

The RUSA Library Publishing Toolkit

ALA Emerging Leaders 2016 Report

2016 ALA EL RUSA Team Members:

Sabrina Wong, Loren Klein, Madison Sullivan, Catherine Damaiani, kYmberly Keeton

About

The RUSA Library Publishing Toolkit is a collection of resources intended to get libraries started with publishing. Explore the tabs to learn more about existing publishing services in libraries, designing and developing content, producing print and online publications, and marketing and distributing these materials.

The RUSA Library Publishing Toolkit was developed by the 2016 RUSA Emerging Leaders team for the RUSA Publications and Communications Committee. RUSA is the Reference and User Services Association, a division of the American Library Association, and is "responsible for stimulating and supporting excellence in the delivery of general library services and materials, and the provision of reference and information services, collection development, readers' advisory, and resource sharing for all ages, in every type of library" (About RUSA, <http://www.ala.org/rusa/about>).

The toolkit is intended to be a living resource: with contributions from the library community, it will grow to address new and emerging trends in library publishing services. Submissions are welcome. Email the RUSA Publications and Communications Committee at rusapubtools@gmail.com and include the name of the resource, URL or identifying information (e.g. ISBN or DOI), and a brief description.

Production

Within the design and production section, the toolkit resources focus on software, licensing, publishing services, and publishing resources. Such resources serve to create a final document ready for publishing in various formats. For both e-Publishing and print publishing, text must be formatted accordingly. If writers wish to format their own materials they may find the software listed in the toolkit to assist in their publishing journey. Once a document has been created there are many services that can print or publish a writer's materials. Often licensing will be offered by such publishing services, but if writers wish to license their own material then resources for both the United States and Canada are provided in the toolkit. As mentioned, there are many services that help publisher both print and market their materials. These services are listed in the toolkit. While these options are free, companies take a percentage of profit from the number of items sold. Lastly, during the process of producing and publishing material, writers may seek support through research, forums, and other resources. The toolkit provides a brief section on resources available within the publishing realm. While the resources are infinite,

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writers can benefit from library and librarian support during this process as questions and research needs may arise.

Marketing & Dissemination

The marketing and dissemination of library published materials encompasses three distinct stages: preparing the document for market, securing a distribution channel, and developing a reader base for the materials. In order to make documents findable by readers, they need metadata such as an ISBN, DOI, and/or ISSN and they need to be optimized for cataloging and indexing by search engines such as OCLC, Google, and those that run on OAI. Certain applications also require the development of open access repositories and initiatives to deliver the documents to readers. Library published documents differ from self published documents facilitated by the library in that the former will have a built in dissemination strategy that must be developed in house. For example, the library may develop an open access platform or traditional print publishing arm to disseminate materials published under the library's aegis. These documents must then of course be marketed to make potential readers aware of their existence. However, libraries that facilitate self published works by offering educational, content development, editorial services, and/or product design and production services do not necessarily offer built in dissemination services. Thus, these works need to be prepared for dissemination by linking authors with information about having their work carried by the major library ebook vendors, reviewed by industry publications, or readied for listing on direct sellers like Amazon. Here the first stage blends into the marketing stage. Whatever the distribution method, library published materials must be marketed to a reader base. Press releases, social media strategies, reviews, and author events can all play a role in marketing library published materials. The library also has distinct advantages when marketing in house publications because they are already a source of reader's advisory and discovery. This process is also made easier if the library supports projects that will serve the library's user base be it scholars, students, or patrons.

Content & Editorial Development

Content and Editorial Development is comprised of gathering, organizing, writing, editing, and arranging information on a website for publications, journals, e-zines, etc. There are a myriad of free and paid resources available for libraries in public, special, school, and academia to utilize to create content-driven information for publishing any type of document or publication. For libraries to be successful in the digital publishing age, they must take the time to utilize all sources that will lead them to relevant and trustworthy

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content and editorial sources that are feasible for anyone to use when creating a new publication. In like manner there are a few details that need to be acknowledged when delving into a new project of this caliber including formatting, production, and localization. Additionally, when documenting and creating three roles should be taken into consideration regarding the makeup of a digital publication made up of an editor, proofreader, and someone that is familiar with information architecture. Lastly, take into consideration the type of publishing platform that you would like to create and host a focus group amongst staff to receive suggestions and feedback that will help with the process of establishing your digital presence as a scholarly or community based publication. This section of the publishing toolkit features resources available to help libraries and its decision makers as it pertains to graphics, editorial content, website development and documentation.

