**Public Knowledge Project:**

**Achieving Sustainability for an Open Source Software Initiative**

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The Public Knowledge Project (PKP) has been a very successful open source project during the past 10 years. The most recent count of Open Journal Systems (OJS) installations exceeds 8,000 and continues to grow. PKP’s most recent initiative -- Open Monograph Press (OMP) -- intends to extend the success in sustainable journal publishing to the book domain. As PKP grows, it has commenced the development of a long term sustainability strategy that will undertake the transition from a project to a distinct organizational entity and the concurrent development of a more robust financial model that will not be largely dependent on grant funding. PKP is seeking opportunities to consult with not only the extensive PKP community but also others involved in developing and implementing systems to support scholarly communications services.

The purpose of this session is to review PKP’s recent initiatives, describe the community it serves, and invite feedback on a variety of key areas including: development of partnerships, operational and support tiers, financial models, incorporation and governance models. All of these are of interest to anyone involved in an open source software initiative. The intent is to generate discussion that will not only inform PKP planning but also have larger relevance to those attending CNI. Following are some of the questions for which feedback will be invited from the participants during the session.

**Partnership Questions**

* How can PKP optimize the potential benefits of its relationships with various types of associations, especially for ongoing sustainability?
* What are the strategies that will enable PKP to engage with current or potential users of PKP software, where relationships have been limited or non-existent?
* Should PKP develop more specific strategies for some partnerships, e.g. commercial publishers, ARL?
* What are more effective strategies for establishing and maintaining these relationships? Do all of them require formal MOUs, or can more efficient procedures be adopted?
* What are the implications for partner participation in a more formal PKP governance structure?

**Current Funding Questions**

* Are any of the current funding sources sustainable?
* Can some of them, especially the Software @SFU Library revenue be increased?
* Are there ways to generate a small amount of revenue from the free services and support, e.g., PKP Forum?
* Are there other opportunities for creating fee for services that do not discourage partnership and the overall PKP mission?

**Potential Financial Models**

* What financial model is most likely to be successful for PKP software?
* Is there an interim strategy (a la arXiv) that can be implemented for the short term to address the pressing requirement to replace Synergies funding?
* Is there a different financial model that could be applied specifically for more commercial entities?
* What is an appropriate balance between cash and in-kind support? How can the latter be managed more effectively?
* How can the financial model support and reinforce the requirement for a central, core PKP team to lead and coordinate ongoing software development and user contributions?
* What strategies could be used to maximize donations, both micro and large? What would be a reasonable target for their contribution to any financial model?

**Potential Governance Models**

* Are there other organizational options PKP should consider?
* What model would be most appropriate for the future of PKP?
* What limitations would these options impose on the future development of PKP?
* Are models other than Hathi Trust or Kuali more appropriate?
* How do these options change the current relationship with founding institutions, e.g. SFU? What is an approprate relationship/role for them?
* What new opportunities would become available for new potential partners?
* What is the most appropriate incorporation option -- non-profit or charity or both -- for PKP?
* Is a Canadian option appropriate and sufficient in light of PKP’s extensive international activities and relationships?
* Would US or European incorporation expand the opportunities for partnerships and fundraising?



   

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