

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: The Future of Publishing at ALA: A Strategic Plan

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

For information purposes. No action requested.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

No action requested.

CONTACT PERSON:

Don Chatham, Associate Executive Director, Publishing Department
312-280-5414, dchatham@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:

N/A

DATE: April 1, 2014

BACKGROUND:

Attachment: The Future of Publishing at ALA: A Strategic Plan

The Future of Publishing at ALA: A Strategic Plan

Mission: Advance professional development and improve library services while contributing to the financial viability of the association

Vision: ALA Publishing will be the content source of choice for the library and information profession
(tag line: your one-stop resource for print and digital materials)

Core Values (Core Beliefs)

- Content is timely, relevant, successful
- Innovation is the tradition of the future
- Work from the customer in, not the product out
- Don't change what won't benefit from change; change what will benefit from change; know the difference
- Work with the best present // to present the best work
- Create new value without losing old value
- Customer satisfaction is the driving force behind publishing decisions
- Success begins with staff

Core Competencies

- The capacity to invoke and leverage the ALA "brand"
- Entree into content-generating communities because of the stature of ALA's reputation and brand
- Peer relationships with stewards of major markets – divisions, office.
- Preliminary access to developing issues (and publishing opportunities) in "markets" represented by ALA Divisions and Offices
- Flexible financial resources for new initiatives
- Recognition by member leaders of the value and importance of a publishing revenue stream (i.e., support for risk taking)
- Inherent institutional relationships with members who are also influence and thought leaders

Process: Outsource functions that aren't key to core competencies (Everyone's back room is someone else's front room)

Align with service providers for the execution of outcomes

Strengths

- The value of ALA's authority and reputation
- Potential for collaboration with divisions and offices
- Ready access to ALA information – member lists, rosters
- Stature and authority of experienced staff in collection development
- Ability to attract celebrities because of mission and role
- Ability to mobilize national programs (than can be monetized)
- ALA's "community" of high profile influence leaders
- Discount advantages because of Not-for-Profit status and presence in the "market"
- Heightened position in higher education by way of Neal-Schuman acquisition
- ALA's ability and willingness to fund new ventures
- The "READ" posters brand
- Partnerships with content sources – publishers, studios
- Inexpensive exposure at ALA trade shows
- Variety or range of publishing platforms
- Early experience with e-book production and marketing
- Success in managing transition from print advertising to digital advertising

Weaknesses

- Department staff now smaller than before the Neal-Schuman acquisition – affects staffing levels and expertise in all imprints not just books
- Behind in developing a mobile strategy
- Digital publishing platforms not in place
- Experience with marketing protocols of social media
- Metrics for social media
- The perceived “cost” of the subscription equivalent & its effect on growth
- Low frequency of the member magazine (6 issues)
- Limited connection to news sources – leads, tips from PR staff at libraries, vendors
- Single year, fund accounting budget expectations make long-term planning and investment difficult
- Financial expectations (General Overhead & Net Revenue) deter investment, research (infrastructure, systems, etc)
- Staffing for online/digital expertise
- Online store is no longer adequate, competitive
- Order Processing/Fulfillment vendor is failing
- ALA Tech support understandably aligned with association’s not-for-profit priorities (i.e., not commercial priorities)
- Length of editing and production cycle for books

Opportunities

- Print on Demand
- Digitize Neal-Schuman content
- Partnerships with divisions that benefit both the Division Fund and General Fund
- More 3rd party relationships – as in Booklist’s Corner Shelf partnership with Baker & Taylor’s Title Source 3
- Monetize investments – e.g., Readers Advisory
- Growing potential for digital formats and digital access in MLS education and online learning
- ALA’s international focus -- adds critical mass to development of emerging markets
- Emerging digital formats enable the delivery of publishing content to markets and customers that have migrated away from print for access to information
- Improved metrics – create stronger selling propositions for advertisers
- More original content on the American Libraries website (to increase traffic and advertiser interest)
- Integration of audio and video (especially video) into online content
- Upgrade publishing systems for both serials and monographs
- Anything that can go mobile will go mobile

Threats

- Fewer advertising dollars and greater competition among fewer players
- Publishers Weekly muscling into library advertising markets as book publishers seek other marketing avenues
- Reduced budgets for “nonessential” purchases (such as posters and other promotional products)
- Overall decline in ALA programs – Teen Read Week, National Library Week, etc.
- Reduced budgets for professional development
- Open Access
- Growing preference for online materials in higher education
- An embryonic digital/online market that is prone to disruptive technologies
- The pace or rate of transition from print to electronic across all publishing venues – i.e., magazines, advertising, books
- Identifying sustainable products in a changing environment
- The place of professional reviews

