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Year in Review

2020 was a challenge for the BioOne community and the entire world. Our hearts are with those who suffered the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic themselves, with those who lost loved ones and friends, and with those whose lives and livelihood have been disrupted.

We began strategic planning before the pandemic hit, and continued the process through the year. This effort helped prepare BioOne for changes on the horizon. In addition to the creation of new programs and activities designed to enhance communication, BioOne sought ways to alleviate the strain on both libraries and publishers. As an immediate response to the coronavirus outbreak, several of BioOne’s publishers agreed to make their relevant articles freely available for the entire year.

In 2020, BioOne offered 214 journals from 156 societies, associations, museums, and independent presses through BioOne Complete. These journals added 52,000+ pages to the total 1,593,490 million pages on BioOne’s platform. Net sales increased 2.8% over an intentionally conservative budget, to $7,242,603* in total net sales allocated for 2020. Since 2001, BioOne has returned over $58 million in royalties to the not-for-profit scholarly publishing community. Importantly, BioOne achieved this while maintaining affordable pricing for its institutional subscribers. Demonstrating its unparalleled value to subscribers, BioOne Complete offers a per-active subscribed title cost of $196 at our maximum, doctoral rate—95% less than the $3,977 average cost of a biology journal, according to Library Journal’s 2020 annual survey.

During 2020 BioOne Complete,
- reached 1,044 subscribing institutions in 47 countries and continued to exhibit a strong unit-based 93% renewal rate;
- offered 30 Open Access titles, of which two were previously subscribed participants;
- provided free access to more than 2,900 institutions in 83 developing nations through participation in philanthropic programs;
- returned $4,326,447 in publisher royalties to subscribed participants, representing 65% of the total net subscription revenue; and,
- added 9,693 articles, many ahead of or independent of print publication, through BioOne’s Issue-in-Progress workflow; and,
- generated over 54 million user impressions.

BioOne would not exist without the support of its many stakeholders—libraries, publishers, authors, researchers, and funders. On behalf of BioOne’s Board of Directors and staff, we thank the many individuals and organizations whose patronage ensures that BioOne will continue to flourish and evolve. These include Accucoms, Association of Research Libraries, Burgundy, Cordia Partners, Innodata, Lutzker & Lutzker, MindsAlert, LLC and SPIE.

Among the many lessons learned in 2020, the pandemic has demonstrated the need for a strong scholarly publishing community to disseminate reliable, timely research in ways that sustain the entire scholarly endeavor. We are proud participants in this ecosystem.

KENT HOLSINGER, PhD.
Chairman of the Board

SUSAN SKOMAL, PhD.
President/CEO

*Reported in USD
We rely on BioOne Complete to provide a single, easy-to-access platform for a wide collection of ecological and environmental journal literature.

Lisa Wallis
Associate Dean of Libraries, eResources & Systems Librarian/Associate Professor
NEIU Libraries, Northeastern Illinois University
Mission-Driven Strategic Growth

BioOne focuses on select operational initiatives each year that are designed to support its mission and strategic goals. In 2020, the organization,

1. returned meaningful royalties for BioOne Complete publishers through the maintenance of a 93% renewal rate, new sales in emerging markets, and restructured commissions;
2. added ten respected titles to BioOne Complete that broaden the collection and increase the value libraries and their patrons derive from the collection;
3. established a Publisher Advisory Board to provide guidance to the Board of Directors and staff;
4. promoted awareness of BioOne to enhance our ability to support the publishing and research community through affordable and sustainable access to high quality research;
5. established Accucoms and Burgundy as our new primary sales representatives outside North America; and,
6. adopted a comprehensive customer relationship management system necessary to facilitate the internalization of sales.

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**BioOne Strategic Goals**

1. Increase the value BioOne delivers to researchers, librarians, and publishers.
2. Develop new publishing models and products that increase access to scientific research.
3. Enhance BioOne’s ability to support affordable access to high quality research in the life sciences.

**BioOne Mission Statement**

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, publishers, professional societies, academic institutions, libraries and research funders in the common goal to maximize access to critical research.

