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GETTING THE BEST OUT OF PAPER
AN ANALYSIS OF UNIDO'S PUBLISHING
INFRASTRUCTURE

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Executive Summary

UNIDO has the in-house authors, expertise, and information to support a commercial publications programme. At the same time, UNIDO can never publish for profit alone. Thus any strategy to maximise income and minimise cost in terms of publications must also ensure that all constituents still receive the results of UNIDO's work.

The present UNIDO publishing system is insufficiently flexible for publications to be optimally produced for sale. Even the best works fail if they are published too late, or marketed or produced poorly.

Commercial, "for sale", publications must be commissioned/contracted with a market in mind. Present acquisition policies are driven, naturally, by UNIDO programmes rather than market needs. If UNIDO is to develop a commercial publishing list it must apply strict market-led guide-lines, choosing titles in relation to market size, competition, availability of authors and ability of the market to pay.

While UNIDO programme directors have the best understanding of the types of material and potential authors among their programmes and staff, such a commercial publishing policy requires professional publishing staff to manage the projects on a daily basis.

Commercial titles sell on their quality. Refereeing is therefore essential. The present system of internal refereeing is open to passive, if not active, abuse and few internal staff will be sufficiently expert in another subject to give a constructive review (i.e. in terms of changes to be made, gaps, openings etc.). UNIDO should therefore always use external referees, best organised in editorial boards. Such referees will also aid in the protection of the acquisition editor from political influences within and around UNIDO.

Commercial titles must be timely. Contracting and writing schedules must be stream-lined. Symposia, which produce "proceedings", must be planned with publication in mind, and periodicals must appear on time. Overall, a commitment to producing publications for sale according to a fixed schedule must be made.

UNIDO titles can broadly be divided into three groups: Functional, UNIDO Charter/PR, and Mastheads. The latter will form the basis of a commercial publication list.

Some of the functional titles are of more use to UNIDO as image builders in the developing world than as commercial publications; these might either be freely distributed or co-published with local publishers.

The UNIDO PR publications, such as the Global Report and the Annual Report, need to be re-examined. The Global Report, if it is the flag-ship, sells very poorly while it puts an enormous strain on the organisation. The Annual Report appears to be a wasted opportunity. While it could be the organisation's "calling card" it appears as an internal document. Both projects affect the in-house publishing procedures and should be separated from the commercial publications production scheme.

The present policy of co-publishing books, some of which are well produced and successful, proves that UNIDO produces quality publications; but the programme is not producing real revenues. UNIDO should investigate expanding this by producing more series, periodicals, and journals for sale. The latter give better cash flow and financial stability, but would need to be managed on a daily basis.

UNIDO's co-publishing contract is strict and could "frighten off" co-publishers. On the other hand, UNIDO can deliver finally edited books and even produce them, so reducing a co-publisher's risk and increasing UNIDO's profit. UNIDO should negotiate on a wider scale of options and weaken "negative negotiation clauses", such as the need to produce 500 copies for internal distribution, so they are not a threat to the commercial success of the project. Co-publishers in the developing as well as developed world should be sought.

UNIDO will be unable to establish any long-term publishing operation, co-publishing or not, under the present budget situation. A rotating fund is required to allow for production and promotion planning. Publishing requires continuity.

Good budgeting requires sales control, analysis and freedom to seek out best terms. The present sales operation is inefficient. It does not appear to aggressively market the products and there is little or no stock control; it is not the basis for a commercial future.

In conclusion

UNIDO has the potential to produce a profitable publication list. To manage this, UNIDO should appoint an acquisition editor, delegate desk editor(s) and, finally, appoint marketing personnel. To provide a step-wise transition from the present to this future scenario, UNIDO could appoint a consultant to develop the present list further and negotiate longer term co-publishing contracts.

1 Introduction

"Publishing" means many things to many people — to some it is a hobby, others, a duty, and to many more, a source of income. Whatever the reason, publications are "calling cards"; illustrating the quality as well as the content of programmes. They are of vital importance in swaying opinions with regard to the efficiency and worth of the author, be that an individual or an organisation.

UNIDO has to publish. In addition to the "publication for income aspect", much of the organisation's output will need to be printed so it can be recorded, read and acted upon. Furthermore, a lot of UNIDO's intelligence must be stored for access and dissemination. UNIDO's total expertise is an obvious resource which can be exploited in a variety of ways; but most of these will be through some form of paper or electronic publication.

