



About

- bioone.org and @BioOneNews
- Nonprofit publisher that aims to make scientific research more accessible through a growing portfolio of products, including its full-text aggregation BioOne Complete and Open Access journal, Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene
- Headquarters: Washington, DC, USA

People

- **Lauren Kane**
BioOne COO

Goals

- Focus on mid size journals and societies who want to pursue an independent, nonprofit publishing approach
- Remain competitive with other platforms and aggregated products by enhancing the research experience for authors and readers
- Accommodate both subscription-based and open-access distribution models
- Gain experience with Open Access publishing with its first proprietary journal, Elementa

Approach

- Deploy ReadCube Discover to improve discoverability of research content
- Altmetric Badges and Altmetric Explorer to measure the impact of published research and effectively communicate those results to BioOne's community

Results



Lauren Kane

BioOne boosts services to society publishers

BioOne is a non-profit publisher that aims to make scientific research more accessible and sustainable through its portfolio of products, which includes a full-text aggregation, BioOne Complete, and more recently, a multidisciplinary Open Access journal called Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene.

BioOne was founded in 1999 as a collaborative venture among five organizations: the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), the University of Kansas, the Greater Western Library Alliance, and Allen Press.

According to Lauren Kane, COO of BioOne: "We were founded by society publishers and libraries to create an integrated organization that would sit at the nexus of those communities."

"Our mandate is twofold," she continues. "BioOne provides non-profit societies and other independent publishing organizations with a place to publish their content as part of a high-quality, cohort-driven aggregation, all while earning royalties which help support their publishing operations. At the same time, we provide libraries with a cost-effective aggregation and access to a wealth of content that they might not otherwise be able to afford."

Initially capitalized by library support, paid back in full through subscription credits over a five year period, BioOne is now self-sustaining, grossing over \$10M per year. The organization maintains a well controlled budget which includes outsourcing sales and technical development, and investing in new tools and features that best fit its strategy.

Exploring new avenues

In December 2013 BioOne launched its Open Access journal Elementa: Science of the Anthropocene, which publishes across six inaugural knowledge domains and focuses on accelerating scientific solutions to challenges presented in this era of human impact on the Earth, the Anthropocene.

Kane stresses, "BioOne wanted to enter the primary publishing space, and to do so in an Open Access context. We are certainly not abandoning the subscription model or our successful aggregation. Instead, this is a way for BioOne to explore new avenues, provide a meaningful public good, and learn lessons that may be applicable to our publishing partners that are also considering Open Access."

All articles published in Elementa are peer-reviewed, and the journal is currently under consideration by Thomson Reuters and Scopus. Elementa has published 58 articles to date. BioOne expects that number to grow considerably over the next 12 to 24 months as the title becomes

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more widely known and as this emerging field of scholarship develops.

Challenges

One of BioOne’s biggest challenges is managing title departures. Although some larger publishers are keen to work with BioOne, others demand exclusivity and require that partnering societies discontinue their BioOne participation.

“Churn is a natural part of our industry,” says Kane, “so titles will leave and we will add new titles in their place. We are working hard to keep churn to a minimum because when we lose titles, we risk losing subscribers, and that affects not just our own sustainability but also that of the 140 independent scientific societies that we support.”

Kane says that the “sweet spot” for BioOne in terms of participant titles for its aggregation, BioOne Complete, are those small to mid-size journals that either are still print-only, or have only a rudimentary online presence and much to gain from the transition to XML.

Another advantage BioOne can offer is its expansive global reach. “Many of these journals might reach between 250 and 400 institutions alone, whereas through BioOne they are made available to over 4,000 institutions worldwide. We have the capability to bring these journals and their authors into markets that they could not possibly reach on their own. This type of dissemination can be transformative for a small or regional society.”

ReadCube Discover

BioOne is using ReadCube Discover to make the content in BioOne Complete and Elementa easily discoverable by researchers.

“What we look for in any product or service is something that will enhance the BioOne experience, whether it is for our participating publishers, our researchers, or our libraries,” she adds. “We are constantly looking for ways to aid discoverability so anything like ReadCube Discover, that is going to open the channels of access as much as possible and lead people to BioOne content, is of interest to us.”

“We really saw ReadCube as a way to give users an improved reading experience and to increase those options for access.”

Feedback from all sections of the BioOne community has been very strong. “Any time we add tools and features like ReadCube that come without a cost to our partners, improve the research experience and expand access options, those services are very well received,” says Kane.

Altmetric Badges

BioOne has also started to use Altmetric Badges within both BioOne Complete and Elementa.

Badges provide a graphic display of how readers are accessing and using published material.

“People love Altmetric Badges and are so glad to see them on the site,” says Kane. “Especially some of BioOne’s smaller society publishers for whom it would be prohibitive to add on their own silo sites—this has been a big plus for them.”

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“We have 184 journals in the BioOne aggregation now using Altmetric Badges,” she says. “It’s just a wonderful piece of feedback to see what content is being talked about without having to wait to see an annual report or to even access statistics through a user panel. Instead, users can just click on the badge and access more detail.”

For Elementa, which is also using Badges, Altmetric data has proven especially useful in its early, pre-Impact Factor stage to provide added context to how the new journal is growing, how it is being used, and what impact it is having on public discourse.

“You realize how reliant we are on measures like Impact Factor,” says Lauren Kane. “It is too early in Elementa’s life to earn an Impact Factor, and so in the absence of that, having something like an Altmetric score is incredibly valuable. This feedback can be given to the Editors-in-Chief and to the article’s authors as immediate feedback on how the article is being used and discussed.”

BioOne has also recently started using the Altmetric Explorer tool to provide staff with a behind-the-scenes dashboard on not only the collated BioOne reports, but also as a broader benchmarking and analysis tool. In particular, the Explorer lets BioOne marketing staff identify hot subject areas and topics that are attracting attention and can be promoted on social media.

“We are fans of Digital Science because we feel that the organization is very forward-looking and has the needs of scientific researchers in mind,” says Kane. “There is a lot of synergy between BioOne and Digital Science in that we are both focused on the needs of the scientific research community.”

For more information on Digital Science Publisher Solutions email publishers@digital-science.com