



About

- pubs.rsc.org
- rsc.org
- Location: Cambridge UK with additional editorial teams in Beijing, China, Bangalore India and Washington D.C. USA
- Scientific publisher of high-impact journals and books

People

- **Will Russell**
Business Relationship Manager

Goals

- Embrace new technology to remain competitive against innovative competitors
- Investigate new business models made possible by digital technology

Approach

- Focus on improving services to researchers
- Buy off-the-shelf software for speed of implementation
- Make content more discoverable and searchable using ReadCube
- Improve impact measurement of content using Altmetric

Results

- Readers are directed to more relevant articles by ReadCube
- Authors are attracted by improved impact measurement from Altmetric



Will Russell

The Royal Society of Chemistry turns its focus on researchers with better search and measurement tools

The Royal Society of Chemistry offers a publishing platform providing access to over a million chemical science articles, book chapters and abstracts. Like many publishers of high quality peer-reviewed content, they are under pressure from their community to innovate quickly and harness digital technology in new ways that add value, simplicity and easier access to the research workflow.

Will Russell is responsible for some of the new technical developments at the Royal Society of Chemistry. "Although we do a lot of in-house development, we need to understand where developments can be improved by working with partners," he says. "I really believe in the benefit of strategic technology partnerships with an external partner. There is the speed of getting a key utility to the market and this offers us a tremendous business advantage."

"We have journals going back to 1841," he says. "We started migrating print content online in the late 1990s. Our biggest challenge now is how we will deliver content in the future in the most useful way for the researcher."

Will pinpoints a way forward. "There are new opportunities presented by open science and alternative metrics, and increasing importance attached to data and open data," he says. "This has created a different playing field. We want to keep our game high and at the cutting-edge to retain our readers and authors by offering the best tools and services."

Will and his colleagues at the Royal Society of Chemistry are ensuring that they work with the research community to develop and provide the right services to help researchers address the challenges they face now and in the future, as opposed to just thinking about their needs today. "It's about thinking about researcher needs," he says.

"To this end, we have built functionality into our platforms to extract chemical intelligence and make it searchable within the article. Specific chemical formats have been made searchable in a way that is most useful to chemists."

"It is not just a presentation of the full text but also the linking of one structure to another. It involves an enrichment of the content in a way that makes it more valuable to the chemical scientist." In essence, Will says, "We want to provide a joined-up knowledge experience."

A recent example is the journal MedChemComm where its research articles now allow access to additional compound information and a range of other chemical and biological information direct from the manuscript, simply by clicking on the compound name or number.

Improving discovery of all the content

The journal and e-book content of the Royal Society of Chemistry has been indexed in ReadCube Discover. More than 350,000 articles were assembled for indexing, covering backfile content stretching back to 1841,

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and frontfile content containing video and audio, with the process remarkably taking less than a month to complete. Both journal articles and e-book chapters were included in the indexing exercise and the process was completed at the end of March 2015.

Will is very impressed by the impact of ReadCube on the research workflow. He comments: “It is advantageous in the way researchers can discover new science – and annotate it. In doing this, the ReadCube machine becomes more intelligent in what it recommends to the user.

“My colleagues and I like the way that ReadCube presents the whole article and the supplementary data together”. Will adds: “The supplementary data is not hidden through a link but exposed and made easily accessible.”

To test the appeal to readers of alternative metrics, Will put Altmetric Badges on 5 of their 39 journal titles: Lab on a Chip, Energy & Environmental Science, Dalton Transaction, Physical Chemistry and Chemical Physics and Chemical Society Reviews. These journals were selected as they contained articles that achieved high Altmetric scores retrieved through the Altmetric Explorer tool.

Will explains: “We had a hypothesis: We thought the Altmetric Badges were going to present an alternative way for a reader to assess the impact of an article. We predicted that readers would open the article landing page and click on the article based on the score.”

“When we implemented it, however, we discovered something different. It appeared that there was more potential for interest from authors than readers in the Altmetric scores. Authors could see what had happened with their article. Where had it been discussed? Where had it been engaged with online and where had it appeared in social and news media?”

The buzz and interest around this newly available capability for authors meant that Altmetric quickly became an established service. Authors can use the feedback that Altmetric provides, for instance by looking at which sorts of titles generate interest or how social media activity can increase the amount of conversation around an article, which ultimately drives the overall impact of the journal.

Will says the Royal Society of Chemistry’s next step is to try to highlight those conversations and create the best value from them to market and promote the journals. He wants to continue improving the relationship with authors and readers by emphasizing the effect of their research.

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