

# Elsevier publishing – a look at the numbers, and more

---

[E elsevier.com/connect/elsevier-publishing-a-look-at-the-numbers-and-more](http://elsevier.com/connect/elsevier-publishing-a-look-at-the-numbers-and-more)

By Tom Reller    Posted on 22 March 2016

---



One thing we know from serving the scientific community is that researchers like data. At Elsevier we appreciate data as well, so each year we compile and validate a wide range of figures that we feel demonstrates that we're serving our community well. We have just reviewed and certified all the data for 2015 and are pleased to share some of the more interesting numbers. The highlight for 2015 is that, along with our editors, authors and reviewers, we increased article volume while maintaining quality and reached new heights in readership, usage and citation. More importantly, authors, students and customers advanced science and improved healthcare by using this world-class content along with our analytics and decision tools to make critical decisions, enhance productivity and improve outcomes.

Tom Reller



## 2015 volume

---

- **Authors:** 1.8 million unique authors worldwide submitted 1.3 million manuscripts to Elsevier journals. (For context, we estimate the total number of active researchers globally at some 7.8 million in 2015.<sup>1</sup>)
- **Reviews:** 700,000 peer reviewers conducted 1.8 million article reviews, under the guidance of approximately 17,000 "high level handling editors." An additional 63,000 editors are affiliated with our journals, totaling 80,000 Elsevier editors. Approximately

7,000 of those editors were appointed in 2015.

- **Articles:** Approximately 400,000 of those manuscripts were eventually published in approximately 2,500 active Journals — 73 of which were launched in 2015. 400,000 is about 16%<sup>2</sup> of the total number of scholarly articles published worldwide in 2015.
- **Archive:** The 400,000 new articles brought the total number of documents available on ScienceDirect to more than 13 million. (It is over 14 million today.)
- **Access:** These articles were accessed by around 12 million people per month, with close to 900 million full-text article downloads for the year.
- **Citations:** Elsevier articles published in the 5 years ending 2014 were cited 11.5 million times in the same period<sup>3</sup> meaning *Elsevier punches above its weight with more than 25% citation share.*

## 2015 quality

---

Each of those numbers mark historic highs. Now consider the above data related to citation impact, a commonly-used proxy for quality:

- Elsevier's share of the top-cited 1% of all articles published in the 5 years ending 2014 was 21.1%.<sup>3</sup> So while we publish 16% of all scholarly articles, we publish 21% of the highest quality ('Highest'=top 1%).
- When you segment articles published in subscription-based journals by their appearance in journals classified as high, medium and low field-weighted citation impact<sup>4</sup>, we publish:
  - **High** (representing 10% of all articles): 21% Elsevier article share
  - **Medium** (representing 56% of all articles): 25% Elsevier article share
  - **Low** (representing 33% of all articles): 4% Elsevier article share

## Open access

---

Now let's look specifically at open access articles.

- We ended 2015 as the 4<sup>th</sup> largest open access publisher, with 20,000 open access (author or funder paid) articles in 2015. That represented 36% growth over 2014, whereas the market is projected to have grown at 15%<sup>5</sup>. The largest OA market provider actually reduced output year over year .
- We launched 33 new fully open access titles in 2015, including *Heliyon*, our new cross-discipline Journal, bringing our total to approximately 170. Currently more than 1700 Elsevier journals offer both subscription and open access publishing options (hybrid journals) and we publish 104 open archive journals.
- If you consider green open access options, all of our 2500 journals permit authors to share their preprints and accepted manuscripts in line with our sharing policy.
- Like subscription articles, author-paid content exceeds the market as well. On a field-weighted citation impact basis, our OA articles score 1.1, compared to the market at just 0.9.

## Beyond publishing

---

These are impressive data, but publishing is only half of the story at Elsevier today. Over the last few decades, we curated and published content, presenting our users with material to read. Going forward, we will continue to produce that highly relevant academic and professional research and knowledge. But we are now combining that knowledge with smart technology. This allows us to deliver the exact pieces of knowledge users need to support their decision and when they need to make it.

So in many ways, we're more of a data company than a publishing company today. We have several maturing products and tools that help aggregate, analyze and make recommendations based on data and we increasingly work with institutions as solutions provider and partner to navigate an increasingly data driven landscape.

Mendeley, for example is thriving as a social collaborative network, with more than 4.6 million registered users, with 817 million full text articles in their libraries, up from 2.5 million users with approximately 300 million articles when we merged in April 2013. In November 2015, it launched the Mendeley Data repository to do more with the data from that research.

Here on Elsevier Connect, you can also learn more about SciVal, Pure and Newsflo.

Our Clinical Solutions and Education businesses also innovated and evolved throughout 2015. The acquisition of InferMed combined Elsevier's extensive content with a powerful new clinical decision support engine. We also introduced Sherpath Adaptive Learning, which provides an individualized and more effective learning experience for nursing and health students. Clinical Key is growing strongly, currently accessed by more than 3,500 institutions, and we launched a new version for nursing. ExamPrep was introduced in Europe to help schools and universities track their performance.