Unit	Goals (broad outcomes)	Strategies (the approaches that will be taken to achieve the goals)	Objectives (measurable steps that will be taken to achieve the strategies)	Tactics (tools that will be used in pursuing an objective associated with a strategy)
Dept	1. Department is prioritized around the web as the access and transaction medium of choice	<p>Align content and marketing delivery to reflect current and evolving content usage behaviors</p> <p>Develop expertise in performance metrics to leverage Search Engine Optimization and improve marketing impact</p> <p>Develop new or extended products that incorporate video, webcasting, streaming (and audio)</p> <p>Modify products to reflect trends and preferences for the use of digital content in library operational workflows -- such as collection development, readers advisory, cataloging</p> <p>Re-structure content to facilitate integration into workflows.</p>	<p>Step up activity in converting to digital modes, improve user interfaces toward the goal of increasing engagement time and # of repeats</p> <p>Develop management reports that grow out of statistics available from social media software; use in promotional materials</p> <p>Learn how, seek help if necessary, imbed, review, track compliance</p> <p>Create new products designed for workflow situations or partner with compatible vendors</p> <p>Pilot with large library systems</p>	<p>Free lance designers, social media analytics tools, instructional design techniques, training, practice, sharing best practices in cross-unit marketing meetings</p> <p>Incorporate linkages to outside sites, promote "partnership" concept, align with third parties, organize websites around a search strategy, use data in marketing campaigns</p> <p>Implement the latest technologies, purchase software, employ consultants; contract with 3rd party providers</p> <p>Market research, assistance from consultants, designers, 3rd party software</p> <p>Appoint a project manager to canvas and organize target pilots</p>

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		<p>Revise job descriptions to include the incorporation of social media behaviors into operations</p> <p>Maximize the transition from print to electronic ads</p>	<p>A culture develops wherein products are developed for their social media marketing potential</p> <p>Transition is trackable and predictable</p>	<p>Job descriptions and employment ads incorporate this aspect</p> <p>Encourage and reinforce lingering attachments to print</p> <p>Feed the curiosity for and anxiety about electronic ads with creative packaging/performance deals for vendors</p>
	<p>2. A mobile strategy is integrated into content development plans</p>	<p>If it can go mobile, it will go mobile</p> <p>Focus initially on periodicals</p> <p>Expand to all content access formats (e-books, apps) -- reference, cataloging, children’s programming, etc.</p>	<p>Experiment frequently, look for quick results, abandon freely (“fail quickly”).</p> <p>Model efforts on successful examples. enlist consultants/experts, partnerships</p> <p>Revise job descriptions to include mobile content engagement</p>	<p>Research comparable publications, survey best practices, project proposal forms include a standard section on mobile opportunities</p> <p>Make part of staff performance goals/objectives (e.g., “implement 3 mobile applications”), prototypes.</p> <p>Make part of staff performance goals/objectives (e.g., “implement 3 mobile applications”), prototypes, field testing</p>

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		Re-design , enhance e-books to be more functional, more flexible, more adaptable to search and compilation	Performance objectives, RFPs, enhanced components	Focus groups, field testing prototypes, research
	3. Staff resources are focused on product line initiatives that leverage the ALA brand	Concentrate on: areas that lend themselves to electronic process (such as collection development, cataloging, intellectual freedom); unique products (such as the READ posters); etc.	Align product activity with most popular/successful subject or topic areas	Staff performance objectives
		Foster new business models – such as marshalling reader reviews, community building, popular but time-delimited opportunities (i.e., text rentals)	Experiment with modeling projects on features of popular websites to see what takes	Staff performance objectives, quick variations on popular social media – Instagram, Pinterest, etc (to see what takes)
		Cultivate access to thought leaders and influence leaders	More proactive acquisitions	Staff performance objectives
		Monetize unique resources -- readers advisory, awards, offices, public programs	Create interactive product bundles, video tours, compilations, etc	Staff performance objectives, project managers/designer on retainer
	4. Time to Market standards meet market demands	Tighter management of manuscript development schedules	Establish more reliable bound book dates	Manuscript delivery schedules with intermediate deadlines, project management software

