



How to Make the Most of Reprints

Table of Contents

Introduction
History & Background
Definitions & Differences
Appropriate Candidates
Reprint Producers
Manufacturing Process
Establishing an Effective Program
Marketing Reprints
Conclusion
Checklist
References
About the Authors

How to Make the Most of Reprints

A White Paper Prepared for Sheridan Reprints
A division of The Sheridan Press

A Restricted Distribution Document

The Sheridan Press has commissioned this paper as a service to its customers and to the publishing community as a whole. Reproduction without the prior written approval of The Sheridan Press is prohibited.

Publisher

The Sheridan Press

Contributing Editors

Mary Hush
Tad Parker
Brenda Walton
Joan Weisman
Diane Yumatoff

Authors

Linda Beebe
Barbara Meyers

Copyright 1999, The Sheridan Press
Printed May 1999

INTRODUCTION

Little has been written about reprints. The meager results of a literature search on reprints are surprising when you realize that reprints of books, book chapters, articles, and essays have been with us since Gutenberg. One might even speculate that the very first books produced by the printing press were in fact reprints of the monk scribes' works. Reprints contribute to scholarly communication as scholars collect and exchange reprints and preprints for their personal libraries and distribute their own works to colleagues and students around the world.

In the first half of this white paper we provide a brief overview of reprints—an integral part of the scholarly communication process for most of the past 500 years—covering half their history, the different types of reprints, and how they are manufactured. In the second half, we describe how to establish an effective reprint program and how to market reprints successfully. Publishers can earn money from reprints and can make their publications better known by serving the unique needs of authors, readers, advertisers, and the community-at-large.

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

According to Merriam-Webster Online (1999) the word *reprint* was first used as a transitive verb meaning “to print again” in 1551. Then 60 years later it was first used as a noun to mean “a reproduction of printed matter.” As nouns the words *offprint* and *preprints* came into use in the 1800s, with *tear sheet* a recent addition to the descriptive vocabulary of publishing circa 1924. Finally, in 1926, *preprint*, used as a transitive verb, was defined as “to print in advance for later use.”

Wells, whose historical coverage of reprints is more comprehensive than any other source located, dated the formal development of the reprint to the mid-1600s (1986). At that time, publishers were manufacturing offprints from monograph chapters. Book chapters were also reprinted and distributed as pamphlets.

In 1665, journal publishing began with the *Journal des Sçavans* issued by the Academie des Sciences and the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* (Bishop, 1984). Authors, who had a long tradition of corresponding with colleagues to share scientific discoveries, found it a natural progression to circulate reprints of their published journal articles. However, as journal publishing lag times increased, authors grew impatient. They negotiated with printers to produce copies of their page proofs, and they circulated them before their articles were published (Knight, as reported in Wells 1986). These copies of proofs could be considered the first reprints. Later authors gathered their journal articles to produce anthologies in book form.

The responsibility for paying for reprints has shifted over time. In the 18th century, authors, not the readers or publishers, paid for them. Eventually, publishers began to offer a set quantity of reprints gratis to authors as an inducement to publish with them. In addition, authors often obtained funds from grants or their institutions to pay for reprints. By the end of the 20th century, however, many publishers concerned with the cost of containment have abandoned the practice of providing free reprints. With granting agencies and employers less willing to pay for reprints, once again authors are finding they must pay for reprints.

Authors' Use of Reprints

Knowledge dissemination among all interested scholars and practitioners in their field is a major goal of any author. Both altruism and professional avarice fuel an author's motivation to distribute reprints or reprints. In a display of altruism, academic and research writers use reprints to share their published work with colleagues who may not have access to the original book or journal publication, particularly fellow professionals in developing parts of the world. Many, including these authors, believe that authors of scholarly works have a responsibility to the community to distribute reprints to others upon request.

The results of two surveys indicate that, in general, authors meet that responsibility. Waller (1996) wrote to authors published in the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* to request a reprint of their article. In a similar study, Ligon, Thyer, and Isaac (1998) corresponded with authors published in four journals produced by the NASW Press, a division of the National Association of Social Workers. The overall response for both studies was approximately two-thirds. That is, over 60 percent of the authors forwarded reprints within 90 days. Waller concluded that "most of the responding authors showed interest in their work and in the dissemination of their scholarship" (p. 589).

Many scholarly publishers not only support this attitude, but encourage it. The American Psychological Association (1994) instructed authors: "It is traditional in scientific publishing to retain data, instructions, details of procedure, and analyses so that copies may be made available in response to inquiries from interested readers (see section 6.05). Therefore, you are expected to retain these materials for a minimum of 5 years after your article is published" (p. 283).

