RESEARCH
EVOLVED

2008 ANNUAL REPORT
“In the long history of humankind—and animal kind, too—those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.”

– Charles Darwin

Proof of Concept

2008 was a year of major growth for BioOne. Despite a deteriorating economy and significant pressure on library budgets, the organization was able to return substantial revenue to its participating publishers, as well as to make critical improvements in the delivery of services, marketing and selling of the collections, and in our internal accounting controls. Each improvement was strategically designed to enable BioOne to retain its hallmark flexibility as the organization continues to adapt to the evolving scholarly communications environment.

BioOne began in 1999 as a “highly promising experimental model reflecting the best ideals of a greatly needed cooperative endeavor” (Former President Heather Joseph, 2001). Ten years later this “experiment” is now a proven concept. Since its launch in 2001, BioOne has grown from a single collection of 40 journals to 143 journals in 2008, available in three complementary collections: 86 titles in BioOne.1; 49 in BioOne.2; and eight in BioOne Open Access. The organization launched with $1,428,000 in cash and in-kind contributions from its partners. The initial investments included over $700,000 in commitments from 132 library charter supporters, comprised mostly of members of the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) and the Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA). Not only had BioOne repaid all investments by 2006, the organization posted $5,421,241 in total assets at the end of 2008.

BioOne’s original business plan was designed to help peer-reviewed scientific journals published by societies, museums, university presses, and independent publishers survive in the new world of electronic access. In 1999 it was already clear that failure to make the transition from print to electronic access could end the long and distinguished career of many important publications. The average return to publishers in 2001 was $11,137; by 2008 the average return—including surplus share for active titles—was $24,389 for publications in BioOne.1, and $5,829 for participants in the two-year old BioOne.2 collection.

From the outset, BioOne decided to out-source major operations to keep organizational overhead low and retain flexibility for swift policy changes and structural improvements. This strategy guided two major decisions in 2008. First, BioOne migrated in early 2009 to a new technological platform powered by Atypon Systems and serviced through a continued strategic alliance with long-time partner Allen Press. Second, BioOne consolidated its worldwide sales and marketing efforts with an industry leader, Publishers Communication Group (PCG). In so doing, we gratefully acknowledge the hard work and essential contributions of our original partners, including Amigos Library Services, OCLC, and CSA/ProQuest.

What began as an experiment has thus matured into a sustainable business and operational model. True to its mission, BioOne’s strategy has improved the position of nonprofits and academia in a vigorously competitive marketplace. BioOne is committed to further serving these communities by challenging the status quo to promote greater equitability and control for all participants.

Kent Holsinger, Ph.D.  
Susan Skomal, Ph.D.  
Chairman of the Board  
Executive Director and COO
A Commitment to Quality

BioOne welcomed 17 high quality titles from 12 publishers to the 2008 BioOne Collections: four titles joined BioOne.1; eight joined BioOne.2; and five titles from Conservation International enriched the BioOne Open Access Collection.

The 2008 collection also increased BioOne’s ISI ranked content to 95 titles—a robust 66% of its total holdings, including five titles that earned an impact factor for the first time in the 2007 Thomson ISI Journal Citation Reports (released in the summer of 2008).

Technological Makeover

Beginning in 2007, BioOne embarked on a project to provide new functionality and a more user-friendly interface to all researchers, participating publishers, and subscribing libraries. Throughout 2008, we worked with our partners at Allen Press/Atypon Systems, Bremmer & Goris Communications, and many other collaborators towards the 2009 launch of a new platform featuring improved content tools and features, as well as an updated look and user experience.

Among the many new features designed with users in mind, the site includes personalized profiles through “My BioOne” allowing for saved searches, favorite titles, and e-alerting preferences, as well as article and title-level tools such as RSS feeds, related article and author searches, and toll-free linking.

For participating publishers, the site adds branding, customization, and promotional opportunities, including dedicated informational pages for each publication and affiliated society.

