CloudPublish

The Role of Preprints and eJournals in Accelerating Scientific Communication

Open access and digital publishing have transformed how research is shared—making it faster, more inclusive, and more accessible than ever before. Two key innovations driving this shift are preprints and eJournals. While they serve different roles, they often work in tandem to accelerate the dissemination of knowledge. This article explores how preprints and eJournals complement (or sometimes compete with) each other in terms of speed, credibility, and reach. We will also reflect on lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic and discuss how platforms like **CloudPublish** can support this dynamic landscape.



What Are Preprints and eJournals?

Preprints are research papers shared publicly prior to peer review, providing immediate access to new findings and inviting feedback from the global academic community. In contrast, eJournals are electronic versions of traditional peer-reviewed journals, ensuring scholarly credibility and establishing a lasting record of research.

Both Preprints and eJournals Offer Valuable Benefits:

- Preprints prioritize speed and openness, allowing researchers to share findings rapidly and engage with the community early in the process.
- Meanwhile, eJournals provide validation through peer review, enhancing visibility and delivering formal recognition that can support academic careers and long-term impact.

These two formats aren't mutually exclusive. In fact, many research communities are learning how to use them together in a strategic publishing cycle where preprints provide an early draft and eJournals offer the final, polished version of record.

Speed

Preprints enable researchers to share their work within days, making rapid dissemination possible—an approach that proved crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this time, preprints allowed urgent public health research to be made available instantly, facilitating global collaboration and accelerating scientific response efforts.

Recognizing the need for speed, many eJournals have also adapted. Leveraging digital publishing tools and advanced peer review management software, numerous journals now offer fast-track workflows and early online publication options, ensuring timely dissemination without compromising quality.

At **CloudPublish**, our end-to-end journal publishing platform supports faster peer review processes, automated decision tracking, and seamless communication with authors. These features help reduce publication delays while upholding rigorous editorial standards.

Credibility

One of the key distinctions between preprints and eJournals is credibility.

Preprints share findings early, but without peer review, they may contain unverified claims. While useful for discussion and collaboration, they require readers to critically evaluate the content. During COVID-19, some preprints influenced public discourse before undergoing scientific scrutiny.

By contrast, eJournals rely on formal peer review to ensure quality. The process checks for data integrity, ethical compliance, and reproducibility. A trusted academic journal platform can manage these workflows effectively and maintain transparency.

Journal management system ensures that every manuscript follows a controlled editorial path. Editors can monitor peer review stages, request revisions, and maintain version control all in one dashboard.

Reach

Preprints are usually free and open to all, making them ideal for early sharing. Researchers, policymakers, and the public can access findings without paywalls. However, preprints are often not indexed in academic databases, which may limit their discoverability.

eJournals, particularly open access ones, can match this reach. When hosted on a secure and scalable journal hosting platform, they offer broader distribution, DOI registration, and long-term archiving. This ensures the research is both accessible and citable.

With **CloudPublish's** open access journal hosting software, publishers can create branded portals that meet discoverability and metadata standards. This improves SEO, discoverability, citation tracking, and global reach.

Lessons from COVID-19

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The pandemic underscored the vital roles of both preprints and peer-reviewed eJournals in rapid scientific communication. In 2020, thousands of COVID-19-related preprints were shared globally, significantly accelerating vaccine development and treatment protocols. In response, many journals adopted fast-track publishing strategies, reducing review cycles from months to weeks to ensure timely dissemination of critical findings.

Cloud-based digital publishing technology proved essential in maintaining agility. Features such as automated reviewer matching, version control, and comprehensive editorial audit trails became indispensable tools, enabling journals to manage surge submissions efficiently while upholding high standards. **CloudPublish** supported these efforts, allowing our clients to navigate the increased volume of submissions without compromising quality.

A notable example is the early preprint findings on the use of corticosteroids like dexamethasone. Within weeks of initial release on preprint servers, the data was evaluated, peer-reviewed, and published in leading eJournals. This rapid cycle facilitated the swift adoption of updated treatment protocols by medical institutions worldwide, demonstrating the profound impact of responsible, accelerated scientific communication.

Moreover, the concerted global effort among researchers, editors, and technology providers played a crucial role in reducing misinformation. Many journals began linking directly to preprints or developing overlay journals, exemplifying how collaboration—rather than competition—between preprints and eJournals can foster both speed and trust.

Another pivotal example is the rapid sharing of genomic sequencing data of the virus. Researchers made this information openly available via preprints and data repositories, enabling vaccine developers to begin design work immediately—well before formal journal publication. Without preprints, the speed of the pandemic response would have been drastically diminished.

Risks to Consider

While preprints promote openness, they also introduce risks:

- Misinformation: Without review, findings may be flawed or overstated.
- Media Misuse: Journalists might cite unverified research as fact.
- Academic Scooping: Others might rush similar work to publication.

For eJournals, delays in peer review and limited access (for non-OA models) can slow down knowledge dissemination. That’s why a hybrid strategy combining rapid preprint sharing with formal peer-reviewed publication is becoming the norm.

How CloudPublish Supports Balanced Scientific Communication

CloudPublish helps academic publishers strike the right balance between speed and credibility. With our:

- Peer review management software

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- Open access publishing tools
- Custom journal management system

You can deliver timely publications without compromising quality.

Our platform supports:

- Preprint integrations and metadata tagging
- Reviewer matching and tracking
- Flexible editorial workflows
- GDPR-compliant, cloud-based submission systems
- Multi-journal management features
- Real-time dashboards and performance analytics

A Complementary Ecosystem

Preprints and eJournals are not rivals—they are essential partners in the shared mission to accelerate and uphold the integrity of scientific discovery. Preprints offer immediacy and open access, while eJournals provide validation and long-term credibility. Together, they foster a more transparent, responsive, and trustworthy research environment.

With **CloudPublish** as your digital partner, you can build a scalable, integrated publishing ecosystem that seamlessly supports both rapid dissemination and rigorous peer review. From preprint-ready workflows to peer-reviewed excellence, our platform empowers publishers to lead with both speed and trust.

Take the Next Step:

Are you ready to modernize your publishing workflows and stay ahead in the evolving landscape of scholarly communication? Explore **CloudPublish's** solutions today and ensure your journals are prepared for the future of research dissemination.

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