On migrating from a traditional platform to an innovative nonprofit partnership

Michael Di Natale, Director of Technology, BioOne

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A History of Collaboration

BioOne’s flagship product is a full-text aggregation of more than 1.5 million pages, accessed by 4,000 libraries and millions of users worldwide.
The Problem

As a mature product in a constrained market, by 2016 reducing our technology costs became a major focus, with platform fees representing our largest expense.

- Annual increases rising ahead of revenue growth
- Costly development needed to address current (and future) needs
- Service concerns as a small fish in a growing pond

No Good Options?

We needed a vendor with competitive technology who could offer excellent service at a sustainable annual cost.
The Realization

We didn’t need a vendor, we needed a partner.

Luckily, we knew a guy.

The Potential Partnership

SPIE offered
- A fellow mission-oriented nonprofit
- Powerful technology and technical expertise
- Experience with migrating and launching their own digital library

BioOne offered
- A non-competitive partnership
- Experience in the academic market and community insights
- Development costs and trend spotting could be shared
The Year of Magical Thinking

b. January 1, 2019
Lessons Learned

- If you don’t like your options, create new ones
- Broaden your network, listen, and stay open to ideas that may seem a little ‘out there’
- Mitigate risk and manage expectations with a detailed contract and service level agreement
- Provide ongoing, transparent communications to your stakeholders
- No transition is seamless... and that’s where true partnership shines

The Spirit of Scientific Publishing?

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Collaboration
Thank you!

Questions:

Mike Di Natale  
*BioOne, Director of Technology*  
mike@BioOne.org  
@mdinatSTM

Artwork Credit: Scott Ritchey, *SPIE CTO*