Open Journal Systems: The Digitization of Academic Journals

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By Rahul Guhathakurta
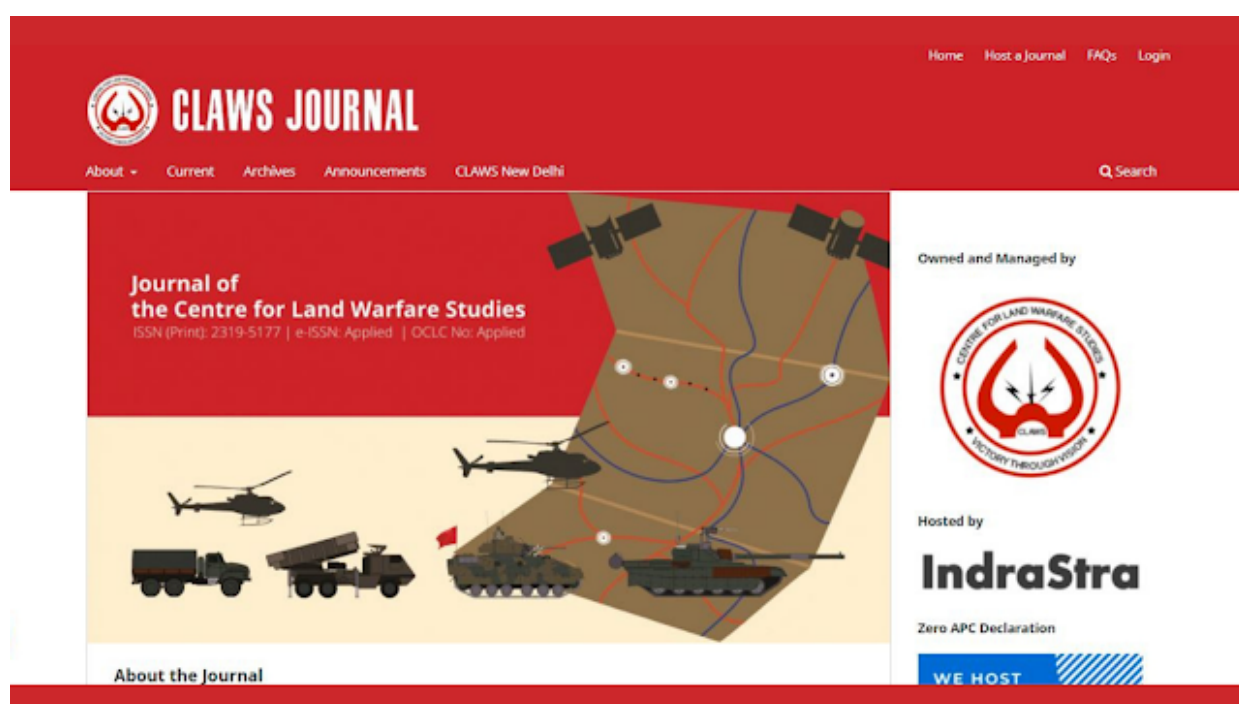
Cover Image Attribute: New Delhi-based Centre for Land Warfare Studies' Flagship Journal; "CLAWS Journal", hosted on IndraStra Open Journal Systems.

More and more library publishers are using Open Journal Systems (OJS), Open Monograph Press (OMP), and Open Preprint Systems (OPS) developed by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP). Out of these three sub-projects, OJS stands out.

The goal of the highly adaptable and scalable architecture of OJS is to not only enhance the publication process, but also to promote academic journals by increasing readership, creating a space for scientific conversation, improving publication quality, and

encouraging open access to scientific research. The software is released under the GPLv2 license, which means it can be freely downloaded, used, and modified if necessary.

OJS' key benefit is that it streamlines the submission and editorial workflow. The system offers the technical infrastructure that supports journals from the time an author submits a manuscript to the time it is peer-reviewed and published, as well as indexing. The tool establishes a clear and transparent split of users into groups such as readers, authors, reviewers, and editors, granting each group suitable system rights. OJS allows for electronic submission, revision, and publication of articles by combining the above tasks into a single platform dedicated to the entire publication process.

The increased citation and prominence of their publications benefit authors the most. Furthermore, the user interface simplifies contact with the editors, and all publication data is centralized. The author may track reviews, manage files, and oversee the entire online editing process. Also, authors can use OJS to deposit papers, offer metadata, and refer to editor and reviewer changes.

Using OJS by the reviewer to examine an article submission has resulted in a significant increase in efficiency and automation of the review process. It provides all relevant timeframes from the review process, such as the deadline for replying to an invitation to review a manuscript and the deadline for submitting the review of the same. OJS allows reviewers to send copies of article files with comments or revisions after the evaluation. The reviewer can submit notes in OJS for both the author and the editorial staff. Also, the reviewer can also check if the author has made the proposed corrections.

However, OJS is a platform designed to help editors handle the publication process remotely using a web browser. These features clearly show that OJS enables the implementation of an extensive and fully customizable article review system, allowing the verification of submission quality and timeliness, as well as contributing to the creation of a reviewer database. Furthermore, OJS promotes communication between users of the site, both inside (discussions on specific articles) and externally (emailing, mailing lists), greatly assisting the editorial team's job.

One of the advantages of utilizing OJS is that the content of a journal updated using this tool is automatically **indexed by Google Scholar**. OJS also allows the transmission of metadata, which means the actual integration of the journal with indexing systems in selected databases, thanks to the ability to install extra plug-ins. Furthermore, the

available plugins allow OJS to be integrated with a variety of publishing services like Crossref, ORCiD, and DOAJ. From a technological standpoint, useful platform functionalities include the event log, statistics and reporting elements, and – most importantly – the ability to create the final composition of the issue for publishing.

Global technological advancements impact science, both in terms of research and presentation, particularly in academic papers. One result of this approach is the gradual digitization of academic journals. And to lead this digitization, universities and other research institutions need to adopt and adapt OJS as the primary platform for their home-grown **University Press Systems**.

NOTE

IndraStra Global offers **OJS hosting service** as *a third-party commercial service provider*. For more details and pricing, visit this **link**. We are not affiliated with PKP or PKP Publishing Services (or PKP|PS).

We fully support the *HINARI/AGORA/OARE/ARDI/TEEAL/ITOCA* Access to IndraStra OJS platform; *a full waiver is given to institutions from the HINARI group A countries*, and *a 50% discount to institutions from group B*. To check the eligibility, visit this link. **link**.

About the Author

Rahul Guhathakurta (ORCID: **0000-0002-6400-6423**) is a strategic management consultant and is currently affiliated with Anaha Innovations — an Ahmedabad-based technology business incubator and private equity firm. Also, he is a primary investor in IndraStra Global — a US-based publishing company.