

Re: history of the DDG

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2008-07/msg03140.html>

- *From:* JosephKK <quiettechblue@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 18 Jul 2008 19:48:19 -0700
-

On Tue, 15 Jul 2008 17:32:23 +0100, Martin Brown
<||||newspam|||@nezumi.demon.co.uk> wrote:

John Larkin wrote:

On Tue, 15 Jul 2008 15:49:57 GMT, James Arthur
<bogusabdsqy@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Jonathan Kirwan wrote:

On Tue, 15 Jul 2008 02:06:14 GMT, James
Arthur
<bogusabdsqy@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Jonathan Kirwan wrote:

On Mon, 14
Jul 2008
23:44:12
GMT,
James
Arthur
wrote:

I
don't
think
journals
have
any
right
to
appoint
themselves

Re: history of the DDG

middlemen
between
publicly-funded
research
and
the
public
good.

They
impede
progress
and
the
free
flow
of
information.
And
they
overcharge
to
boot.

They are in business to make money for their shareholders. They are most definitely not charities. Prestigious paper journals are still important for disseminating new research (although many have online versions too).

So what do you propose to do – nationalise them?

Well, I'm
not going to
fight you on
that score.
I'd rather it's
all
immediately
in the
public
domain.
Perhaps,
with
universities
taking
action and
with
scientists
also taking
individual

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action, there
will
eventually
be a sea
change.
There is
already
some
impact.

But I'll also
repeat again
that I've
never had to
pay for a
single
paper; and
I've asked
for papers
that were
only
announced
and hadn't
even "hit
the stands"
yet. So
while I
agree with
the idea of
"free
flow of
information"
as did every
scientist I've
talked with
about
this, I'm not
sure about
the "impede
progress"
part of your
comment.
The fact is,
it seems
from my
experience
anyway,
that one
does not
have to pay
for ANY

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published
article. Just
write the
authors.

Jon

It's not just the money it's
the awkward access. It
becomes
impossible to quickly
collect, peruse, and compare
papers.

Don't you have libraries in the USA?

I agree it's a pain. No argument from me.

For example, it's usually
faster to fetch one of my
books than
to find something on the
web.

I usually try the web first. Keyword indexing is a marvellous thing.

A test: It's great you can get
articles free by asking, but
how many articles have you
skipped because of the
hassle?

I just put them on a list for next time I am at a suitable library. You
can get quite good at guessing which journals will be free access.

And, in theory, it's illegal to
disseminate them—they're
copyrighted by the journals.

Indeed. Your point?

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I don't want to clutter up John's thread with this,

Oh, be my guest.

I

was just pointing out several ways in which access delayed = access effectively denied. One example was the difference in bandwidth between flipping through a book, and accessing the info on the web.

If papers are a hassle to get, people are a lot less likely to bother.

I don't think it makes all that much difference. A lot of stuff is online in some form or other if you know where to look. Tetchy journals are not public access or are available only at arm & leg PPV rates unless you have a subscription or a tame librarian.

Many institutions have web pages with simplified versions of the current research topics and often the same images as are in the journals.

A few big companies have locked up the journal business. They get the papers peer-reviewed for free, charge the authors "page fees" (like, kilobucks per page), copyright the material, make sure the abstracts are vague, and charge users to see it.

I think that is a bit unfair. Unless things have changed mightily the cost for academic journal publication is nominal unless you want to sponsor the front cover, have full colour plates or something exotic like that. See for example the Nature author guidelines:

<http://www.nature.com/nature/authors/gta/>

Section 5.9 Costs – £700 per for the first colour plate, £250 thereafter, but if the editor thinks the colour image is essential non-payment will not prevent publication.

And the scientists play along, for unscientific reasons.

Scientists publish in the most prestigious widely circulated journal for the work they are doing. There is little point in sending major new work to some obscure journal in Outer Mongolia that noone ever reads.

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Regards,

Martin Brown

** Posted from <http://www.teranews.com> **

Yes, and the "journal publishers" used this to invert the normal Author – Publisher financial relationship, and con Authors to pay (who just passed it on as a cost to the funding source).

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