This *need* means that UNIDO can never publish for profit alone, but it also means that UNIDO must have a publishing policy aimed at maximising these resources — in terms of use and finance.

Such a policy will therefore have to balance a number of factors, from maximum dissemination to minimum costs, from statistical analysis to commercial interest. Thus, in developing this strategy, it is pointless to analyse only those titles with sales potential; there is little point in analysing the sales side of a publishing list without researching the list itself: in the words of one of the better scientific publishers of the 60s and 70s — bad products don't sell — but you can only measure the potential by looking at the whole.

This analysis therefore began with an examination of UNIDO's present publishing activities¹. This identified many problems, especially when trying to measure "performance". It is extremely difficult to find if books sell; the present situation delivers poor or no statistics and, on asking for a list of present "best-sellers", the consultant was given data on books that sold *outside* the present system. Everyone seemed to acknowledge that the previous system of allowing managers to choose volumes for sale was inefficient and open to various kinds of abuse, but few felt that a committee could really choose titles much better. Many saw an essential need for UNIDO to improve its PR and dissemination of results; the more so in these increasingly difficult financial times when UNIDO will have to compete for

¹ It was impossible, in the time available, to examine in detail all the publications. Thus I apologize to any author who might be mis-represented or whose work might not have been fully understood. Furthermore, projects were, in general, looked at in "groups" so that most comments refer to an "average" rather than an individual title. This means that some individual titles might appear to be gaining more, or less, credit than they deserve.

money instead of obtaining "core fees" through the present budget system, but few felt this could happen in the present structure. Overall, managers, and staff alike, seem to feel that the best sides of UNIDO should be reported but the present bureaucracy prevented many opportunities from being taken. But there was a gentle confidence in the potential quality of the material.

2 Project execution

The study was executed according to the "Terms of Reference for Publishing Consultant." Following an initial survey of a sample of publications, interviews were held with UNIDO staff. These included members of the Publication Board and others who had an interest in publications per se. During the research, ad hoc interviews were also held with a variety of other staff to test general awareness, need for/of publications, and general organisational points.

3 ... Examine the present procedures for UNIDO sales publications...

3.1 A commercial publishing house

The "market level" of UNIDO sales volumes can be compared to that of a STM (scientific technical and medical) publisher with a strong interest in economics.

Acquisition of titles

Such a theoretical commercial publishing house would base its financial success on a mixed list of journals (or periodicals/serials) and books. These volumes would be acquired by an acquisition (commissioning) editor working against a matrix of marketing need, available authors, and the company's promotion strengths (*The 4 Ws — why is it needed, who needs it, who will buy it and who will write it?*).

Titles are chosen in relation to market size, competition, availability of authors and ability of the market to pay. Quite often an idea for a volume precedes the choice of author. Then the idea, and proposed contents and "aims and scope", is refereed by experts in the field, modified if needed, and put to a suitable author (or teams of writers with an editor). The manuscript is prepared, again refereed, and the volume produced as quickly as possible (a maximum of 6 months) so as to reduce the *dating* of the manuscript.

The majority of these steps, from conception to production, can be handled without a formal publishing infrastructure. A good editor, and an experienced board of editorial advisers, can ensure quality and many small publishers consist of little more than one or more acquiring editors supported by such freelance teams.

Production

The submitted manuscript is usually edited by in-house desk, or copy, editors. Nowadays, many STM publishers only edit lightly, to ensure *no ambiguity* rather than *masterful writing*, and many more really prefer to publish from the authors camera ready copy (CRC), or a submitted word-processor file.

The move to CRC came about mainly as a cost saver, although it is often claimed that the reason is to "save time" — dating is one of a publication's greatest dangers. Both are true as CRC allows one to reduce the desk editing to a minimum and prepare the final product by "cut and paste".

Production time is reduced, but so is quality; poor grammar, indifferent style, use of non-standard terms etc. means that many such products leave much to be desired. Furthermore, the often uneven typing, amateur lay-out and less than ideal graphics have meant that many publishers have re-thought this policy so that, with the introduction of the word-processor and desk-top publishing, they are once again paying more attention to copy editing (repairing the author's diskette when required). Even so, the detailed "editing" of the 60s seems to have disappeared.

Promotion and Marketing

A key measurement of the success of any commercial publisher is the marketing department; even the best title will not sell if it does not reach the correct market at the right time.