In nearly all scholarly journals, footnotes to articles cite a corresponding author who can provide additional information about the article. Reprints are high on the list of materials readers seek from authors. Scholars collect reprints as background information for their own research and writing and to stay abreast of advancements in their field of study. Waller (1996) reported that such reader requests occur on a consistent basis, and they serve as the principal means for many scholars to achieve access to the work of their published colleagues. With libraries subscribing to fewer and fewer journal titles, practitioners and scholars often rely on an author's response to their reprint request as an alternative to acquire the desired article or book chapter.

Authors use both preprints and reprints to establish their priority claims to research, and they often include them in their academic tenure file. To substantiate their credentials, they often append reprints to grant applications. Reprints are also especially useful to disseminate published materials across disciplines and share research findings among the members of an interdisciplinary team.

Commercial Use of Reprints

Businesses are the number one customers for reprints from a wide variety of publications, particularly magazines. Buyers of reprints in large quantities find reprints to be a great source of information for clients and customers. Because reprints communicate substantive information from an external source, they are a better promotional tool than advertisements or brochures developed internally. Companies draw on the credibility of technical magazines and scholarly journals when they use their reprints to enhance their own corporate information materials. Reprints are credible because they are an unbiased source of information.

For example, pharmaceutical companies¹ use journal reprints precisely because an independent third-party author wrote them. The Food and Drug Administration (1998) defined a bona fide peer-reviewed journal as “a journal that uses experts to objectively review and select, reject, or provide comments about proposed articles. Such experts should have demonstrated expertise in the subject of the article under review, and be independent from the journal.”

The Institute of Industrial Engineers (see <http://solutions.iienet.org/re-prints.htm>) has suggested to their members and customers in industry: “Reprints of articles in *IIE Solutions* are an invaluable selling tool for your product and an important image builder for your company.”

Among the many ways corporate customers use reprints are the following:

- Advertisements
- Annual reports
- Customer relations
- Direct mail campaigns
- Distributor education tools
- Exhibit and meeting collaterals
- Media kits and press release packages
- New business development
- Sales force
- Sales kits
- Sales proposals
- Shareholder prospectuses
- Training and consultation

Articles that feature a single company or product have the greatest potential for use as a reprint. However, corporations look to the entire body of technical literature to support their sales and public information goals; consequently, huge numbers of articles and book chapters are candidates for reprints.

DEFINITIONS & DIFFERENCES

Although people often use the term reprint to mean any copy of an original document, that reproduction may be an offprint, a reprint, an electronic print, or a copy received via document delivery, depending on timing and number of copies. The most common materials to be copied and distributed in this way are journal articles, magazine articles, chapters from books, proceedings from symposiums, and reports produced in series. The use and distribution of reprints varies widely from discipline to discipline, but the definitions and the participants remain the same.

Offprints

Offprints are copies of articles manufactured at the time the original journal or magazine is printed. They are simply planned overruns. Publishers generally give authors and editors an opportunity when they approve page proofs or edited manuscripts to order offprints in quantities ranging from 50 to several thousand for a fee. Some publishers also provide the author with a certain number of free offprints, generally between 25 and 100 copies. When the journal magazine goes on press, the printer has been given all the quantities for offprints, as well as the print run for the issue.

Offprints are the most economical to produce, and there is no question that they are identical to the original. However, they offer little opportunity for customization. The article appears just as it does in the parent publication with the same dimensions, paper, colors, running heads or feet, and page numbers. The only addition is the attribution for the publication and possibly a cover. Offprints are most suitable for authors. Other customers, who require customization or time to understand the importance of a specific article, are better served by reprints.

Reprints

Once a serial publication has been distributed, the publisher may obtain orders for bulk copies of various articles from authors, advertisers, companies featured in the articles, and so forth. Because the reprint is a new printing, it provides the opportunity for customization. The following are some examples of ways reprints can be customized:

- Add a company logo and contact information.
- Expand on the author bio or the company description.
- Include pictures of authors or company executives.
- Create a personalized introduction.
- Provide full description of a product.
- Enclose in custom covers.
- Reprint editorial content without advertising.
- Correct mistakes in the original, such as errors in computation or a wrong table.

Customized reprints are excellent marketing and public relations tools for companies. Several industries also select book chapters for customized reprints.

Although some publishers offer reprints in quantities as low as 50 or fewer, quantities generally range from 100 to 100,000. Quantities for reprints from scholarly journals often are in the lower range, and many of these reprints are black and white printed on 60 or 70 pound paper. In addition to authors, buyers include advertisers and service providers. Reprints from magazines and medical journals, on the other hand, tend to be printed four-color on 80 pound glossy paper, and the quantities are more likely to be between 1,000 and 5,000. Buyers include subjects of company or product profiles, pharmaceutical companies, and other advertisers and sponsors.

Electronic Reprints

We have been accustomed to thinking of reprints in print form only, but customers have begun to ask for electronic reprints, which they can post to their own Website. At least two reprint services invite clients to pay for a link from their Website to a server in the service's offices (Kirby, 1998). The service maintains and monitors the link, with the reprint posted in either PDF or HTML format. Reprint collections are also being offered on CD-ROM.