As a leading publisher of scientific research, BioOne explores economic models and strategic partnerships that balance the needs of all stakeholders and increase the accessibility and integration of content with a global network of scholarly exchange.
BioOne Complete

In 2020 the BioOne Complete collection included 214 publications, 156 of which contributed current content. Of this total, 73% had Impact Factors; 32% were based outside the US; and 60% were available for online institutional subscriptions exclusively through BioOne Complete. In addition to attracting new subscribers, BioOne is dedicated to delivering value to its existing institutional subscribers by providing tools to monitor usage, as well as a variety of dedicated user training and educational resources. To learn more, browse our growing suite of library resources.

Figures 1-2 offer a visual representation of the BioOne aggregation’s sustained growth over time, and the value provided to both the publisher and library communities over the past two decades.

Figure 1: BioOne Complete Publisher Consideration (2001-2020). Note that these figures include ancillary revenue (pay-per-view and Copyright Clearance Center).
BioOne Open Access

The BioOne Open Access (OA) Collection, which was comprised of 30 journals in 2020, operates under a cost-recovery, fee-for-service business model. This program provides open access titles with a sophisticated hosting platform where users can access this content globally at no charge.

During 2020, 17 of the OA titles were based outside the US. The collection has grown to include 104,830 pages, which received 5,262,321 impressions during the year.

Just as the BioOne Complete collection consists of subscribed titles that benefit from the content contributions of the aggregation’s open access titles, the OA Collection benefits from the strong financial foundation made possible by BioOne subscription sales. Notably, the availability of the BioOne Complete collection within emerging markets increases the distribution and visibility for all titles, whether open access or subscribed. This increasing usage from OA content translates to greater royalties for subscribed titles, as well as an increase in authorship and potential citations for all participants.

New Publishers

BioOne welcomed new publishing partnerships in 2020. Ten journals were added to the collection. This included the return of four popular journals from the Entomological Society of America, plus six open access titles new to the collection. These include:

- *Annals of the Entomological Society of America*, v.93 – Current
- *Environmental Entomology*, v.29 – Current
- *Journal of Economic Entomology*, v.93 – Current
- *Journal of Medical Entomology*, v.37 – Current
- *Air, Soil and Water Research*, SAGE, v.1 – Current
- *Environmental Health Insights*, SAGE, v.1 – Current
- *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery Open Reports*, SAGE, v.1 – Current
- *Tropical Conservation Science*, SAGE, v.1 – Current

**Figure 2: BioOne Complete Growth and Trends (2001-2020)**

- 32% Titles based outside the U.S.
- 60% BioOne Exclusive Titles
- 73% Titles with Impact Factors
- 93% Subscription Renewal Rate
- 3.3% Increase in Net Sales
I would recommend BioOne Complete to any institution who, like us, is looking for a cost-effective means of accessing journals that meet an important niche requirement.

Roger Pawson
Head of E-Resource Management
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

2020’s cohort of additional titles offers high-quality content in entomology, plant sciences, zoology and environmental sciences. Their collective backfile offers over 10,000 new pages through BioOne Complete.

**Strategic Global Distribution**

BioOne’s sales force is dedicated to selling and promoting BioOne Complete worldwide, and in 2020 our new sales partners Accucoms and Burgundy expanded awareness in critical markets outside North America. With a focus on end-user outreach and consortial sales, BioOne brings its publications into markets that smaller publishers would be unable to penetrate on their own. Through a combination of institutional subscriptions and gratis access to all hosted content through a developing nations partnership with Research4Life, BioOne Complete was available in 2020 to researchers working in 2,900 institutions from 130 (66%) of the United Nation’s 196 voting member countries, plus Taiwan. This exposure to the international scientific community is mission-critical for growing readership, increasing author base, generating citations, and promoting broad access to scientific research.

Although sales representation was limited to only two in-person meetings in early 2020, BioOne’s sales team kept busy perfecting their virtual attendance throughout the year. Tools to achieve this presence included the development of library training videos, specialized webinars, targeted sponsorships, and availability for one-on-one consultation.

*Figure 3: BioOne’s global reach 2020*
Platform Enhancements

Each year BioOne carefully assesses its platform and strategically invests in enhancements to increase usability and distribution. During 2020, BioOne made a major investment to add Client Relationship Management (CRM) software.

CRM
BioOne successfully internalized its sales operation at the beginning of 2020 with the assistance of our partner SPIE. To complete the internalization, it was imperative to adopt our own CRM and import the legacy customer data. The migration afforded an opportunity throughout 2020 to review and clean key customer data, as well as capture and structure this data more effectively. We are now fully responsible for the maintenance of our own authoritative customer database, which provides better customer relationship management and enhanced internal reporting. Further, we spent significant effort to refine the sales reporting process to meet our accounting and audit requirements.