For BioOne subscribing libraries, the site offers an increase in core access and reporting functionality including easy download of COUNTER statistics and MARC records, Open URL compliance, and Shibboleth supported access.

In Memoriam

Howard Goldstein was BioOne’s head coach from 2000 until his untimely death on September 21, 2008. In his passing, BioOne lost one of its most creative, dedicated, and determined progenitors. Although not present at the legendary meeting in 1999 where plans for BioOne were sketched on a napkin, in his capacity as SPARC’s publishing consultant, Howard worked those sketches into a solid business plan. This was a groundbreaking endeavor and BioOne’s subsequent success is due in large part to the strength of that foundation and to the business savvy, foresight, and sheer determination Howard focused on BioOne throughout the ensuing decade.

To commemorate Howard’s legacy to the scholarly community, BioOne and SPARC created the Howard Goldstein Award to Advance Scholarly Communication, designed to be awarded annually at the BioOne Publishers and Partners Meeting beginning in 2009.

Howard’s son Alex Goldstein (left) presents the inaugural Howard Goldstein Award to Randy J. Olsen, University Librarian for the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

“[I]t is interesting and impressive to continue to see how creative and flexible BioOne is as the world of publishing continues to evolve...”

– Joerg Henner Lotze, Publisher, Humboldt Field Research Institute and Eagle Hill Foundation
Expanding Horizons

Users throughout the world accessed BioOne content during 2008 through institutional subscriptions, pay-per-view options, and BioOne's participation in developing world access programs such as eIFL, HINARI, OARE, and AGORA. There were 40.4 million hits to the BioOne website in 2008; 15.6 million of which directed to full text (HTML, PDF) and abstracts. Hits to abstracts, in particular, were up 30% over 2007 due to much wider exposure through A&I databases.

BioOne's collection of titles has grown increasingly international, with journals from Brazil, Canada, Japan, Kenya, Poland, South Africa, and Sweden to complement the core of US-based publications. Authors based outside the US—representing 90% of the world's 195 countries—published 36% of BioOne's articles. By the end of 2008, approximately 30% of BioOne.1's subscribers and 20% of BioOne.2 subscribers were from institutions in countries beyond the US and Canada.

As part of its mission to promote global distribution, in September 2008 BioOne entered into a partnership with Publishers Communication Group to provide exclusive worldwide marketing, sales representation, and library customer service.

Education and Collaboration

BioOne's commitment to providing useful and timely information to the community of researchers, publishers, librarians, and service providers is best illustrated by the annual Publishers and Partners Meeting. A record turnout for the fifth such event in April 2008 enjoyed an engaging lineup of speakers, including an introduction to the newly launched Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL) project by Deputy Director Catherine Norton. BHL is designed to provide researchers open access to the published materials critical for taxonomic discovery and identification. Several BioOne journals have already partnered with BHL to provide legacy materials towards the project's goal to digitize and host over 40,000 journal titles, 5.4 million books, and 800,000 monographs.

Three of BioOne's most active librarians also presented original research based on the BioOne journals using a variety of citation tools; and Tricia Davis (Ohio State University) suggested ways that BioOne publishers can improve their agreements with authors to best meet the NIH Public Access policy. Finally, Association of Research Libraries Director of Scholarly Communications Karla Hahn moderated a panel in which three BioOne publishers discussed the collaborations and innovations they have developed to keep their programs financially afloat and technologically apace.

As another key component of BioOne's program to enhance understanding of the scholarly communications environment, the organization awarded travel grants to sixteen Publishers and Partners meeting attendees to help defray the cost of attendance.

“We have one of the largest research groupings of biologists in the UK and we need to sustain comprehensive collections in comparative and integrative biology. BioOne provides us with a unique collection of bioscience research journals with invaluable and timely content.”

