Predatory and Irresponsible Commercial Services Peddled to Authors: What Can Be Done About It?

Dr. Eddy™ personifies the efforts of Editage to support authors with good publication practices.
Globalization

The world is now so flat that it is starting to curl!
Irresponsible Practices in Publishing

Like almost everything in Asia, if you take a few steps back, the real story is very different.

There is an element of commerce in every facet of the society. Where there is an opportunity, there is an entrepreneur; including academic services.
Every facet of the ‘axis of publication’ now has predatory and irresponsible elements of activity associated with it:

- Editorial Board solicitation
- Peer Reviewer solicitation/fixing
- Manuscript solicitation
- Peer Review promises
- Predatory Author Services
  - Authorship for sale
  - Plagiarism / data stealing
  - Manuscripts for sale
  - Writing fraud

In 2-years’ time, an author will have a very hard time identifying what are ethical practices. We will not be able to educate fast enough as irresponsible practices become mainstream.
On December 30, 2014, Jeffrey Beal posted “Is This a Paper Mill?” on his ScholarlyOA.com blog where he brought to light some irregularities of an otherwise seemingly very sophisticated author services website.

This was my personal call-to-action on several levels:

- It was very sophisticated
- It clearly heavily borrowed elements from Editage and other similar websites; so the company did their homework
- It was clear to me that an unsuspecting author would never know the difference
While Jeffrey clearly did due diligence on this site and uncovered a connection to a whole host of sites, at Editage we dug very deep and tested the degree of inappropriate behavior they were exhibiting.

- Scholarly recognition certificates
- Questionable NDA agreements (Texas jurisdiction)
- Web traffic focused in Pakistan
- Payment to Dubai

**Expert 4:**
Your Thesis will be written on your specified topic and provided requirements; if you're not satisfied with the quality of our work, you can ask for free revisions or you can get all your money back-guaranteed!

**Expert 4:**
Prior to delivering your order, our Quality Assurance Department runs a thorough check on the order and makes sure that all your given specifications are met.
But those who are looking to buy a manuscript, or buy their way onto a paper should not be dismayed. There are still plenty of websites to facilitate this for you.

For example, SCIPaper.net is a manuscript “Marketplace” in China.
Predatory Author Resources
Marketplaces

- There are plenty of titles for sale! You can buy to own the manuscript, buy your way onto the author by-line, or solicit the writing of a manuscript customized to your specifications (journal, Impact Factor, timeline to final draft, etc.). Check out www.scipaper.net/about.php?part=announce#1.
Hijacked and Look-alike Journals

Can you spot the hijacked journal?

www.bthla-journal.org

www.abcjournal.org
Predatory Author Resources
Fake Impact Factors and Misleading Metrics

Universal Impact Factor
The Universal Impact Factor is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a given period of time. The impact factor is used as a standard dimension and the relative importance of a scientific journal. The Universal Impact Factor is calculated by several scientific methods. No Evaluation Processing Fees.

Real-time Impact Factor
Bestowed with the eminence of the finest service provider for open access journals, CiteFactor with its announcement of a new feature launch called as the 'Real Time Impact Factor' for research paper is creating ripples amongst industry enthusiasts.

SIF
Science Impact Factor

INTERNATIONAL
Scientific Indexing

GIF
GLOBAL IMPACT FACTOR

IMPACT FACTOR LIST
SCIJOURNAL.ORG®

SCIJOURNAL.ORG
SUBMIT JOURNAL
2015 IMPACT FACTOR

SOURCE: Beall’s List; http://scholarlyoa.com/other-pages/misleading-metrics
Keeping on Top of Things

• Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources (CRPR)
  – www.RPRcoalition.org
  – http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2015/09/16/validating-author-services-providers-qa-with-donald-samulack
  – A coordinated coalition of vetted publication resources acting responsibly

• Think. Check. Submit.
  – www.thinkchecksubmit.org
  – http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2015/10/01/think-check-submit-how-to-have-trust-in-your-publisher
  – A program launched by the Open Access Scholarly Publishers’ Association (OASPA); http://oaspa.org/
  – A “check list” to follow before you consider submitting to a journal
Keeping on Top of Things

- Pledge to Publish Ethically (www.editage.com/pledge-to-publish-ethically)
Keeping on Top of Things

- Alliance for Scientific Editing in China (ASEC)

Founder Members

- edanz
- editage
- enago
- Ivy Editing
- LetPub
- Medjaden
“5-Don’t” Policy of CAST*

- Manuscripts cannot be written by third-parties (i.e., anyone other than the listed authors)
- Manucript cannot be submitted by third-parties (i.e., only the listed authors should submit the manuscript for publication)
- Third parties should not modify the scientific content of the manuscript
- Authors should not provide false peer reviewer information to the publisher
- Only researchers involved in the research itself or the writing of the manuscript should be included in the author list

* China Association of Science and Technology (CAST)
  Rules of Conduct for Scientific Professionals in Publishing Articles in International Journals
What is the “common purpose,” exactly?

*To help preserve the integrity of the scholarly literature by sharing industry knowledge and to ensure transparency, discoverability, and accountability of responsible scholarly services to industry norms, guidelines, and best practices, so that academic authors can make informed decisions at point-of-service when seeking publication support and when publishing their scholarly works.*
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources

This website represents a first phase in an industry-wide call-to-action to discuss, develop, ratify, and launch a coalition of stakeholders representing the publishing community (publishers, journals, academic societies, academic institutions, pharmaceutical companies, scholarly services companies, freelancers, and academic authors) under the structure of a US-based non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation called the Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources, yet to be formed.

