery service provider. Moreover, they are the leading providers in each of the categories worldwide, which open many doors for exposure immediately for partnering journals. In a short window of time since partnering with EBSCO, CSCH has experienced a major spike in institutions that now have access to the journal, and it is having a profound impact on the mission to enhance scholarship across the subject areas that the journal supports. With a nearly 300% usage increase in recent months, compared to prior to participation, the influence the journal has on researchers is exponentially increasing.

And moreover, we are seeing that this influence is having a direct effect on impact. Very recently the journal has been selected for Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection: the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI - http://wokinfo.com/products_tools/multidisciplinary/esci/). This is an indication of quality and impact, and it is an honor. The publisher is realizing a greater value and purpose for the quality research that they provide. It is happening through participation with EBSCO. Exposure, discovery and access is facilitating the desired influence on scholarship. The publisher is seeing the results in the increased usage statistics. And the resulting impact is real.

References

- [1] About EBSCO: <https://www.ebsco.com>

Biographical notes

Donald P. Doak is Senior Vice President in charge of Strategic Partnerships & International Licensing for EBSCO databases, e-books, and SaaS (Software as a Service). He has been with EBSCO Information Services for 25 years and has extensive experience in many areas of EBSCO operations. He has been a senior executive in the APK division (Academic, Public Library & K12 School), Medical, as well as the Corporate & Federal division. Don has spoken at many information industry conferences and uses his extensive industry knowledge to help balance the needs of our partners and customers.

Summary

Although publishers and authors hope to see their publications having an impact in the discipline, focusing only on the quality of the published articles may not guarantee the desired impact. Papers should also respond to principles of quality not only from a scientific point of view, as it is also very important to understand and capitalize on the critical phases that lead to usage — namely ensuring exposure and discoverability of the publications by the target audience. Apart from partnering with subscription agents that offer value-added services for online publications to ensure that linking to full text is accurate and stable, full-text databases also offer an effective channel to bring high-quality journal contents to a target audience that may eventually cite the consulted articles in their own researches. Nonetheless, the publisher, and at times the editor-in-chief, also wants to make sure that the full-text databases they work with are not going to bring a negative impact on the journal subscription. Therefore, it is critical that publishers look to partners that support all areas of their business in an optimal way. This is what has been achieved across the years by the Journal "Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage" which has had excellent results in its dissemination and scientific content.

Riassunto

È noto che gli editori e gli autori debbono rispondere a dei principi di qualità non solo dal punto di vista scientifico, ma anche in relazione alla diffusione e destinazione

degli articoli. È anche importante la collaborazione con agenti intermediari che offrono servizi aggiuntivi, ma anche pubblicazioni online, per garantire testi completi e accurati, nonché database full text, permettendo che canali efficaci portino i contenuti delle riviste ad un pubblico più vasto che potrebbe anche citare gli articoli nelle loro ricerche. Tuttavia, l'editore e, talvolta, l'editor-in-chief, desiderano assicurarsi che i database a testo integrale con cui lavorano non abbiano un impatto negativo e, quindi, sull'accettazione. Pertanto, è fondamentale che gli editori scelgano partners che supportino in maniera ottimale tutte le aree della loro attività. È quanto si è realizzato lungo il corso degli anni con il Journal "Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage" pervenendo a risultati eccellenti sia nella diffusione sia nel contenuto scientifici.