

Date: Tue, 6 Mar 2012 02:46:16 +0100 (CET)
From: farge <farge@lmd.ens.fr>
To: ingrid@math.duke.edu
Cc: costofknowledge@ima.umn.edu, rolf.jeltsch@math.ethz.ch
Subject: Re: ** POSSIBLE SPAM ** business model

Dear Ingrid,

This is a good idea to propose us to think from the fictitious journal JMG (Journal of Metaplectoid Geometry) published by 'Elsinger'. It reminds me your paper 'Wiglets: new histeric results', published in 1991, I enjoyed.

- > - the Legal Entity Metaplectoid Geometry (e.g.
- > foundation/society/cooperative) (LEMG) has been established, as a
- > Foundation/Society/Cooperative (see below on how to get there), the sole
- > function of which is to get the journal published. LEMG is a non-profit
- > organization.

I prefer a cooperative which owns the journal title and whose members are the mathematicians who publish, refer and edit the papers of this journal.

- > - LEMG oversees appointments to the Editorial Board, which names
- > coming up in a similar as is done now in practice, after discussion of the
- > current Editors and (possibly) advice from prominent researchers in the
- > field of Metaplectoid Geometry.

OK

- > - this Editorial Board functions in exactly the same way as the Editorial
- > Board of JMG has functioned in the past (it can, ofcourse, revise its
- > procedures over time, as Editorial Boards do).

OK

- > - LEMG has a contract with Elsinger, good for x years, to publish JMG
- > (including copy-editing and sophisticated typesetting beyond the Latex
- > skills of most of us), and to market it. The services that Elsinger
- > provides to LEMG are described in (some) detail in the contract, and
- > Elsinger.

I will tend to prefer that marketing be the responsibility of LEMG and not of the publisher. In my view Elsinger should rather be a service provider (e.g., designing and running the electronic platform to manage submission, referring, edition and diffusion of JMG, maybe also to print on demand) than a publisher. LEMG will be the publishing entity for JMG.

- > - The contract stipulates review, once per year at least, of the financial

- > situation, with regular audits (probably not as frequent as annually) so
- > that earnings are completely transparent. (Note that this is not simple
- > and LEMG may need help from experts, and one should think about best
- > practice to set up such contracts.) Earnings by the publisher on JMG are
- > set by contract not to exceed $y\%$; any excess will be used to lower of
- > subscription prices for the subsequent year.

In my view the financial aspect has to be rethink from scratch if LEMG is a cooperative and Elsinger only a service provider. Let us try to be as innovative as possible. I propose to introduce a Complementary Community Currency (CCC) called the MCC (Mathematical Community Currency) specifically used to produce and trade mathematical papers. For more details about CCC, I refer you to your compatriot Bernard Lietaer from the Belgium Central Bank (<http://www.lietaer.com>) and to his books (e.g., 'Creating wealth: growing local economies with local currencies', 2011). When you refer or edit a paper you earn MCCs, when you submit or read a paper you spend MCCs. When your paper is accepted you may be reimbursed some MCCs and if your paper is highly praised by the community you may win a prize given to you in MCCs. MCCs are convertible into other currencies (dollars, euros, yens) but, as long as you are an active mathematician, you need them since mathematical publishing is only trade in MCCs.

- > - Electronic access issues are also regulated according to the contract;
- > in particular, LEMG is *owner* of the copyright on the content of JMG,
- > for all materials for which the copyright does not reside straight with
- > the authors. Elsinger (or its successor, if LEMG decides to switch to a
- > different publisher at contract renewal time) cannot change any access
- > policies that are set by its contract with LEMG.

The question of the ownership of copyright is a critical issue. One think is sure copyrights should not belong to Elsinger. I think the author should keep the copyright of his paper and allow LEMG to publish it under a Noncommercial Creative Commons (NCC) license (for more details see Wikipedia).

- > Right now I am at a meeting in Hanoi, where I talked about the journals
- > and access issue with Rolf Jeltsch. He is a member of the board of the EMS
- > publishing house (EMSpH), and says that as far as EMSpH is concerned, this
- > is actually the model under which EMSpH would *prefer* to publish a math
- > journal. In short one wants that a journal is owned by a mathematical
- > community (e.g. foundation, society, cooperative,???)

Say hello to Rolf and his wife for me (in 2009 we were both invited speakers at the Indian Applied Mathematics Conference in Agra).

- > Joachim Heinze, from Springer (official title: Executive Vice President
- > Publishing Mathematics), is here as well, and would be interested in a
- > chat later this week. He told me they take the whole turmoil extremely
- > seriously, including the caveat expressed about Springer in the SoP34. I
- > mentioned to him that whatever results, it will mean a change of the

- > business model for publishing a journal. I tentatively mentioned the model
- > above, adding that I was speaking for myself only, not for the IMU, and
- > not for the SoP34; he seemed to think it might be feasible to get there --
- > adding that he too, was speaking only for himself, and did not have the
- > authority to make such decisions, although he felt he did have influence.

Beware of Springer. Since it merged with Kluwer it seems that Springer has shifted from the fair relations we had in the past towards similar practices as Elsevier. For more details ask Bernard Teissier who is presently negotiating with Springer. See also the petition 'Appel pour des negociations equilibrees avec les editeurs de revues scientifiques' many French mathematicians have signed (launched on January 5th 2012 and which has 1765 signatures, <http://www-fourier.ujf-grenoble.fr/petitions/>).

- > In view of possibly further discussions with both Jeltsch and Heinze, I
- > would very much like to have your feedback. I would not claim to speak for
- > us all any more than now, but I would prefer to know whether it would be a
- > waste of time or whether, on the contrary, a sizable number of you agree.

Of course what you are doing is not waste of time but constructive brain storming. I think we ought to be as innovative as possible and design a new model to be tried in parallel with the present one. If ours is finally better, it will develop while the previous one will slowly dies away.

- > Of course, I am also awaiting all your counter-arguments -- I am sure that
- > the above can be shaped into something better.

I think we should redesign the peer-reviewing process too. The present one is not sustainable since many referees are much too busy and either they do not accept the job or they do not spend enough time to complete it. I happened that I received some referee reports so superficial that I eliminated them since they were not worth being shown to the authors. One suggestion is that the referee reports will be made open access but without the name of the referee (only LEMG would keep track of it). Each year LEMG will announce the names of all referees having worked then and give a prize (a nice mug plus some MCCs) to the Best Referee of the Year.

- > Finally, how would the LEMG be established? Well, if this direction would
- > be pursued, then we can start with a few journals, and this would give
- > experience on the legal, financial, etc aspects of starting such
- > foundations (which need not be separate for each journal). The IMU and
- > other national and international math societies could help. I don't want
- > to belittle these aspects, but I believe they will not be obstacles that
- > could make the model impossible, if we like the model.
- > So: do you?

Do you have contact with lawyers to get advices on legal issues? Our community has little competence there (I talk for myself) and the way contracts will be written may be critical for future developments.

Have a nice trip back home
and get some rest.
All the best,

Marie

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