– Adrian Smith, Faculty Team Librarian, University of Leeds
Financial Report of Management

The financial statements of BioOne are audited annually by the independent auditor, Gelman, Rosenberg and Freedman, LLP. BioOne received an unqualified opinion as of December 31, 2008, which found that the financial statements were presented fairly in all material respects and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. BioOne’s management is responsible for the financial information and representations reflected in its financial statements and accompanying footnotes.

BioOne ended fiscal year 2008 with an operating deficit due to the organization’s decision to change from a modified cash basis of accounting to an accrual basis, with regards to the method of recognizing sales revenue. This change affected the Revenue Share pool, and thus royalty payments to publishers. To mitigate the financial impact to participating publishers of this transition, the Board of Directors elected to pay a one-time Revenue Share subsidy to participating publishers, which is reflected as a non-operating item in the Statement of Activities. For titles participating in BioOne prior to 2008, the subsidy was sufficient to bring 2008 Revenue Share earnings in line with 2007. For titles new to BioOne in 2008, thus having no 2007 comparative data, the subsidy was sufficient to equal predicted earnings on a cash-basis methodology.

For a fifth year, the Board of Directors also authorized payment of a surplus share to active titles based on BioOne’s operating surplus. Through the combination of a deliberately conservative investment policy and the Board’s decision to move its assets by September 2008 from a bank to Piedmont Investment Advisors, LLC, BioOne was able to protect all revenue during a volatile economic climate.

BioOne maintains a system of internal controls to assure that its financial information is reliably reported, its assets are safeguarded, and that its transactions are recorded and occur with proper authorization. BioOne’s Board of Directors provides financial oversight through its Audit Committee, which meets with management and the independent auditors.

A copy of BioOne’s full financial statements with the Independent Auditor’s Report is available on the BioOne website at http://www.bioone.org/page/about/organization/bylaws.

Revenue by Subscribed Collection
- BioOne.1: $2,091,058 (86.43%)
- BioOne.2: $307,512 (12.71%)
- UniBio: $20,781 (0.86%)

Expense by Program Area
- BioOne.1: $1,732,427 (52.15%)
- BioOne.2: $355,540 (12.75%)
- BioOne OA: $20,775 (0.75%)
- UniBio: $27,077 (0.97%)
- Education: $14,193 (0.51%)
- Management & General: $637,659 (22.87%)

“This thing [BioOne] is really working, isn’t it?”
– Gerald Esch, Journal of Parasitology
Leadership

2008 BioOne Board of Directors

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Professor, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
University of Connecticut, Storrs

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Director of Communications
Entomological Society of America

Catherine Murray-Rust, Treasurer
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Washington University, St. Louis

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Executive Director
Greater Western Library Alliance

Raym Crow
(representing the Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition)
Senior Consultant
Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition

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American Institute of Biological Sciences

Sara Rockwell
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Editor-in-Chief, Radiation Research
Yale University School of Medicine

BioOne Directors Emeriti
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Rand Allen (1999-2001)
E. Dale Cluff (1999-2001)
Alan Covich (1999-2000)
Guy Dresser (2001-2007)
Ted Freeman (2001-2007)
Richard Fyfe (2003-2006)
Joan Gieseke (2002-2004)
Richard Johnson (1999-2006)
Heather Joseph (2001-2007)
Robert Kidz (1999-2001)
David Shulenberg (2001-2006)

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2008 BioOne Community Advisory Council

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The Ohio State University Libraries

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BioOne Global Marketing and Sales Director
Publishers Communication Group

Guy Dresser
Vice President of Operations
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Ted Freeman
Manager of Client Services
Atypon Systems

Howard Goldstein
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Association of Research Libraries

Victoria Hollowell
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Babcock Library, University of Connecticut

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Professor of Biology
Old Dominion University

Rob Sprinkle
Editor-in-Chief, Politics and the Life Sciences
Professor, School of Public Policy
University of Maryland, College Park

BioOne recognizes with gratitude the valuable contributions made by many volunteers towards the organization’s success.