Anticipating that their journals will be delivered only in electronic form, some authors have cited the need for electronic reprints. Walker (1996) proposed that publishers offer an electronic reprint service to authors by charging them a fee that would allow them to post their article on their own Website where it could be downloaded freely by anyone. *Florida Entomologist*, a journal Walker edits, charges authors a small fee for posting PDF files from the journal on the authors' Websites.

Although the electronic reprint may serve some authors in some disciplines, it is useful primarily for passive distribution. Authors and companies who wish to actively distribute their materials to a targeted audience will not find electronic reprints useful. Furthermore, many journals appear only in print form and are likely to remain print only for many years (Meyers & Beebe, 1999); consequently, they are less apt to offer PDF files as an option for reprints.

Document Delivery

Researchers often find they need a single copy of an article, but they do not have access to the original publication or a reprint. If their library has the original publication, they can take the time to find and copy the article, or—if they have staff or graduate students—they can ask someone else to do so. Failing all of these options, they can turn to document delivery services offered by the publisher or by a third party such as UnCover or UMI. Generally, these services deliver articles within 24 hours either by fax or on the desktop. The copies are reprints produced on demand, usually in single copies.

The publisher has several options for document delivery. They may provide copies of their journals to as many document delivery services as possible and wait for the royalty checks to come in. They may deliver documents from their own Website for a fee, or they, like the *British Medical Journal*, may make journal articles available on their Website free of charge. Publishers sometimes combine the latter two options. For example, *The Washington Post* maintains current articles that may be downloaded free of charge for two weeks; articles published previously may be downloaded for a fee.

Document delivery services are a fast, efficient means of providing single copies of an article; however, they are generally not a source for multiple copies. And, like electronic copies, they are a passive means of distribution for the publisher. Although they may generate additional revenues, they do not offer any opportunity to partner with authors and advertisers to create ancillary products.

APPROPRIATE CANDIDATES FOR REPRINT PROGRAMS

Many publishers see reprints as one of their most cost-effective ways of producing additional profits from an existing publication. Recently, *Ancillary Profits* (1998) interviewed publishers in different segments and found that sales of reprints were among their top ancillary products. Overall, the only ancillary product that consistently outdrew reprints was print inserts for advertisers for a fee. List rentals, World Wide Web products, and conferences were also frequently mentioned in the top 10 products generating additional revenues.

Some publications are clearly natural candidates for reprint programs. For example, there is a very large market for reprints of articles from biomedical journals and from chapters in medical texts. Likewise, publishers of journals and magazines that address subjects such as building materials, financial products, or new technology can expect significant sales of reprints. Publishers in other disciplines may need to consider whether their publications are appropriate for a large reprint program that requires more of an investment in marketing, or whether they just want to benefit from some efficiencies and some increase in sales of their reprints.

Rouse (1996) noted that some types of articles have more potential for reprint sales than others. For example, longer articles sell better (and generate more revenues per article) than very brief ones. Articles printed in four-color are more enticing, she said, than those printed in black and white. Magazines that run multipage company profiles have a large potential for reprint sales, and any article that addresses what she called “big issues” is a likely candidate because many companies are likely to be interested in distributing the editorial content.

Knowledge dissemination and potential markets vary significantly from discipline to discipline. Whereas four-color may be essential for consumer products, professionals in many fields are accustomed to reading their literature in black and white. Besides, it is always possible to add color to a reprint, and it can often be done easily by adding the journal cover. Although the potential for reprint sales is unquestionably lower in some disciplines, such as humanities and social sciences, any publication with good editorial content and a broad audience can generate reprint sales. Publications that might interest a multi-disciplinary audience may have untapped potential. The key to any successful reprint program is efficient processing and good marketing, no matter what level of effort is justified by the potential return.

REPRINT PRODUCERS

Some publishers have the capacity to market and produce reprints within their company. Most publishers, however, partner with another company to deliver reprints from their publications. Either they work with a printer—who may or may not provide services in addition to printing and delivering the reprints—or a reprint management service.

Printers

If the printer of the original publication also specializes in reprints, that printer is the natural partner for the publisher. However, some publishers print the parent publication with a printer who does not offer full reprint services and then turn to a printer who is a reprint specialist for their reprints. Rouse (1996, p. 233) noted that specialists “offer several advantages including price, service, and attention to details.” In addition to producing and shipping the reprints, printers usually can provide other printing-related services such as typesetting, layout, preparation of halftones or changes in copy size, and different types of binding. When a buyer wants customized reprints with new or deleted content, they will carry out the necessary production work to resize or move copy around. They may also convert color to black and white.

