

Publishers are not bad guys

A strategy for changing the reputation
of copyright in the Italian academic environment

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The issue

“Copyright as an obstacle to the progress of science”

- In the academic environment publishers are bad guys
- Copyright is guilty for every difficulty the researchers meet
 - In particular, for budgetary issues
- Focus on research rather than on didactic
 - Italian publishers more involved in didactic than in research
- The publishers association not an interlocutor anymore for the academic institutions
 - Though academics regularly work with publishers

The strategy

The message: *Publishers care*

- The evolution of didactic in higher education a key publishers' interest
- Publishers serve the university through providing educational content
- Quality of higher education is an objective that publishers share



The Strategy

Offering interesting data and occasions for debating
about core issues for the Italian academics

- È-book (è = is)
- A survey on how students study and on how they would like studying
 - In collaboration with the University of Milan-Bicocca
- Two editions: **2014** and **2015**
 - Questionnaire to 2000 students
 - Linked to a contest (creating a slogan about books and university)
 - 3 prizes = 1000€ voucher to buy books
 - 2000 c.ca students respondents
- Interesting findings
 - E.g: no preference towards digital over print
 - o “Digital natives are also print natives”!
- Public presentations in some academic environment
... and an [e-book](#) published



A survey on the lecturers' view

- **2016** - in collaboration with Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli and University of Milan
- Qualitative interviews to 100 Italian professors of different disciplines on:
 - Planning of didactic in their university
 - The didactic methodology
 - Method of students' assessment
 - Books and other didactic material assigned
 - Courses attended to improve their didactic
- First presentation in the Italian Parliament
 - Very large and qualified audience
- The main author invited to present the survey many times in several universities
- A [slide-book](#) published



- Two editions of “Processo all’Università” (**2017-2018**)
- Rigorous role play:
 - Very precise indictment
 - Starting from data (2017 ex.: “*The social elevator is broken*”) to find who is guilty (OECD, [A Broken Social Elevator? How to Promote Social Mobility](#), 2018)
 - Equal opportunities to accusation and defence, moderated by a judge
 - High reputation “lawyers” and judge
 - Each lawyer calls 2 witness that the other can cross-examine
 - The verdict by the audience (red or green cards)
 - **(No publishers speaking)**
- Very much appreciated by all participant
 - “Black and white” arguments
 - Unknown end (also for us)
 - First edition: Not-guilty
 - Second edition: Guilty



Result

Publishers care (the message passed)

- We gained reputation in the academic milieus, which was the main purpose
- It also worked with politicians
 - Though now we need to start from scratch with the new Government
- In the last two years the publishers association and/or publishers regularly invited as speakers to main conferences about the future of Italian university

Thank you

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