



CASE STUDY: SCHOLARONE MANUSCRIPTS™

EMERALD PUBLISHING GROUP

STREAMLINING AND IMPROVING THEIR COPYRIGHT PROCESS

A REPORT FOR SCHOLARLY PUBLISHERS



THOMSON REUTERS™

“WHEN EMERALD DECIDED TO REPLACE THEIR EXISTING ONLINE SUBMISSION SYSTEM, THEY HAD TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE THAT PROVIDED AT A MINIMUM ALL OF THEIR EXISTING FUNCTIONALITY.”

CASE SUMMARY

Emerald is currently deploying *ScholarOne Manuscripts* across their entire journal list and, as part of their implementation, they wished to simplify and standardize their copyright process, making the best, most efficient use of their online submission and peer review system. Using *ScholarOne Manuscript's* Electronic Forms, Emerald has succeeded in a significant improvement of their internal processes and implemented a simple and straightforward copyright process for their authors.

BACKGROUND

Emerald publishes over 240 journals in management, library and information services, along with engineering, applied science, and technology. Emerald uses ScholarOne Manuscripts to receive submissions and manage their peer review processes. A key benefit of using ScholarOne Manuscripts is the ability to use electronic forms to manage their copyright assignment process, to the benefit of their journal administrators and their authors.

BUSINESS ISSUE

When Emerald decided to replace their existing online submission system, they had to find an alternative that provided at a minimum all of their existing functionality. As only a smaller number of Emerald journals had been using their old submission system the possibility of taking their copyright process online was limited and for the majority of their journals this remained a paper-based process. This created a substantial administrative burden for their Editors and could lead to publication delays, creating additional work for the Assistant Publishers at Emerald. Emerald thoroughly tested a variety of online submission and peer-review system and found that ScholarOne Manuscripts not only met their requirements but exceeded their expectations.

“Our paper-based copyright process created a lot of work for our editorial assistants and was a lead cause in delaying publication,” says Rebecca Marsh, Publishing Director at Emerald Publishing Group. “We needed a solution that benefited both ourselves and our authors.”

Emerald’s previous copyright process required authors to sign and return a paper form. Manuscripts would be accepted for publication and the editorial office then had to send the correct paper form filled out with the manuscript details to both the corresponding and all co-authors. As the editorial office typically did not have all the co-author email addresses, this often involved sending the form by post. This alone caused significant delay. There were often considerable waits for signed forms to be returned. Any reminders for missing forms had to be sent manually by editorial staff, again sometimes by mail.

“Often, getting completed copyright forms was one of the slowest parts of the publication process,” says Andrea Watson-Lee, Editorial Office Manager at Emerald.

Even when completed forms were received, Emerald then faced the burden of storing and filing numerous paper forms, and ensuring they were easily and quickly accessible should a query be raised.

The possibility of completing copyright assignment forms online had immediate appeal to Emerald. Authors were already using the ScholarOne Manuscripts site to submit and track their submissions, so the ability to complete their copyright assignment through the same familiar interface appeared the ideal solution to the problem. Electronic forms ensured that their editorial office staff could easily see pending and outstanding forms, and have reminders automatically sent to late returning co-authors. In addition, the system had already captured all co-author emails, so contact was easy and electronic. Authors could fulfil their side by simply logging onto ScholarOne Manuscripts, locating their paper and completing the form with just a few clicks.

“Online form completion seemed to be the ideal solution to the delays and additional work we were encountering with our existing paper processes,” recalls Andrea, “it gives greater transparency and was certainly the most convenient option for authors”.

Emerald’s legal counsel examined their requirements for a legally binding copyright transfer and saw no problems with a simple electronic signature. Authors had to assent to the copyright transfer with a single checkbox and input of the date. Completed and pending forms are displayed on the journal administration dashboards, so staff can easily see the status of all copyright forms.

Completed forms are retained on ScholarOne Manuscripts and can be transferred to any production system or content platform, ensuring permanence for these vital legal documents. "We needed to be sure that our legal requirements were met by any replacement system for our copyright processes," says Rebecca.

As a test of the concept, Emerald embarked on a formal pilot programme to confirm that the new forms process met both their internal requirements and was acceptable to their authors.

The pilot programme ran for six months. Emerald explored several options for the optimum deployment of their electronic copyright forms including downloadable forms for the authors to sign and the full electronic signature option that became their eventual choice. They looked carefully at both the administrative and author experience and compared this with their previous process and collated feedback from all pilot users.

"Authors liked the ability to simply log into ScholarOne Manuscripts and complete their copyright transfer, without having to print and sign documents," said Andrea. "This made the final decision easier. The benefits were clear to both ourselves and the authors."

Emerald deployed their standard copyright form to all their existing titles using ScholarOne Manuscripts and incorporated the form into their master sites for future implementations. This scalable process ensured that new titles were ready to go with the new copyright system upon launch of their ScholarOne Manuscripts sites and also gave them the ability to manage opt-ins to their Literati network. Copyright e-forms will be in use across all 215 current Emerald titles.

THE THOMSON REUTERS SOLUTION

ScholarOne Manuscripts is the leading system for web-based manuscript submission, peer review, and tracking.

Highly preferred for its flexible feature set, ScholarOne Manuscripts integrates manuscript invitation, submission, real-time fee collection, file conversion, correspondence, tracking, reviewer management, decision making, reporting, issue planning, user data management, broadcast e-mail, XML metadata transformation, and integration with print and online production...all in one easy-to-use system.

ScholarOne Manuscripts balances the needs of the editorial office for comprehensive information gathering, with an author's desire to submit quickly. It is proven author-friendly by the more than 1.1 million annual submissions.

ScholarOne Manuscripts eases the administrative burden on editors, allowing them to focus on qualitative tasks that increase the value of the content.

Functionality includes:

- Onscreen and e-mail notices for assignments and overdue tasks
- User-specific task "to do" lists
- Quick view of suggested reviewers
- Multiple reviewer search and filter tools
- Detailed reviewer performance statistics
- Single, double, and editor blinding
- Easy to grant extensions for reviewers
- External searches of PubMed, HighWire Press, and Google
- Download, annotate, and upload author files
- Editor-specific decision letter templates
- Editable reviewer comments in decision letters

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive electronic forms solution in ScholarOne Manuscripts enabled Emerald to take a new look at how they handled a laborious part of the publication process and reduced the burden for their editorial office staff and created a simpler and popular solution for their authors. Publication delays owing to late copyright forms can be minimized and incorporation of standard electronic forms into their template ensured a quick and simple deployment of Emerald's current and future titles.

Science Head Offices

Americas

Philadelphia +1 800 336 4474
+1 215 386 0100

Europe, Middle East and Africa

London +44 20 7433 4000

Asia Pacific

Singapore +65-6775 5088
Tokyo +81 3 5218 6500

For a complete office list visit:

science.thomsonreuters.com/contact

AG0905128

Copyright ©2010 Thomson Reuters



THOMSON REUTERS™