Delivery Schedule Options

Sometimes speed is an essential ingredient for customer satisfaction; at other times, cost is a greater consideration. Printers usually offer at least two options for delivery times with different per unit costs. The time required for the more expensive rush delivery is generally three to six days, whereas the less expensive schedule ranges from eight to 15 working days.

Ordering and Billing Services

Publishers who want to minimize their processing and eliminate administrative headaches can supply order forms to authors who return them directly to the printer. The printer provides customer service to the authors through a 1-800 number. Once the order and payment have been supplied, the printer produces and ships the reprints. (Advance payment is generally required, particularly for international orders, which have a higher rate of collection problems.) The printer collects the monies on behalf of the publisher and provides scheduled reports and payments. Depending on volume, those reports and payments may be issued monthly or quarterly. In return for their services, the printer charges a small fee per order, which is incorporated into the price of the reprints so that the publisher has no direct costs associated with the service.

Reprint Management Services

These companies assume all of the responsibilities for a publisher's reprint program, and they take in all of the revenues. Either the service maintains electronic files of the publisher's publications so they are prepared to deliver reprints quickly, or they obtain content from the publisher when an order is received. They do all of the marketing, process the orders, invoice the customers, and receive payments. In return, they usually pay the publisher some agreed-upon percentage of the revenues, although some work on a for-fee basis. If they are working with a service on a for-fee basis, a publisher retains some control over setting prices, but assumes some risk in terms of bad debt or credit. A reprint management service may be the option for a publisher who wants no involvement in reprints and who is willing to relinquish control and forego some revenues in return.

THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS

Producing reprints is relatively straightforward. The printer must have in house the content in some format. The format may be tear sheets taken from the original printed publication. The content may also be on film as a byproduct of the original printing. Or it may be in digital files in different formats, such as PostScript, PDF files, or application files, and on different media, such as diskettes, Zip disks, or FTP transmission. More and more, printers are receiving files in digital form, and they expect that the trend toward electronic delivery will continue to increase.

If the original is black and white text, tear sheets are the easiest and most economical format. Film from the original printing is the most economical method if the original contains halftones and screens. However, the economics change if the content is to be altered in any significant way or if there was no film. Having the content in digital form is particularly useful when the printer will be customizing reprints, as it is much easier to move, delete, or add content with a digital file—and therefore less expensive.

Proofs are not always customary for exact reprints of black and white articles. However, they are used for color and any customized reprints. Instead of the traditional blueline, some customers are accepting laser proofs if the work is not four-color process.

The presses used vary according to the type of format received and the number of copies required. Printers may use digital presses when digital files are received, the print run is small, and the turnaround time is short. Although high-quality sheet-fed presses are used for the majority of reprints, ranging in quantities from 50 to several hundred thousand, some printers are using web presses for as few as 5,000 to 10,000 copies.

ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM

Administration

As is true of any other function in a publishing operation, reprint programs, regardless of size, require sound administration with attention to detail. Good administration, sound policies, and clear procedures are needed to run an effective reprint program, whether they are operated internally or outsourced.

Reprint Policies

Establishing policies in the beginning will improve customer service and help assure smooth operations. As a publisher, you probably have already stated a policy on whether you provide free reprints to authors, how many, and to which authors. But you may not have considered the complexities that can arise from marketing customized reprints. The American Medical Association (AMA), for example, has established “Standards for Commercial Reprints” that cover such issues as publisher control, verbatim reprints, percentage of AMA material in a compilation, and so forth (American Medical Association, 1998).

The following are examples of the issues for which you may want policies:

- Collections of reprints—sponsorship and content
- Peer-reviewed and not peer-reviewed—can they be compiled in one document?
- Excerpts—are they permitted or must all material be reprinted in toto?
- Product and service ads—are any not acceptable?
- Author permission—will the author receive courtesy notice even if the publisher owns copyright?

Issues and policies will vary depending on the sensitivities of the publisher’s constituencies and the market for reprints.

Order Processing and Billing

Efficient and effective systems for processing orders and for billing are critical for a successful reprint program. Today customers want ordering options—printed forms that they can mail or fax back are still important, but online ordering systems will also help boost sales. All order forms should be complete, include clear instructions, and be easy to understand.

The real question is whether you will perform these functions internally or outsource them. For many publishers, outsourcing frees staff time and reduces paper work with no reduction in revenue, as the outsourcing costs can be built into the pricing models. If these functions are maintained internally, they must be assigned the same priority level as any other customer service function in your operation.

Originals Available for Reprinting

If the printer who produces your parent publication also manufactures the reprints, there is likely to be no problem in assuring that the content will be available for reprinting. If your reprint producer and publication printer are different, you must establish mechanisms to get the tear sheets, film, or file to the reprint producer. The key to success is to develop archives and systems so that there are no delays or glitches in the process.

Archiving your publications in digital formats will enable you to use them easily for a variety of derivative products, including reprints (Meyers & Beebe, 1997).

