Taking an open access start-up journal to the next level

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The story so far

• The internet disruption
• Blogs, preprint archives
• The role of peer-reviewed journals
• Open access electronic journals
• 2007: S&P

Facts & Stats

• Founding co-editors: David Beaver & Kai von Fintel
• Decision to associate with the LSA eLanguage initiative
• Supported financially by MIT and UT
• Now hosted at Public Knowledge Project (SFU)
• Using open source publication software (OJS, LaTeX)

• 8 associate editors
  – Josh Dever, University of Texas
  – Paul Elbourne, Queen Mary, University of London
  – Michael Franke, ILLC, Universiteit van Amsterdam

  – Anthony S Gillies, Rutgers University
  – Magdalena Kaufmann, University of Connecticut, United States
  – Louise McNally, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain
  – Rick Nouwen, Utrecht Institute for Linguistics OTS, Netherlands
  – Katrin Schulz, ILLC, Universiteit van Amsterdam

• 200+ members of the editorial board
• 12 big cheeses on the advisory board

• 350-500 pages per year so far
• About 10 articles per year so far
• Acceptance rate < 20%
• Time to first decision < 60 days

• Citation impact at least equal to Big 3

• Poised for explosion
  – 12 articles accepted for 2013 already
  – 16 articles under review

Kudos

S&P has quickly established itself as one of the leading journals in semantics/pragmatics, thanks to three key properties:

1. It has high standards, which are shown by the thoroughness of the peer review process, and high rejection rates.
2. It has very quick turnaround times.
Publication is open access.*

"S&P is having a wonderful effect on the field by strengthening the ‘fast’ culture."

“It’s a blessing for our whole field to have this journal around.”

Challenges

- Cyclicity of peak submissions
- Artisan sensibilities (a.k.a. quality standards)
- Culture of procrastination
- Change from startup intensity to sustainable and scalable structures and processes
- Uptake from indexing and rating agents

Phases

- Phase 1: startup phase (founders, burning souls)
- Phase 2: sustainable & scalable structures and processes
- Phase 3: founders leave; turn over to new editors

Plans

- Expect to publish at least 20-30 articles per year
- Additional associate editors
- Additional materials:
  - underground classics
  - state of the art on “hot” topics
  - S&P monographs?
- Push for shorter articles (issue for linguistics in general?)
- Continuing to build a reputation

What does it take?

- Money
- Leadership
- Disciplinary support

Announcement!

- As of today, S&P leaves the eLanguage incubator and becomes a full-fledged LSA journal
- The LSA will join MIT and UT in supporting the journal financially
- S&P will stand alongside Language (and its offshoots) as a separate, independent LSA journal
- No change in day-to-day operations:
  - Same URL (http://semprag.org), same hosting, same stylesheet
  - Continued immediate open access, no author charges
  - LSA membership not required for authors
- The journal will be overseen by the LSA Executive Committee
- S&P Editors will maintain operational responsibility for the journal
- Big decisions (editorial succession, business model) will be made cooperatively:
  - LSA EC
  - Editors
  - Advisory Board

S&P is ready for the next level!