Accessibility
Always watchful for ways to maximize accessibility, BioOne worked with SPIE in 2020 to adjust the color contrast on the platform to ensure that it meets the WCAG 4:5:1 ratio. BioOne and SPIE share the goal to continuously upgrade and adjust the platform to be as accessible as possible. With the continual development of new enhancements and features, accessibility is something that has to be considered with each design and deployment.

Publication Workflow
BioOne continues to work with our production partners to refine the publication workflow from publisher, to production, to publication. This has required the setup of an automated system to ensure that content is delivered in a timely manner as well as installation of enhancements and improvements to our Journal Upload Tool.

Issue-In-Progress Workflow
BioOne continues to see an increase in the number of publications adopting an article-by-article workflow with our Issue in Progress early publication model. This workflow allows the addition of individual articles to be posted online as they are ready for publication, rather than waiting for an entire issue to be finalized. There is no cost to adopt this model. Most publishers see an increase in their total usage—and thus their annual royalty—as a result. Such early publication is of tremendous benefit to both the author and user communities, and increases a publication’s citation and usage window.

Education & Outreach
BioOne considers sustainable scholarly publishing to be an inherently collaborative enterprise that connects authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research. Education and the exploration of new models and innovative strategic partnerships are therefore important components of BioOne’s operating mission.

BioOne values the opportunity to meet community members in person, and encourages members of the community to consult the annual conference calendar for opportunities to make personal connections with BioOne staff. During 2020 we attended virtual society conferences and board meetings, and are always prepared to speak on relevant topics, such as trends in scholarly publishing, BioOne’s business models, history, and report on journal performance or institutional analysis.
What BioOne has accomplished in tandem with us publishers in all these years has been truly remarkable.

Joerg-Henner Lotze
Director
Eagle Hill Institute
Publisher Advisory Board

In 2020, BioOne established a Publisher Advisory Board to provide BioOne’s Board of Directors and BioOne staff with insights and recommendations from the active BioOne publisher community for the purpose of informing on trends, as well as current and future needs. The Advisory Board provides guidance through their evaluations of current and prospective services and strategic directions by specifically addressing how new initiatives might affect publishers.

BioOne Ambassador Award

BioOne’s Ambassador Award was first offered in 2018 to support early career scientists committed to communicating their research broadly, as well as to highlight BioOne Complete’s publishers and content. In 2020, BioOne recognized six outstanding early career researchers who produced five articles. These researchers excelled at communicating complex research results beyond their disciplines. There was an encouraging response from many enthusiastic publishers. The six winners hailed from three countries and represent such fields as herpetology, ornithology, malacology and ecology.

We congratulate 2020’s BioOne Ambassadors, while celebrating the work of our publishers:

- Dr. Chris Murray
  Nominated by the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists

- Dr. Matt George
  Nominated by the National Shellfisheries Association

- Fernando Medrano Martínez
  Nominated by the Netherlands Ornithologists’ Union

- Christoph Leineweber and Anke Cordula Stöhr
  Nominated by the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians

- Dr. Auriel M.V. Fournier
  Nominated by the Waterbirds Society

In addition to a $1,000 prize awarded to each winner, BioOne’s marketing team created individual landing pages to highlight the recipient’s work and research interests. We also compiled a comprehensive list of institutions, organizations, and individuals to receive notice of the winning summaries. 2020’s Ambassador Award winners received media attention from the Society for Scholarly Publishing, the Lion’s Roar, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Herpetologie und Terrarienkunde (DGHT). In addition, Dr. Auriel Fournier was interviewed by Research Information as “researcher of the month.”

By promoting the work of BioOne’s early career researchers, the 2020 BioOne Ambassador Award thus encourages publisher engagement; features BioOne Complete as home to cutting-edge scholarly content; and, engages BioOne and BioOne Complete in the discussion surrounding scientific communication.

As an added bonus, award winners Drs. Chris Murray and Robbie Hart participated meaningfully in BioOne’s 2020 strategic planning activities. Thus, this award not only recognizes the important work of early career researchers, it has the capacity to build leadership opportunities and grow stronger relationships between BioOne and its researcher community.
2020 Publisher Census

To foster a better understanding of the situations and circumstances that BioOne publishers experience, BioOne conducted its first publisher census in June 2020. The responses confirm the need for more regular communication with our publishers. Initial results also documented that submissions pipelines continue to be a concern for the journals, and that there is still mixed concern about open access business models.

