Altmetric

IntechOpen

Sara Uhac
Chief Operating Officer

"Tracking metrics is an important part of the post-publishing process as it indicates the engagement surrounding the works and the influence and reach the research is having within the scientific community."

Key points

- Since its launch in 2004, IntechOpen has grown to become the world's leading publisher of open access books

- Using Altmetric, it offers enhanced reporting to authors, which they in turn can use for grant applications, career progression, and internal reviews

- A champion of books, innovation and transparency lie at the heart of IntechOpen's core values. Altmetric provides a tangible way for it to demonstrate these values.

- The data is also used to inform marketing campaigns and identify cutting edge topics

- As book publishing continues to evolve, IntechOpen are positioned at the forefront of new models to improve the author experience

IntechOpen was born as a response to the challenge experienced by its founders to access academic research while they were PhD students. Inspired by this need, they decided to create a new digital platform where researchers like themselves could find critical information more easily and for free. The publisher's first open access journal went online in 2004, the first open access book was published in 2005, and thus the IntechOpen publishing platform was born - built by scientists for scientists.

Now, with over 15 years of experience and more than 4,800 books published specialising in technology, science, and medicine, IntechOpen has grown to become the world's leading publisher of open access books.

IntechOpen's Chief Operating Officer Sara Uhac joined the company in 2010 as Head of Journal Publishing. From 2014 onwards her focus has been the management of everything related to open access book publishing operations.

A changing research landscape

In August 2018, Sara shares, Simba Information reported that open access titles published per year will grow at a compound annual rate of 23.2% between 2018 to 2022[*], and that there are more than 30,000[**] scholarly and academic open access books available on the internet today.

As a pioneer in open access publishing and, with a real desire to make publishing easier and more relevant for the

digital age, IntechOpen see themselves as innovators of the product, of the business model and of the industry.

As the demands on researchers and innovations in the scholarly publishing cycle continue to evolve, Sara says that they are constantly responding to impulses with new technology solutions, key partnerships, product improvements to meet authors needs, and focusing on customer-centric innovations.

Altmetrics, therefore, align well with their mission and the core values they hold as a publisher as an innovative solution designed to meet author needs. Since first integrating the Altmetric Badges in 2018, they have further enhanced the service that they offer to authors, editors and readers.

A pioneering approach to author feedback

As of 2015, IntechOpen provides authors and editors with personalised post-publication readership metrics and allows them to track and measure activity around the academic research that they published with IntechOpen.

That service was built upon their desire to foster transparency and openness. Together, with live reporting on downloads and the attention and online discussion surrounding the content available from intechopen.com via Altmetric and Dimensions badges, authors and editors can access on their dashboards full reports on their chapter and book performance.
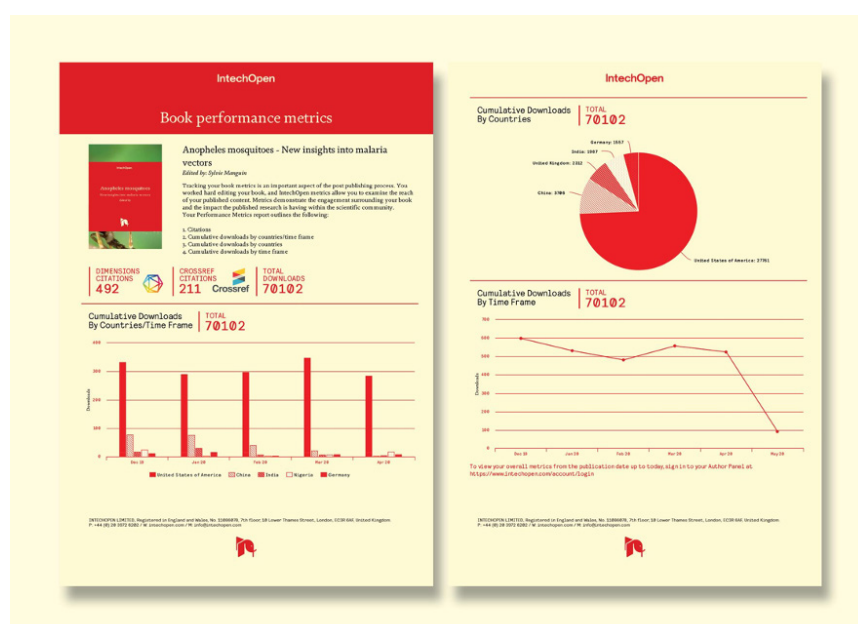
In addition, notes Sara, contributors receive detailed information on downloads, geographical distribution of readerships, and a detailed accounting of all citations including Dimensions data.