We embarked on a number of high-profile partnerships to strengthen our engagement with the science and health sectors, including REsearch, which brought together researchers, citizens, industry and policy makers to address societal challenges. We also supported the Francis Crick Institute, the Golden Goose Awards and Falling Walls. We issued a report on Sustainability research with SciDev.net, plus numerous other reports, sponsorships and awards, with special emphasis on the developing world.

We also recently launched a new Empowering Knowledge tagline and brand campaign. *Empowering Knowledge* celebrates the extraordinary people Elsevier strives to serve. Like many of our customers, we're making a lot of changes at Elsevier, small and large, many behind the scenes, to enable a smarter user experience to advance science, technology and health. We invite you to view a series of videos that showcase the work of some of people we serve.

## Remaining challenges

---

While it was a tremendous year for our community, I don't mean to gloss over some ongoing relationship issues we have with some parts of the academic community. Or the technical hurdles to address from time to time. We committed back in 2012 to spend more time listening, learning and communicating with all our communities, and while we are doing just that, there is more work to be done. Meanwhile, we remain committed to working on communicating the value we provide alongside our efforts to improve our customers' ability to reach their objectives.

We look forward to continuing this important work in support of the research community.

---

<sup>1</sup> Elsevier analysis based on data from OECD and UNESCO.

<sup>2</sup> Elsevier's historical article share has been reported as high as 25%, and is now 16%. This is due to a migration from using Thomson Reuter data to Scopus, which has a more inclusive data set.

<sup>3</sup> Elsevier analysis of Scopus data (2014 is the latest year for which complete data are available).

<sup>4</sup> Field-weighted citation impact is an indicator which accounts for field-based differences in citation practices to allow comparison of citation impact across research disciplines, and is always benchmarked to a global baseline of 1. In this analysis, 'high' is defined as those with a value greater than 2, 'medium' less than 2 and greater than 0.5, and 'low' less than 0.5.

<sup>5</sup> This is an expected, though not yet confirmed market growth number for 2015. Recent year growth rates have been 15%.

---

## Infographics

---

Elsevier has created infographics with this data in English and Chinese:

# ELSEVIER PUBLISHING A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS, AND MORE

Key journal performance data for 2015 and other highlights from  
a business that is doing a lot more than publishing

## 2015 in Numbers

### VOLUME



**Authors:**  
1.8 million unique authors worldwide submitted 1.3 million manuscripts to Elsevier journals.  
(For context, we estimate the total number of active researchers globally at some 7.8 million in 2015.<sup>1</sup>)



**Reviews:**  
700,000 peer reviewers conducted 1.8 million article reviews, under the guidance of approximately 17,000 'high level handling editors.'<sup>2</sup>

### QUALITY



When you segment articles published in subscription-based journals by their appearance in journals classified as high, medium and low field-weighted citation impact<sup>4</sup>, we publish:



Elsevier's share of the top-cited 1% of all articles published in the 5 years ending 2014 was 21.1%.<sup>3</sup>  
So while we publish 16% of all scholarly articles, we publish 21% of the highest quality ('Highest'=top 1%).

# 数字解读爱思唯尔

2015年爱思唯尔核心期刊数据统计及业务新亮点

## 2015核心数据

数量



作者

全球180万作者向爱思唯尔旗下期刊提交了130万份手稿。

2015年活跃于全球的研究学者数量约为780万人<sup>1</sup>。



评议

在17000名资深编辑的指导下，70万名同行评审对180万份论文进行了评审。

质量



我们通过域加权引用指数<sup>2</sup>将在订阅期刊上发表的文章分为高、中、低三类：



自2010年至2014年，爱思唯尔出版的文章占同时期出版的高被引文章的21.1%。

爱思唯尔出版了全球16%的学术文章，其中21%为高被引文章。

## Elsevier Connect Contributor

As VP and Head of Global Corporate Relations at Elsevier, Tom Reller (@TomReller) leads a global team of media, social and web communicators for the world's largest provider of scientific, technical and medical (STM) information products and services. Together, they work to build on Elsevier's reputation by promoting the company's numerous contributions to the health and science communities, many of which are brought to life in this online community and information resource: *Elsevier Connect*.

## Related Stories

- Sustainability science takes the stage before UN #globalgoals summit  
By Lei Pan, PhD, and Coralie Bos, MSc | Posted on 24 Sep 2015

Download the new report on sustainability research by Elsevier and SciDev.Net



- Elsevier CEO discusses the future of health research at Research!America forum  
By Tom Reller | Posted on 22 Sep 2015

Ron Mobed talked about the government's role in balancing applied and basic research, and the publisher's role in ensuring reproducibility of results



- Meeting scientists' changing needs in a digitized world  
By Hesham Attalla, MD, PhD | Posted on 28 Jul 2015

How Elsevier and Mendeley are working with researchers to facilitate their work processes



- Video: Elsevier CEO reflects on Europe's research and innovation challenges  
By Harald Boersma | Posted on 04 Dec 2014

Ron Mobed shares a publisher's perspective at the 3rd European Intersectoral Summit on Research and Innovation (EISRI)