Communications

Assure that everyone who might come into contact with customers understands the processes and policies related to the reprint program. Staff in marketing, editorial, customer service, and reception must all be able to answer questions and direct customers to the right place. There must be designated contact people and clear channels of communication between your operations and all outside suppliers.

Evaluation

Yet another aspect of administering an effective reprints program is systematic evaluation. Profit and loss statements are obvious beginnings, but you will also want to see some of the following: analyses of the customer list, the authors whose articles are most frequently reprinted, topics most in demand, comparisons of quantities ordered for different topics, and intended use of reprint. The reprint program can yield invaluable market information that can be used in planning for your overall publishing program.

Pricing

You need to set your reprint prices based on the costs you incur in administering the program and producing the reprints, plus a mark-up that is sufficient to assure your desired return on investment. Printers generally establish a price matrix with the number of pages in one axis and the quantity desired in the other as follows:

In line with other pricing models in printing and publishing, the price per copy decreases as the quantities ordered increase. Shipping is often priced using the same type of matrix. Other variables will include the trim size and whether the reprint is black and white or four-color, and there will be a matrix for each product. In addition, the printer will have a “laundry list” of prices for composition, file conversion, additional halftones, covers, and so forth.

You determine the level of mark-up needed to cover costs and profit and use that percentage to create your own matrix, which is the price sheet for the customer. For example, if you need a 100 percent or 200 percent markup, you would double or triple the prices on the printer’s matrix. It is important to consider all of the costs involved in running the program, including marketing and overhead. Sometimes publishers who outsource the ordering and billing forget that they still have internal administrative costs, albeit lower ones. Competitive analysis is another tool in establishing prices. If your reprint fees are considerably higher or lower than other publishers of like materials, you may not be getting maximum value from your reprint program.

Pricing may also vary with the type of customer. Many publishers see sales of reprints to authors as a service they provide rather than a profit center; consequently they price author reprints lower than commercial ones. Depending on the discipline and the market for commercial reprints, the price for commercial reprints could be 30 to 50 percent higher than those for author reprints.

Services

Reprint programs offer an opportunity to provide services to authors, readers, and customers. The preferential pricing for author reprints noted above is one example. A certain number of free author reprints is another. Because so many potential readers may have access only to an abstract of journal articles, the willingness of authors to provide reprints to them is essential to the full dissemination of the work (Ligon, Thyer, & Isaac, 1998). And authors are likely to be more responsive to requests when they receive a quantity of free reprints. The *British Journal of Radiology* offers coupons to referees of published journal articles that entitle them to an extra 25 free reprints of the next article they publish with the journal.

As noted earlier, publishing carries an implicit obligation for the author to share information about their work. Ligon, Thyer, and Isaac (1998) suggested that publishers make the obligation to share reprints explicit to authors in acceptance letters and style guides. As a service to readers, the American Medical Association prints the message “Reprints not available from the authors” in a footnote to articles for which the authors have not ordered reprints (Cheryl Iverson, personal communication, March 29, 1999).

Services for commercial customers will vary with the publisher and the specialty. These services might include differential pricing for regular and accelerated delivery schedules, options for covers and other customization such as a special meeting issue, links to Websites, and others. How effectively extra services contribute to the success of reprint programs depends on how clearly publishers delineate them and how aggressively they promote them to customers and potential customers.

MARKETING REPRINTS EFFECTIVELY

As mentioned earlier, companies that offer reprint management services provide a complete package including all the marketing. Regardless of the size and sales potential of your reprint program, you might want to consider outsourcing this function once you have performed a thorough analysis (Beebe & Meyers, 1998).

For publishers who manage their own reprint sales programs, this section provides a brief review of the major marketing issues. In terms of market segments, there are three major customers for reprints: authors, readers, and advertisers and other companies whose services or products are featured in your publication or whose businesses are related to your content.

General Guidelines

The most important step you can take to increase reprint revenues is to just take action. Many publishers function in a completely passive, in-bound mode of communication and expect authors, readers, and companies to initiate the order. You can undertake several fairly easy and inexpensive activities to increase overall awareness of your reprints and subsequently their sales. The following are just a few suggestions.

Using Existing Promotional Opportunities

Within your publications program you have some of the best opportunities to promote reprints.

- ✓ Advertise reprints in the publication itself to promote reuse of the editorial content to the readers and advertisers who are already predisposed to find it useful. Avoid dull listings—make the ads lively and eye-catching.
- ✓ Promote reprints on your Website. You may want to set up a complete “Reprints Section” with an ordering mechanism. At the very least, post copy describing the benefits of reprints to authors, readers, and advertisers; price lists; and a staff contact list for orders and further assistance.
- ✓ Promote reprints in your regular catalogs and all other marketing communication products.
- ✓ Include a listing for your internal reprint specialist or your reprint service in the front matter of your publication and in your catalogs.

