Editorial Control in Library Publishing

Who Does What and Why?

Who Decides? Why?

In this context editorial control is about who makes decisions about editorial processes such as manuscript format, who accepts changes to a manuscripts post copyedit, and who defines portions of the process that require collaboration between authors and publishers.
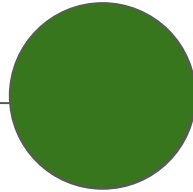
Editorial control can be seen as a continuum.

Authors or project owners exist at one end of the continuum and publishers exist at the other.

Project owners have editorial control

Project owners and publishers share editorial control

Publishers have editorial control

Productive Capacity

Who holds editorial control determines how the productive capacity of publishing departments is spent.

Supporting Project Owners Creates Value

The less editorial control publishing departments have, the more of their productive capacity is spent in supporting the authors and project owners who do have editorial control. This is a valid way to create value for one's community.

Managing an Efficient Process Creates Value Too

The more editorial control publishing departments have, the more they are able to standardize their production processes, thereby creating the ability to publish higher volumes of scholarship. This too is a valid way to create value for one's community.

Partnerships Can Impact Production Capacity

In the context of a publishing department that does not have editorial control, productive capacity is initiated through budget and staffing, but determined by the authors and project owners the department chooses to support. The productive capacity of such departments is subject to the skills and experience that project owners bring with them to the collaboration. Thus, partners must be chosen carefully.

Standardized Workflows Can Impact Capacity

In the context of a publishing department that has editorial control, productive capacity is initiated through budget and staffing, but maintained through carefully chosen workflows and a commitment to strictly adhere to those workflows.

Streamlined Workflows Limit Process Flexibility

When publishers hold editorial control and enforce a systematic process, opportunities for creativity and experimentation in the publication process are diminished for authors/project owners.

What value does your program create for your community?