



People in the News

Ginny Hendricks

Ginny Hendricks has recently been appointed as the new Director of Member and Community Outreach at CrossRef. CrossRef runs the metadata engine for scholarly content, bringing together publishers and their data for the benefit of the whole community of researchers, publishers, funders, librarians and readers. It was set up by a group of publishers initially to enable reliable reference linking, and that remit has extended over the years to include other data and services that address the status of and relationships between scholarly works of all kinds. For example, CrossRef now includes services that allow publishers to show which organization funded the research, when an article has been changed or updated (or even retracted) and to check for signs of plagiarism. A recent development also enables text and data mining.¹

Your Editor asked Ginny about her background and how that had led to the new role. Ginny explained she has always been drawn to the technology of publishing, and loves translating complex propositions into compelling stories that make people want to get involved with a brand. Her career to date provides for broad experience and an excellent track record. Prior to joining CrossRef, Ginny had been consulting with publishers under Ardent Marketing for nine years, undertaking multichannel marketing projects, branding and launching products, and developing digital communities. Prior to that she launched Scopus at Elsevier in 2004, where she established advisory boards and outreach programmes with library and scientific communities. In 1998, she established an e-resources help desk for Blackwell's Information Services and later led training and communication programmes and events for the Swets digital portfolio in Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Africa.

Ginny has lived and worked in many parts of the world and managed globally dispersed creative, digital and commercial teams. She co-hosts the Scholarly Social networking events in London, and (if that were not enough) she is also studying for her Masters of Science in Digital Marketing Communications.

We wanted to know what had attracted Ginny to the new role at CrossRef. 'So many things!', she told us enthusiastically. 'The fact that CrossRef is mission-driven and not-for-profit, collaborative and inclusive; the people are pretty inspiring; the culture is quite informal and still a bit start-up-like (we're only 15 years old, a mere teenager); the awareness that "marketing" has shifted so far beyond brochures and giveaways, to outreach and community engagement, and that communication is no longer about "campaigns" but collaborating with our network, and developing and

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6 sharing useful information in helpful formats. I also love that CrossRef's reach is properly global, with current membership growth coming from the Middle and Far East, areas I have fond ties with; and it's a very interesting time to join, as the membership is diversifying more than just geographically, with over 70% of members being very small newish publishers, many of whom are open access.'

Your Editor asked Ginny about how she will overcome the usual global challenges of language and lack of local staff. Ginny explained that digital technology allows us to reach and engage with people a lot more widely now – for example, through educational webinars (of which CrossRef has a highly comprehensive programme in place) – and they will be developing a series of resources such as simple how-to videos and interactive guides. 'Regional partnerships are key too', said Ginny.

'Our members often ask us to visit and present information on best-practice publishing as well as on trends and innovations, so we're developing a series of local seminars to meet this growing demand and interest, as well as kits for 'superfans' to run their own. It's kind of a dream job in that our members seem to be really keen to volunteer and be ambassadors.'

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CrossRef deals with quite complex technical issues and your Editor wanted to know if that presents a challenge in communicating with members and potential members. 'Yes and no', explained Ginny. 'CrossRef was founded by scholarly publishing organizations, both commercial and non-profit, in 2000, and the membership was mostly medium and large primary publishers who were technically well versed and well resourced to understand the benefit of sharing metadata for linking. In the last few years the member profile has shifted significantly: 70% of members now are very small, sometimes open access, and often with few or no technical production staff or any real XML knowledge. We have developed simple web forms and other tools to enable smaller publishers to take part, and we need to consolidate and communicate these clearly as well as digitize our onboarding and support processes, and introduce a comprehensive educational programme: education is going to be a big part of my plan going forward.'

Currently, Ginny is wading through a long list of services, projects and potential projects, and trying to visualize how they all fit together. 'CrossRef Labs is where to look for the hot new initiatives. We'll take a request and start trying things out and experimenting – I love that attitude!', said Ginny, 'and you can see how projects have graduated into bona fide products, from a small working group to adoption with numerous publishers. Our most exciting recent work (what we're asked to speak on a lot) is probably the API which allows anyone to take metadata and build their own services on top of it – that's what powers many of the familiar products out there, like SHARE, ORCID and CHORUS, etc. We're also working with the Wikimedia community to add CrossRef digital object identifiers (DOIs) into articles there – Wikipedia is the eighth largest referrer of DOI articles. Our newish services have become quite established in the last year or two, people recognize some of the individual service names such as FundRef, CrossMark and CrossCheck, and they have a great following. One of the first things I'm doing is refreshing our brand identity and creating a new hierarchy with new names and logo marks that will allow us to launch new services more cleanly. I'm also hiring new staff to focus on digital content creation and international outreach, as well as to build stronger relationships with non-publishers such as researchers and library staff. But the thing I'm most excited about is re-articulating CrossRef's core metadata services, and generally just strengthening our role in the scholarly community.'

A new role is always very demanding and Ginny said, 'I am throwing myself into CrossRef and am really psyched about the people and the work. Thankfully, I have a fantastic team who have worked at CrossRef for years, and are bringing me up to speed.' Ginny is also a mother and 'fairly enamoured' of her two-and-a-half-year-old son, Milo. However, she not only combines the demands of the new role with motherhood, but also takes an active role in her local community: 'I travel a lot', she

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7

explained, 'and Milo's excited by my aeroplane stories but I also work from home so we still hang out quite a bit together, an arrangement I know I'm very lucky to have. Aside from this, I'm also involved with my local London neighbourhood which is seeing – that oft-used word – “regeneration”! I'm part of a community group that represents residents and local businesses by looking at how funds should be best spent to benefit everyone, from air quality to cycle paths to shop front improvements to bus routes to mixed social housing. We have had some small victories! I usually just have time to help with Twitter or the odd e-mail but I love being part of a neighbourhood that is empowered to steer its own development and encourage change. Actually, that goes for my joining CrossRef too!



Reference

1. Lammey, R, CrossRef Text and Data Mining Services, *Insights*, 2015, 28(2), 62-68; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1629/uksg.233> (accessed 5 June 2015).

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To cite this article:

Estelle, L, and Hendricks, G, People in the News: Ginny Hendricks, *Insights*, 2015, 28(2), 5–7; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1629/uksg.249>

Published by UKSG in association with Ubiquity Press on 07 July 2015