Say What They Want to Hear

You can increase sales by establishing policies that are customer-friendly and using promotional copy that appeals to several motivations.

- ✓ Appeal to the customer’s pocketbook by establishing a good discount rate for exact repeat orders.
- ✓ Stroke their ego by suggesting that they add their company logo to the reprint cover or a picture of the president to the business description tagline.
- ✓ Encourage their promotional spirit by reminding them of the many ways they can use reprints, from direct mail campaigns to exhibits, to promote their businesses.

Create New Venues

If you look around your operation, you probably have the potential to generate new reprint sales with staff and information on hand.

- ✓ *FOLIO: PLUS* (1996) suggested that you reward editors for reprint leads. As they write or edit stories, they talk to many contacts who will be leads, if not actual purchasers. They suggested that editors be rewarded with a 5 percent commission for leads that result in sales.
- ✓ Review your orders from the past few years and evaluate the potential for repeat sales; contact the customers to see if they need to replenish their supply.

Publishers with flourishing reprint programs design information and services specifically for each of their reprint market segments.

Authors

Whenever you communicate with an author, a portion of your communication should be promotional. Your “instructions to authors” communication is the first contact you have with them about reprints. Those instructions should be both specific and promotional. Will they receive some number gratis? Must they pay for all reprints? Do they pay extra for halftones or color? Are there minimum quantities they must order? In addition to the answers to these basic author concerns, you need to impress prospective authors with the significance of reprint distribution to their careers and to the advancement of their science. Promoting reprints to authors can result in a significant revenue stream, and you can use a number of tactics to increase those sales.

Start Early

You are probably sending your reprint order forms to authors either with their edited manuscripts or with their page proofs. You could increase the number of orders by coupling the form with the editor’s notice of acceptance so that you can capitalize on the author’s pleasure at having a manuscript heading to publication. You can send another form with the edited manuscript or page proofs to the authors who have not yet ordered.

If you are using or plan to use the Internet for peer review, then you can set up an ordering system for the author to order reprints directly online at the time of acceptance or at a later point in the publishing process. You can also develop a “soft-sell” promotional message to send via email to all authors who have not replied with an order for their article or chapter reprints at press time.

Help Authors with Quantities

Most publishers merely include the reprint order form in their correspondence with authors without any attention to promotion. Yet you can improve your results if you establish good quantity breaks and prices and then tell authors why they may want to order more copies. For example, they may need more copies than they expect for grant applications. They should buy enough copies that they will feel comfortable sharing them with anyone who asks for them.

You also want to point out the economies to be gained by ordering larger quantities. Day (1984, p. 117), noting that buying 200 reprints costs very little more than getting only 100, suggested “if you think you may need about 100 reprints, order 200; if you might need 200, order 300.” The minimum order in a predominantly academic-based author audience is likely to be 50, and authors are likely to earmark roughly half that quantity for use in grant proposals and candidacies.

You must know the vagaries of each discipline for which you publish. If, for example, a significant number of your authors have stopped ordering reprints altogether because they consider the minimum order too large, decrease the lowest number of copies by half. With new printing technologies, shorter runs can still be economical, and you can generate revenues by increasing the total number of authors who order.

Encourage Authors’ Altruism

With the existence of the World Wide Web (WWW), some authors may question the need for professionally produced reprints. You need to remind authors that a significant number of practitioners and professionals in many parts of the world do not have consistent, or any, access to the WWW. Further, mere access to the Web is not enough. The graphic content in some articles requires advanced technology printers if they are to be properly reproduced. The number of such printers in developing countries is not large. You can help your authors understand that, by personally distributing their reprints, they can make significant contribution to the literature needs of their colleagues around the world.

Readers

You want to make it as easy as possible for readers to order reprints of any of your materials. Readers should be able to find ordering information for a single reprint copy easily in every issue of a serial, as well as in all your marketing materials including your Website. Display ordering information creatively with simple-to-execute instructions. Most readers want only one copy of an article so why ask them to contact you as if they were ordering hundreds? Every marketing professional knows that every extra step inserted in the buying process creates an extra chance to lose the sale.

Although most of your readers will be ordering a reprint as document delivery, you may have opportunities to sell quantities as well, if you consider how your content might be used. For example, could any of your articles be used for training? Would consultants want to customize them and distribute them to clients? The key is to promote them adequately. *Harvard Business Review* is a good example of a publisher who actively markets reprints in small and large quantities to readers. Every issue of the magazine includes executive summaries of the articles, with the reprint number listed at the bottom and full ordering instructions including their URL (see <http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu>).

Your reprints may also be useful for coursework in schools and universities. In promoting its journal reprints on the WWW, Sage Publications boldly declares, "You can share critical scholarship with students, faculty, and colleagues using Reprints from Sage Journal articles!" (See http://www.sagepub.com/journal_reprint.htm.)

