

Editorial

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Publishing has played an essential role in documenting and accelerating human civilization. The woodblock printing technology invented in China during the Sui and Tang Dynasties (AD. 581–907) greatly advanced the ancient Chinese civilization by recording, disseminating knowledge and technology, promoting learning, and by debating thoughts. The introduction of Chinese papermaking and printing technologies to Western countries inspired the birth of Western papermaking and Gutenberg movable type printing. These technologies, along with the industrial revolutions, not only drastically facilitated the spread of science and the development of human civilization, but also made the publishing industry one of the modern specialized professions.

Over history, the publishing industry has evolved from books and periodicals in the early days to audio-visual, electronic, and digital publishing. One hundred years ago, Lubi Kui, the founder of Zhonghua Book Company and a well-known publisher in China, once said: "We hope for the progress of the country and society, but we cannot but hope for the progress of education; we hope for the progress of education, but we cannot but hope for the progress of the book publishing industry. Although it is a small industry, its relationship with the country and society is bigger than any industry." This notion remains true today. From a global perspective, the economic value of the entire global publishing industry is far smaller than that of a single high-tech company; however, the value of the publishing industry in education, learning, and documenting civilization is irreplaceable and extends far beyond economic value alone.

Today the publishing industry faces many challenges. The reading habits formed by humans in hundreds of years are changing under the influence of digital publications. Traditional paper publishing is facing fierce competition from digital publishing. Not only is publishing technology fast evolving, but the speed of publishing has also become almost instant. For academic journals, the traditional subscription model has been rapidly shifted to an open science model. Not only will this economic model change overturn the traditional paradigm of copyright and content ownership, but will likely also change the path of human civilization, especially for underdeveloped countries that will gain access to science, technology and knowledge. The traditional peer review process has also been challenged by preprinting achieving without peer-review. Traditional large commercial publishing companies have been competing against hundreds of small, self-publishing enterprises due to internet-enabled digital publishing. In terms of content generation, publishing is no longer considered as a

scholarly activity because individuals can also generate enormous amount of content and publish across a variety of formats and contribute to user-generated content. How have all of these changes in publishing industry evolved and will evolve in the future? What are the new laws, challenges, and trends in current and future publishing? What impact will these changes and challenges to the publishing industry have on recording, achieving, and sharing information in society? How will these massive new content formats be judged in terms of their value and authenticity? Nothing is predictable, but these fast-evolving changes in the publishing industry will certainly impact the future of civilization. All of these issues in the publishing industry require research and a trusted outlet for publishing. We are so fortunate living in such a dynamic, flourishing era of publishing in order to fulfill this mission.

However, there are only few academic journals that publish research on publishing itself; and there is a lack of open-access journals in this field. This has inspired the publisher, Maximum Academic Press (www.maxapress.com) and myself to establish a new academic journal, called *Publishing Research*. This journal will provide a platform for academic scholars who study issues related to the publishing process, behaviors, industry, etc., and serve as a platform for global scholarly exchange and collaborations. *Publishing Research* will be a repository for our publishing history and support global intellectual collaborations to advance publishing in the future. As the founding editor-in-chief, I am honored to build this platform together with scholars and practitioners in the global publishing industry.

Publishing Research aims to become a leading journal in achieving and disseminating the latest research on publishing ancient and current books, e-books, subscription and open-access journals, newspapers and e-newspapers, e-letters, and online user-generated contents, regardless of the field of contents. Its scope includes, but not limited to, the following topics: the publishing theories, methodologies, and processes; the history of global publishing; digital & multimedia publishing; ancient books and literature publishing studies; the trend in the publishing industry; development on contents in all forms and in all fields of literature; statistics and analysis reports in data and databases related to publishing, etc.

I am honored to have a group of outstanding scholars in various subdisciplines of publishing research to help me edit the journal, organize special issues, and promote the journal. I wish to thank all the authors in advance for submitting your best research for publication in this new journal, and encourage all readers to freely download the articles. *Publishing Research* publishes all articles as open access as we feel that research output should be a common good for all. With the

joint efforts of all stakeholders, authors, reviewers, readers and publishers, I hope that *Publishing Research* will become a highly trusted outlet that we are all proud of. *Publishing Research* will document and witness the dynamic development of the publishing industry in the coming decades and centuries.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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