As one of a number of such initiatives, we plan to deliver an annual census, as well as shorter surveys to gauge publisher interest in initiatives and to assess the multiple, overlapping, and divergent needs of publishers participating in the BioOne Complete collection.

BioDigest

Under the guidance of Gary Price (Infodocket.com) and Minds Alert, LLC, BioOne began development of BioDigest during the fall of 2020. This feature provides a series of internet tools that will be foundational to future products. Initially, BioDigest will be used to inform a regular publisher-focused newsletter curated to address interest in the trends and transformations in scholarly publishing. Other use-cases may include tracking grants and white papers relevant to the BioOne community at large.

BioOne Career Center

On mission to support the scientific community, the BioOne Career Center builds on our reputation as a trusted partner to the biological, ecological, and conservation communities. Serving both jobseekers and employers, this program is used to expand the BioOne audience, the BioOne brand, and cross-promote BioOne Complete. In addition to free posting for BioOne publishers, and low cost for others, the service offers gratis inclusion of volunteer opportunities and internships, use of BioOne’s events page by participating publishers to advertise conferences and meetings; and, free accounts, job alerts, and CV or résumé posts by jobseekers for registered employers to review.

Publisher Forum Series

To further facilitate education and community building, BioOne launched the publisher forum series in 2020. This series has already featured a number of webinars on such topics as how to position a journal for success in a changing library market, and BioOne’s partnership with Research4Life. Recordings of these forums are available on BioOne’s YouTube channel.

Welcome & Farewell

Board of Directors

The BioOne Board of Directors elected Chris Makowski, Ph.D. as a member-at-large to begin his tenure January 1, 2020. Chris brings a wealth of experience and perspective as the Senior Vice President of the Coastal Education and Research Foundation, Inc. and Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Coastal Research (JCR). The JCR joined BioOne as one of the collection’s first journals, and has grown exponentially to become a prominent and actively used journal. BioOne warmly welcomes Chris to the Board.

In addition, Alan H. Savitzky, Professor of Biology at the Utah State University, was elected to serve in the newly-created position of Vice Chair of BioOne’s Board.

After 15 years of valued service on the Board of Directors, James V. Maher, Provost emeritus, Distinguished Service Professor of Physics and Senior Science Advisor at the University of Pittsburgh, stepped down at the end of 2020. We wish him a well-deserved retirement from active duty and know that he stands firmly by the organization as we move forward.
BioOne Team

During 2020, BioOne bid a fond farewell to Director of Technology Michael Di Natale, under whose leadership we transitioned to the new SPIE platform, complete with CRM. The pandemic notwithstanding, BioOne welcomed three new members to the team: Beth Hutchins as Director of Product Management; Katie Kafer as Marketing Communications Associate; and Hillary Liu as Program Assistant. Although we have interacted only virtually since some have come aboard, the team has been singularly productive. We look forward to the day when this mighty team of eight will meet in person.

Financial Report of Management

2020 Financial Summary*

Publisher Consideration

Total 2020 net sales to BioOne Complete increased by 3.3% over 2019, to $7,242,003. Fifty percent of this total is allocated to BioOne overhead and 50% to BioOne publishers. Thus in 2020, publisher Revenue Sharing payments totaled $3,388,724. We are also proud to report that BioOne was again in a position to return a second—Surplus Sharing—payment to its active publishing participants from a pool of $937,705 (58% of the organization’s net operating surplus). In total, BioOne publishers received $4,326,447, 65% of BioOne net subscription sales earned in 2020.

COVID Payroll Protection Plan

In April 2020, BioOne applied and received $145,400 through the GSA’s Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan program. Full forgiveness was granted in 2021. This support has contributed to BioOne’s solid footing for 2020 and will help ease some of the negative effects posed by COVID-19 that we anticipate going forward.

Board-Designated Reserves

BioOne has a responsibility to fund its Board Designated Operational Reserve to minimum established levels after distributing Surplus Share and before adding funds to its Capital Reserve. The Board set aside an additional $117,806, to provide six months of current operating expense in 2020 ($1,400,000). The Board then contributed the remaining 2020 undesignated net assets in the amount of $561,222 to the 2020 Board Designated Capital Reserve for a total of $2,247,662. BioOne is thus in a strong financial position for future growth.