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		Monitor contract requirements more closely		New author “training,” scheduled check-in dates, project management software
		Develop fast-tracking policies and procedures for time sensitive projects	Editing and production short cuts, print on demand	Standards for application, careful utilization of book packaging vendors
		Expand base of freelance copyeditors	Reliable budgeting and time management	Performance objectives
		Use Print on Demand as a hedge against decreasing unit sales	More “efficient” revenue streams	Standards for application
	5. ALA Publishing sets the standard for analog and digital education experiences	Finalize and implement the integration strategy for Neal-Schuman	Plan for where new titles reside	New title for the imprint, clear editorial responsibilities
		Initiate a marketing plan for promoting the concept behind the integration of the two imprints	Consolidate and maximize the strengths of both book imprints	Marketing campaign to introduce advantages
		Digitize materials for MLS programs	Blend the technologies for classroom and online content	Print/Digital bundles, online textbook packages or bundles, textbook rentals
		Develop digital supplements that facilitate course /	Additional sales beyond text sales	Make the professor look good, reduce workload

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		classroom management, workflow		
		Align with companies that offer successful online access portals for educational and professional/reference publishers	Improve the flexibility of digital access; explore new access options/business models – such as bundles, rentals.	3 rd party software
		Coordinate the undergraduate and post-graduate forms of learning (i.e., classroom education and professional development)	Calibrate the continuum, maximize the print-digital relationship	print to digital arrangements for the classroom, digital to print arrangements for professional development
		Incorporate online-relevant educational theories (such as adaptive learning) to enhance individualized learning	Be careful to identify the most practical/relevant theories for application	Higher Education Advisory Board
		Capitalize on changing usage patterns of textbook materials	Explore print/digital usage patterns, extend and modify accordingly, introduce plans for author succession	Strategic planning sessions for ALA/Neal-Schuman’s leading texts, Higher Ed Advisory Board
	6. ALA Publishing becomes a leading source of English language content for international venues	Leverage the potential for ALA products provided by the success of its promotion of RDA in international markets	Seek advice and introduction from RDA adopters, distribute promotional materials	Feedback and recommendations of international distributors,

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		Focus on countries that have a strong EASL presence, profile	Create a list, establish partnerships	Engage international ALA members, travel to conferences
		Explore increasing the number of co-publishing relationships	Co-Publishing contracts	Strategize with ALA’s UK partner, Facet (part of CILIP); align with other international groups such as IFLA subcommittees
		Explore the state of print on demand in foreign markets	Prioritize markets	Set up informal agreements
		Prioritize acquisition plans around topics that have international potential – such as cataloging, reference.	Identify areas for focus, create a plan for soliciting authors and co-authors	Establish a publishing business plan
	7. Financial Stability	Encompass the commercial sector of the library audience in establishing periodical editorial objectives	Balance the member and commercial support for the periodicals (i.e., ad revenue and circulation base)	Communication, shared strategies with vendors
		Manage the proportion of frontlist and backlist revenue contribution	Balance the acquisition of “hot topics” with titles in core fields, target backlist for 65% contribution to total list, carefully manage the choices for revision	Balance the cultivation of emerging leaders, influence leaders, thought leaders; carefully manage acquisition standards

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		Maintain market leaders (textbooks) in basic/required MLS courses	Manage revisions for their life-cycle factors – e.g., three revision tenures?	Maintain knowledge of upcoming leaders as potential co-authors, develop succession plans, test new co-authors, sign successor projects

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Products and Promotions	shorter book production cycles	Tighter management of manuscript development schedules	X % of titles are published within 6 months of transmittal	Measure editorial performance on contract delivery requirements
		Monitor/manage contract requirements -- # words, ms due date, compliance with CMS, etc.	Expand bank of freelance copyeditors Improve release time of time-sensitive topics	Delegate to Project Coordinators, electronic editing in the ms, Edit art simultaneously with text
		Delegate to Project Coordinators		
		Expand base of freelance copy editors		
		Use Print on Demand as a hedge against decreasing unit sales in print		
	Finalize and implement the integration strategy for Neal-Schuman	Establish the plan for where books are assigned and published	Consolidate and maximize the strengths of each imprint	
		Initiate a marketing plan for promoting the concept of the integration		

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	Expand online learning options for Neal-S products	Focus on "hot" topics, Train presenters (authors), re-enlist best presenters	Double the number of courses each fiscal year	Social Media marketing -- especially tweets to followers, targeted email blasts
	Digitize materials for MLS programs	Align with digital access portals Incorporate online-relevant educational theories (such as adaptive learning principles) to enhance individualized learning	Re-conceptualize the use of textbooks Develop a template for new online textbook offerings Revise top 3 textbooks into digital access products Generate 25% of revenue from MLS programs from online products by the end of FY16	Set up economic models for intermittent online access Develop template for textbook rentals Explore potential for new purchasing models -- individual vs institutional
	Digitize materials for MLS programs	Align with companies that offer successful online access portals for educational and professional/reference publishers	Capitalize on changing usage patterns of textbook materials	