Education & Instruction

The Education and Instruction section of the toolkit aims to document examples of educational activities, workshops, resources, and events that libraries now offer as a service for library users to learn about publishing. Libraries may find inspiration in the available content for their own library publishing programming and initiatives.

Publishing education and instruction is often found to be associated with academic libraries, and, from our searches, much of the discovered content regarding educational publishing initiatives appeared to reflect this. We additionally identified some initiatives from public libraries aimed at educating the public and authors about publishing. We hope to discover and add more resources in the future about publishing education in public, school, and special libraries.

Publishing resources are also available regarding copyright and training librarians in this ever-growing area. Users interested in publishing may require consultation in deciding where and how to publish their work, including the kinds of publishing platforms and formats now available (eBook publishing, institutional repositories, digital publishing, open access publishing, blogs, etc). Users may have copyright or author rights concerns, or need guidance on funding and financial issues in publishing their work. Libraries are increasingly offering workshops and web guides to educate their communities about navigating the complex publishing landscape, and they are devoting more resources and staff to provide information and expertise to patrons.

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Future steps

The RUSA Library Publishing Toolkit is intended to be a living document that provides useful and practice-driven resources to address new and emerging trends. As such, this toolkit will require the RUSA Publications and Communications Committee to facilitate participation from the library community. To ensure that this toolkit is kept current and relevant, RUSA may consider appointing a Library Publishing Toolkit Working Group who could identify new trends and resources for inclusion in the toolkit, receive submissions, and maintain resources.

The working group could ensure that they are keeping up with trends by monitoring relevant blogs, attending conference presentations, reaching out to libraries that are engaged in publishing, and actively inviting libraries to submit resources. A review process would need to be established for contributed resources to ensure quality, relevance, currency and accessibility. With the ever-changing digital landscape, the group must also maintain the existing content in addition to adding content. A maintenance schedule should be set so that links are regularly checked and content reviewed for continued relevance.

The working group could also consider partnerships with other interested groups, for example, the Library Publishing Toolkit (<http://www.publishingtoolkit.org/>) created by the Milne Library at SUNY Geneseo and the Monroe County Library System. Working with other partners could allow different library publishing resources to be networked and increase accessibility for libraries. Partnerships could also enhance promotion opportunities for the toolkit: with support from library partners, RUSA could organize conference panels and presentations to share the toolkit with interested library professionals and organizations. Relevant ALA listservs and e-newsletters could feature the toolkit in a profile article and encourage libraries to add it into their toolkits.

To support promotion, RUSA may consider incorporating case studies of libraries that have successfully offered publishing services. While publishing services in large academic and public libraries have been promoted widely, this toolkit may present an opportunity to highlight the work of special, school, small, and rural libraries. Featuring diverse types of libraries could also underline the message that library-publishing services can be offered on any scale: it does not require having a press or a large budget, and can be as simple as offering workshops.

The EL group noted that a downloadable or printable version might be useful to libraries

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and recommends that this option be explored in the future. The Library Publishing Toolkit, a similar resource, can be downloaded. However, adding a new version will make it more difficult to maintain as updates and edits will need to be made on the website as well as the downloadable file. It would be worthwhile to survey RUSA members to see if a downloadable format is desired.

Conclusion

In closing, this has been a unique experience for our team as ALA Emerging Leaders - RUSA. From January 2016 to June 2016, the EL team worked to gather research for each of the designated sections (following in this report) and built an online toolkit accessible to librarians and libraries interested in publishing. The EL team members kept in-communication with the Committee and attended the monthly meetings to give updates and news on how the project was going. Teamwork has been our motto from the beginning of our first meeting and introduction at 2016 ALA Midwinter in Boston. Our hope is that what we have produced can be used by any library that is interested in publishing in the future. The final toolkit can be accessed via <http://rusapubtools.wordpress.com>.