*Reported in USD

Audit and Financial Safeguards

Independent auditor Gelman, Rosenberg and Freedman, audits BioOne’s financial statements annually. BioOne received an unqualified opinion as of December 31, 2020, 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 maintains a system of internal controls to assure that its financial information is reliably reported, its assets are safeguarded, and its transactions occur and are recorded with proper authorization. BioOne’s Board of Directors provides financial oversight through its Finance and Audit & Oversight committees, both of which meet regularly with management, as well as with its independent auditors.

The investment firm AllianceBernstein L.P. manages BioOne’s assets in accordance with the organization’s investment policy. This policy was designed to protect publisher royalty revenue and earn investment income above CPI.

BioOne financial statements with the Independent Auditor’s Report are available on the BioOne website, or may be obtained by contacting BioOne directly.
With BioOne Complete there have been no concerns with the cost per download and even with the addition of new titles, the price isn’t impacted.

Amy Castillo
Manager, Electronic Resources and Scholarly Communication
Dick Smith Library, Tarleton State University
Leadership

2020 Board of Directors

Officers

Kent E. Holsinger, Chair
Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor
Vice Provost for Graduate Education
Dean of the Graduate School
University of Connecticut

Alan H. Savitzky, Vice Chair
Professor, Department of Biology
Utah State University

Joni Blake*, Secretary
Executive Director
Greater Western Library Alliance

Catherine Murray-Rust, Treasurer
Dean of Libraries
Georgia Institute of Technology

2020 Directors

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Information Resource Coordinator
Ontario Council of University Libraries, Canada

Raym Crow*
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Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC)
Managing Partner, Chain Bridge Group

James V. Maher
Provost emeritus
Distinguished Service Professor of Physics
Senior Science Advisor
University of Pittsburgh

Chris Makowski
Senior Vice President
Coastal Education and Research Foundation, Inc.
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Coastal Research

Andrew (Town) Townsend Peterson*
University Distinguished Professor and Curator for
Ornithology, Biodiversity Institute
University of Kansas, Lawrence

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Former Senior Director in Strategic Technology Policy
CISCO Systems, Inc.

Eric S. Nagy*
Associate Director, Mountain Lake Biological Station
Professor, Department of Biology
University of Virginia, Charlottesville
American Institute of Biological Sciences

Mira Waller
Associate University Librarian for Research &
Learning Services
University of Virginia, Charlottesville

James F. Williams II
Emeritus, Dean of Libraries
University of Colorado at Boulder

2020 Staff

Susan Skomal, PhD.
President/CEO

Caroline Breul
Library Services Associate

Michael Di Natale (Jan-Jun)
Director of Technology

Alexandra Vieux Frankel
Publisher Relations Associate

Beth Hutchins (Jul-Dec)
Director of Product Management

Katie Kaefer
Marketing Communications Associate

Hillary Liu
Program Associate

Christine Orr
Director of Sales and Marketing

Chelsea Tharp
North American Sales Manager

* Appointed Founding Organization representative
Directors Emeriti

Adrian W. Alexander (1999-2006)  
Rand Allen (1999-2001)  
Shirley K. Baker (2001-2008)  
David H. Carlson (2009-2016)  
E. Dale Cluff (1999-2001)  
Alan P. Covich (1999-2000)  
Guy Dresser (2001-2007)  
Susan Ford (2011-2016) †  
Ted Freeman (2001-2007)  
Richard C. Fyffe (2003-2006) †  
Joan R. Giesecke (2002-2004) †  
Jeffrey L. Horrell (2012-2016)  

Stephen C. Howell (2010-2012)  
Richard Johnson (1999-2005)  
Heather Dalterio Joseph (2001-2008)  
Alan Kahan (2005-2013)  
Robert Kidd (1999-2001)  
Leonard Krishtalka (2009-2014)  
Catherine N. Norton (2007-2012) †  
Richard T. O’Grady (1999-2014)  
Sara Rockwell (2007-2009)  
David E. Shulenberger (1999-2006)  
Denise Stephens (2006-2008)  

† Deceased

BioOne is indebted to the founding organizations that came together in 1999 and continue to invest their time and expertise to lead this collaborative and ever-evolving endeavor:

American Institute of Biological Sciences  
Allen Press, Inc.  
Greater Western Library Alliance  
Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition  
The University of Kansas