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		Incorporate online-relevant educational theories (such as adaptive learning principles) to enhance individualized learning		
	Increase volume of international sales	focus on professional functions that are less ethno-centric (e.g., cataloging)	Increase the number of countries adopting RDA as their standard	Outreach for online training programs
		Develop Co-publisher territorial marketing campaigns	Expand international sales of RDA	Increase number of co-publishing arrangements with international publishers
		Focus on countries with strong presence of English as 2nd language		Expand distributor network
		Expand presence in international shows	Increase share of international cataloging market	increase the number of translations
				Increase online training modules for international customer prospects
				Provide assistance in creating marketing campaigns for co-publishers

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				Utilize Print on Demand
	Increase e-book sales	<p>Research usage statistics of professional/reference e-books</p> <p>Maximize non-linear content engagement techniques</p>	<p>Identify and play into the changes digital access imposes on content development</p> <p>Leveraging emerging habits of intermittent, non-linear access</p> <p>Modify features of e-book production</p>	<p>Research e-book sales by other publishers</p> <p>Profile the e-book user</p> <p>test market prototypes</p> <p>Experiment with e-book subscriptions and rentals (as done in Asia)</p> <p>Develop marketing campaigns and publicity campaigns on the usefulness of e-books</p>
	Increase volume of international sales	<p>Focus on professional functions that are less ethno-centric -- such as cataloging</p> <p>Leverage the momentum and growth potential for RDA in international markets</p>	<p>Maximize strongest, most neutral elements of U.S. strengths in the profession</p> <p>Capitalize on the historic change in standards represented by RDA</p>	

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		Focus on countries with strong presence of English as a second language		
	Confine new promotional products to posters and ALA program initiatives	Leverage, emphasize the unique advantages of the trademarked products	Leverage the most popular and most successful products (minimize low margin products)	
	Increase the backlist revenue contribution in ALA Graphics with products that have 3 to 5 year life cycles	Increase the ratio of the more long term established celebrities to the more short term movie tie-ins.	Leverage reduced product costs from reprints, more sustainable net revenue performance	
	Expand the READ poster lineup	Include more celebrities from music, sports.	Expand the range of role models	

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Booklist	Stay current with evolving collection development trends and practices	Profile and assess changes or trends in collection development practices		Partner with vendors in customer surveys
	Minimize revenue loss from declining print subscriptions	Monitor the shift to online products for clues to sustainable content offerings	Maintain a stable print/online subscription base	Survey users of most popular electronic alternatives
	Grow electronic advertising	Enhance and develop electronic products that monetize Readers Advisory and Collection Development	RA training broadcasts from Booklist staff to enhance publisher presentations	create a member sub-committee of the advisory board to monitor and tabulate, and evaluate competitive offerings
			Best practices programs in collection development	
			Webcasts and streaming training programs sponsored by vendors.	

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		Use emerging technology to provide advertisers with additional metrics	Collaborate with 3rd party resources such as our ad serving software company to customize reports	
		Leverage position of authority on the Common Core	Promote licensing of Common Core content to vendors in school library market	
			Be the first to publish and present information on new developments	
			Spin off Book Links to a separate publication/site	
	Develop video/webcast product line	Provide video services to advertisers -- author events, interviews	Create Media Services Program	Re-align staff, add staff.
		Launch Booklist TV	Plan for the day when print will become the add-on	
	Manage the transition from print to online	Leverage current predilection to print	Offer creative packages	Utilize editors in a lead generation program for ad reps

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American Libraries	Update and modernize online products	Hire a consultant to analyze website	Increase advertising revenue	Hire an online editor
		Hire designer to create a mobile-friendly AL Direct template	Increase unique visitors and page views	
		Review competition and comparable magazines	Increase # of subscribers	
		increase opportunity for print ads while print is still viable	Increase advertising revenue	
	Create a strategy for mobile access	Review competition and comparable magazines	Have a mobile version by the end of FY15	Alignment with outside provider or providers
	Review print strategy	increase opportunity for print ads while print is still viable	increases advertising revenue	Commitments from advertisers
	integrate mobile strategy into content development plans	Identify skill sets required	Facility in developing mobile-effective content	Research comparable publications

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		content engagement		
		Training of current staff		Identify advertising revenue targets
		Apply to criteria for new hires		
	institute effective social media marketing	Revise job descriptions to include a place for social media marketing	Increased frequency of national trending tweets	Training programs, practice, sharing best practices in cross-unit marketing meetings
		Contract for professional advice		