"Tracking metrics is an important part of the post-publishing process as it indicates the engagement surrounding the works and the influence and reach the research is having within the scientific community."

Sara shares some interesting use cases amongst authors for this data; *"it helps demonstrate the impact of their research and the reports can be used to support them in their applications for funding, for career advancement, or for academic activity reporting."*

By meeting the needs of their core audiences and providing authors and editors with valuable feedback on their work, IntechOpen encourages an interactive post-publishing experience.

Informing content and marketing strategy

In addition to the author-facing tools, IntechOpen also uses the Altmetric Explorer as a supporting tool in the editorial processes when creating the publishing program, or when working on identifying impactful research areas and cutting-edge research topics.
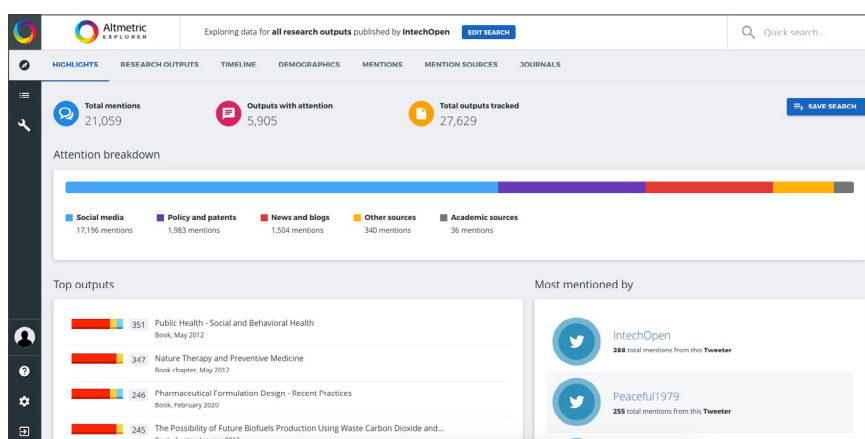
> *"We changed the way our book chapters are published, ensuring research can more quickly contribute to the knowledge base. Online First means chapters are published individually, after review, but before the entire book is ready for publication, allowing them to be searchable and citable without delay."*

With hundreds of millions of mentions of journal articles, books and more, the Altmetric Explorer is also used by the IntechOpen marketing team to identify success stories and create content that supports the enhancement of brand recognition. In doing so, they aim to build, maintain and grow the scientific community, as well as strengthen customer loyalty.

The evolution of books

Research evaluation practices in many countries have often been weighted favourably to journal articles, and ensuring that the book remains a valued scholarly output is something that many in the community are now taking action to ensure.

Well aware of this, Sara observes that books will certainly need to adapt to our increasingly online research environment.

IntechOpen has stepped up to this challenge, seeking to satisfy the desire by research communities to access research as it is available, rather than waiting on production schedules. In providing a service called Online First, it is transforming the book publishing experience into a journal-like one, delivering the speed that authors have come to expect.

"We changed the way our book chapters are published, ensuring research can more quickly contribute to the knowledge base. Online First means chapters are published individually, after review, but before the entire book is ready for publication, allowing them to be searchable and citable without delay."

Once the whole book is ready, chapters are collated into a collection. This development, Sara notes, benefits authors and the broader research community because it speeds up the publication and impact of research.

Adapting the age-old process of publishing a book for the modern research world is no small challenge, but it seems to be one that IntechOpen is tackling head-on.