This initiative was first formally presented by Donald Samulack, PhD (President, U.S. Operations, Cactus Communications and Editage) during a panel session titled “Predatory Author Services: What Can be Done About it?” that included Hazel Newton (Head of Author Services, Nature Publishing Group), Josh Dahl (Head of Publishing & Associations, Thomson Reuters), and Jeffrey Beall (Scholarly Communications Librarian and Associate Professor, University of Colorado, Denver) at the International Society of Managing and Technical Editors (ISMTE) Annual North American meeting in Baltimore, MA (USA) on Thursday, August 20, 2015. A recording of the panel presentation is hoped to be posted on this site, when
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
Effective and Efficient Industry Communication / Collaboration

Who is making sense of all of this non-sense?

CRPR

- Virtual community
- Removal of barriers between industries and entities
- Topic-based community discussion forums
- Notice boards
- Live industry-wide alerts
- Invited video meeting rooms
- Shared directories
  - Members
  - Suspended members
  - Known fraudsters
  - Known e-mail spam
- Shared resources
  - Company contacts
  - Organization contacts
  - University contacts
  - Government contacts
- Organized archives

Information flow

- Suspected predatory activity
- Industry guidelines
- News articles
- Landscape intelligence
- Government actions
- Industry initiatives
- White papers
- Identified fraud
- Irregular author activity
- Novel findings
- Known spam/scams/schemes
- University e-mail filter capture

Disconnected or non-sharing

Selective sharing

Reciprocal sharing
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
Transparency, Discoverability, and Accountability of Membership

Audit of recognized and sustained best practices

Collaboration, education, and thought leadership

Development and adjustment of Audit

Self-report via online Audit achieves Provisional Member status

Consideration of past and current knowledge

Continued vigilance over ongoing feedback and yearly Audit assessments

Hyperlinked to a registered certificate and Web form on Coalition server

XYZ Company
Doing Business as: ABC, 123, XYZ International
CRPR Membership #20345632

- Provisional Member as of Sept. 2105
- Current Audit submitted Sept. 2015
- Member since Oct. 2015
- No reported incidents on record
- 357 FTE staff
- Registered in Delaware, USA
- Headquartered in New York, NY
- Has physical offices in: San Diego, CA; Washington, DC; London, UK; Shanghai, China
- Primary business activities include: scholarly publication, education, author services

www.RPRcoalition.org
#RPRcoalition
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
Industry Press Release – Founding Supporters

Cross-Industry Coalition Forges to Collaborate on Solutions to Protect Against Predatory Publishing and Irresponsible Author Support Practices

May 16, 2016 (EDITAGE; Philadelphia, PA, USA) – The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources (CRPR; www.RPRcoalition.org; @RPRcoalition) is one step closer to its mission to help preserve the integrity of the scholarly literature by sharing industry knowledge of irresponsible and in some cases predatory practices associated with academic publishing. The Coalition is also committed to ensuring transparency, discoverability, and accountability of responsible publishing services to industry norms, guidelines, and best practices, so that academic authors can make informed decisions when seeking publication services and when publishing their scholarly works. The Coalition intends to facilitate communication and collaboration among university, academic society, publisher, scholarly journal, publication services, pharmaceutical, funder, and government stakeholders, worldwide.

• First publisher’s consensus-building conference call and business meeting was held on April 19, 2016
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
CRPR Website Redesign Underway

- New, fresh look in development
- Statement of Mission and Structure
- Navigation to FAQs, Resources, etc.
- Identification of Founding Members, Members, and Other Contributors
- Member entry to communication tools behind the Coalition firewall
- Feedback and whistle-blowing form fields
- Infographics
- Twitter feed and other alerts
- The “Join CRPR” prompt leads to company audit form as part of application process
- Sign-up to receive Coalition news, prompts, and other benefits
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
Membership Through Audit and Peer Review

Audit Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>Observations/Comments</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is your parent company’s legally registered name?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what country and city is the parent company legally registered?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your company have physical offices in more than one country?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the brands that your company conducts business under (sales)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the strength of your global workforce?</td>
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OJS Peer review module?

Reject

Accept

Closer consideration

Reject

Accept

Industry-matched peers
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
Membership Badge Hyperlinked Back to Coalition Servers
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources

Firewalled “Intelligent” Membership Chat Interface

Chat Interface

Discussion on publication practices

- New Relic: We received an e-mail offering batched conference manuscripts from a company called XXXXX which seems like an article broker. Has anyone heard of them?

- New Relic: We are trying to confirm the identity of a Professor Lin Chan of the Beijing Normal University and associated with the Beijing Institute of Genomics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He has a 123.com e-mail address and is not responding. We cannot confirm his identity via the University. Does anyone know of this individual already?

- graylog: We’ve received a manuscript that appears to be machine generated, titled “Intemnt of Genial Programs.” Please advise if anyone else has received the same. Please be on the lookout.

- Derek Anonymous: We know that a manuscript from Dr. Beman Olivier on floral pollination has been received in duplicate by three of our journals. Please be on the lookout for it. @Bob Awesome

- Bob Awesome: We are aware that CAST has released updated guidance on its author guidelines 5-don’t policy.
The Coalition for Responsible Publication Resources
@RPRcoalition / www.RPRcoalition

- Twitter comments
- CRPR alerts by e-mail
- CRPR updates by e-mail