Many publishers are promoting their reprints to readers online. It would be a good exercise to canvas the Websites in your subject areas to see how others are exploiting this new selling tool and what approaches they are using to increase reprint sales.

Companies

Publishers of all types can realize significant ancillary profits through the sale of reprints to companies. There is an industry (versus academic) component to every area of human endeavor. Therefore, every publisher has an opportunity to partner with advertisers and corporate sponsors with an active and effective reprint program. Alerting companies to the many uses of reprints is just one way for publishers to market reprints more attractively to the company market.

For example, reprints of medical literature, both journal articles and book chapters, may be one of the largest and most lucrative segments of the market because the advertising budgets in pharmaceutical companies include substantial sums for reprints. But the pharmaceutical industry is just one of many that can benefit from using reprints of peer-reviewed scholarly literature. Creative and energetic marketing will help you succeed in selling reprints to the industries in your subject area. Here are some ideas for you to try with your reprints program.

Be Assertive

Establish a regular routine of approaching potential purchasers when an issue is in progress. As your publication's table of contents is set, be sure a staff member checks it for articles that might have great reprint potential; then marketing can alert advertisers or other appropriate companies who might benefit from using the editorial content to scan the text and follow up in the same way.

If you have not been active in this area previously, here are some techniques to get you started:

1. Scan the last full volume of your publication to identify companies who might benefit from reprints of certain articles.
2. Create a sample reprint mock-up for each company.
3. Mail each sample with a personalized cover letter that extols the benefits the company can get from using your reprints.

Offer Discounts

For example, you can include a discount on reprints to your space advertisers or meeting exhibitors as part of a larger inducement package. Or you might offer a discount on reprints to certain levels of membership or sponsorship if you are a professional society or nonprofit organization.

Explore New Ground

Think of new services and extras that will encourage companies to distribute your reprints.

- ✓ Publish a “Reprints Roster” once a year listing all the companies and organizations that purchased reprints and thus supported the publication with those ancillary revenues. Make the copy parallel in tone and appearance to your acknowledgement of reviewers.
- ✓ Offer “E-Prints” to your custom reprint clients—that is, a link from their own Website to your site or your vendor’s where the electronic reprint of the article or book chapter resides.

Adapt Techniques from Others

Study how other publishers, in your field and outside it, are promoting their reprints. The following are just a few examples.

- ✓ The *Forbes* Reprints page (see <http://www.forbes.com/reprints/>) caters to businesses with ideas for how to use reprints, and they include an electronic order form for instant submission of information.
- ✓ The headline for the *NACE Magazine* reprints page exclaims, “Reprints are a great investment!” Copy then explains the value of reprints as “reference material for bids, speaking engagements, contracts, and future employment. They enhance your professional image as an expert, enhance your company’s image as an industry leader, promote your company’s products and services, and can be used as instruction tools for other employees and for company-sponsored seminars and courses.” (See <http://www.nace.org/naceframes/Pubs/pubreprt.htm>.)
- ✓ The Institute of Industrial Engineers has titled its page “IIE Solutions Reprints” and advises companies that the “value of reprints increases with use...And, if you customize your reprints—with a special cover, reflowed text, highlighting, an ad, a logo, sales office listings, etc.—their value increases even more!” (See <http://solutions.iienet.org/reprints.htm>.)

These examples are all from the World Wide Web, but you can also adapt the promotional language and techniques and use them in direct mail efforts and space advertisements.

CONCLUSION

Reprints have been an important component of scholarly and technical communications for hundreds of years. As the practice of science has evolved, so has the use of reprints in that practice. Many parties—authors, advertisers, publishers, and the community-at-large—benefit from the dissemination of reprints. Authors first used them to stake their claims to their discoveries and to share the results of their work with their peers. Later they discovered the value of reprints in communications with promotion and tenure committees. Then, as the burden of obtaining funds for the parent institution fell more and more on academics, reprints became an important component of successful grant applications. With today’s emphasis on interdisciplinary research, the use of reprints is a powerful tool for the author who is interested in collaborating with colleagues in other fields. Authors will continue to find reprints a key resource for sharing their work, gaining advertisement, and partnering with others.

Reprints are also used commercially. Because many advertisers and other commercial organizations integrate reprints into their sales and marketing efforts, they purchase huge numbers. As products of an independent third party, reprints provide integrity to a company’s promotional claims. This is a mutually beneficial process for all parties involved. Advertising dollars and bulk reprint sales provide funds so that publishers can offer publications to individual readers at a lower price or gratis. The individual reader is also often an author, who produces research results that serve as authoritative and independent substantiation to advertisers’ marketing communications when they are distributed as reprints. The opportunity for increased commercial reprint sales industry-wide is virtually unlimited if publishers exploit the residual potential for their publications.

Although some publishers have seen a drop in reprint orders because of photocopiers and the World Wide Web, others have enjoyed significant growth in their sales. For many publishers, reprints constitute a large revenue stream, and for a few, revenues from reprints exceed subscription sales. Dissemination of reprints greatly extends the market for any publication, as reprints often reach a totally new audience. The result is increased recognition for the publication, as well as possibly increased sales. Publishers in any subject area can make the most of their reprints if they evaluate their programs carefully and take appropriate action. Effectively managed reprint programs that are creatively and cost-effectively marketed will bring a welcome return to any publisher.

Authors, advertisers, publishers, and even the community-at-large all profit from the ongoing distribution of well-produced and well-promoted reprints. We believe that reprint sales will continue to support the development and global dissemination of knowledge.

CHECKLIST FOR A SUCCESSFUL REPRINT PROGRAM

- ✓ Establish sound management responsibilities, administration, and goals.
- ✓ Develop policies that support customer service.
- ✓ Choose good partners.
- ✓ Foster good communications with all parties.
- ✓ Establish efficient procedures for order processing and billing.
- ✓ Set competitive prices that include sufficient margins.
- ✓ Market assertively and creatively.
- ✓ Enlist all staff in promoting reprint sales.
- ✓ Evaluate your program systematically and regularly.

FOOTNOTES

¹This very large market is complicated because the federal government regulates the use of reprints in drug advertising. In 1998 FDA set forth guidelines that prescribe when and how drug companies may use article reprints to promote their products. Criteria include FDA-approved use, bona fide peer-reviewed journals, original research, and clear identification of any unapproved use on the cover of the reprint.

REFERENCES

- American Medical Association. (1998). *American Medical Association, Manual of Style, A Guide for Authors and Editors, 9th Edition*. (pp. 127-128). Chicago: Author.
- American Psychological Association. (1994). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th Ed.* Washington, DC: Author.
- Ancillary products at health-industry magazines. (April 1998). *Ancillary Profits*, 7:3, 8.
- Ancillary products at consumer magazines. (August 1998). *Ancillary Profits*, 7:6, 8.
- Ancillary products at business-to-business magazines. (November 1998). *Ancillary Profits*, 7:9,8.
- Ancillary products at newspapers. (December 1998). *Ancillary Profits*, 7:10, 8.
- Beebe, L. & Meyers, B. (1998). *Outsourcing: Planning for Strategic Partnerships*. Hanover, PA: The Sheridan Press.
- Bishop, C.T. (1984). *How to Edit a Scientific Journal*. Philadelphia: ISI Press.
- Day, R.A. (1988). *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*. New York: Oryx Press.
- FOLIO. (1996). Reward editors for supplying reprint sales leads. [Online]. *FOLIO: PLUS*. Available: <http://www.foliomag.com/Magazines/Folio/Plus/19960301.htm>.
- Food and Drug Administration. (1998). Advertising and promotion: Guidance. [Online]. Available: <http://www.fda.gov/cder/guidance/fr8Oct96.htm>.
- Kirby, G.A. (May 1998). If they can, we can too. *Publishing & Production Executive*, 30-35.
- Ligon, J., Thyer, B. & Isaac, A. (1998). Do social work scholars respond to requests for reprints? A study of authors who publish in NASW journals. *Behavioral & Social Sciences Librarian*, 16:2, 19-25.
- Meyers, B. & Beebe, L. (1999). *The Future of the Print Journal*. Hanover, PA: The Sheridan Press.
- Meyers, B. & Beebe, L. (1997). *Archiving from a Publisher's Point of View*. Hanover, PA: The Sheridan Press.
- Merriam-Webster Online. (1999). *The Language Center*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.m-w.com/>
- Rouse, Nancy. (1996). How to get the most out of reprints. *Folio: Special Sourcebook Issue*, 232-233.
- Walker, T. (1996). [Online]. Viewpoint: Electronic reprints—Sequeing into electronic publication of biological journals. *Bioscience*, 46:3, 171. Available: <http://www.fcla.ufl.edu/FlaEnt/biosci/vp.htm> .
- Waller, Raymond J. (1996). Responding to requests for reprints: How do *JABA* authors measure up? *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 29, 589-590.
- Wells, E. B. (1986). Reprints. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. Volume 40, supplement 5. New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc. (pp. 385-394).

Authors' Note: This white paper contains many URLs for Websites. These were accurate as of April 1, 1999, but they are subject to change. Most commonly, Website owners redesign their sites and create new internal addresses; consequently, using the base URL may bring the searcher to the home page with pointers to the specific content sought.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Linda Beebe is President, Parachute Publishing Services, which provides project and program management and support for all publication phases from content development through promotion, distribution, and evaluation.

Barbara Meyers is President, Meyers Consulting Services (MCS), which provides expertise in management, marketing, research, and planning to professional societies, scholarly publishers, and commercial firms.