Promotion and marketing, although really two different subjects, are usually referred to as the same in STM publishing. They are certainly a critical factor in any publisher's success as the marketing department must translate the initial market research, which indicated the need for such a volume, into sales: finding the correct mailing lists, producing an attractive folder, supporting the book trade; often the marketing department is at least tangentially involved in ensuring that money is received and booked and that the volumes leave the warehouse. These steps, unlike acquisition which needs subject specialism, can hardly be handled by well meaning experts; they require professional training and a good infrastructure.

Conclusion

The commercial publisher is looking for products to fill market needs; there are many cases where ideal volumes, through little fault of their own except, perhaps, that they would be too expensive to produce, or that the market is too diffuse, remain unpublished. Once the product is identified, it is

produced as swiftly as possible and brought to the market as an identifiable, defined product.

4 The UNIDO publishing system

UNIDO publishes a great deal; various teams produce manuals, abstract journals, directories, newsletters, primary journals, monographs and reference works. Software and diskette products are either planned or, in some cases, already successes.

Acquisition

With the exception of a few titles that have been developed by individual authors close to their market, very few UNIDO titles and products have been developed against a researched market matrix; they are "end products" rather than "marketable products". Naturally, some authors had and have a clear understanding of what their market requires and produce books accordingly. Others, perhaps with hindsight, filled a niche which has led to some excellent performances (while this might sound derogatory, there are very few "best sellers" that were planned that way!). Recently, titles have been selected for co-publication experiments and these have benefitted from some further UNIDO market research. However, there is still no mechanism to learn from these successes, passing the experience on to other authors.

The basic premise for the co-publishing experiment is to check on the value of the volume (if a commercial publisher takes it, he will believe in it, therefore the standard is good). This is working; there is, and will be, a continuing interest from commercial publishers for the UNIDO list. However, the interest in using a co-publisher is increased, as far as many of the authors are concerned, by the fact that co-publishing leads to outside editing and a way around the in-house editorial bottle-neck (although care should be exercised as few publishers edit that thoroughly these days, see above).

Whatever route is chosen, quality is essential. In this regard, the present system of internal refereeing is doomed to long-term failure — it is open to passive, if not active, abuse ("we'll let this through because he/she was in favour of our title") and few internal staff are sufficiently expert in another subject to give a constructive review (i.e. in terms of changes to be made, gaps, openings etc.). Furthermore, few staff have any experience of publishing markets and expectations and so cannot referee on market need.

Production

UNIDO shares with the UN a detailed and skilled editorial section. This team has clearly been established to ensure that the publications which will reach the public are produced in a clear and unambiguous style. It is politically essential, as well as PR-necessary, to ensure that the released texts, often written by non-native English speakers, are accurate and well written.

A great deal of the material passing through this section appears to be for procedural purposes, and so has to be produced to strict deadlines. These "unmovable schedules" tend to force delays on other projects and publications falling outside these deadlines seem open to delay. This is seen as a key factor in prolonging production times, dating material and rendering it less commercial and effective; and in raising internal, hidden, costs. As such it poses a major obstacle to producing a commercial list of publications and unfortunately turns well-meaning authors against the "system".

It is for this reason that some managers, actively following the co-publishing line, are looking for new staff and consultants with proven writing ability. They see this as a way of by-passing, or reducing the delays introduced by such controls. Such steps, plus the use of the word-processor and some editorial tools (for instance, mount the UN preferred terms in a spelling check programme to ensure that basic editorial rules are followed), could lead to a further reduction in the time needed for editing some volumes; however not every team will be able to appoint such staff, and many teams should not! Writing ability is not necessarily the *forte* of an otherwise excellent field engineer.

Sales

The end-result of any promotion or marketing campaign is to sell. This requires reaching the market, usually through direct mail, advertising, and the book trade. The present situation, using the UN sales offices, is basically unacceptable. There is no specific promotion, no linked marketing campaigns, little evidence of any specific image building through advertising and no "UNIDO folders campaigns". The cost of the present system, to the UN as a whole, must be running at absurd levels as money is transferred from one UN office to another for books that often are not actively sold.

This criticism has to be tempered with the fact that some volumes have sold well and so buyers can find their way through the system. One would imagine that the UN sales offices in New York and Geneva should be able to promote titles and so develop the whole list; but I have failed to find real evidence of an active, market orientated, approach. Basically, the present system is clouded in mist which means that campaigns to improve and/or exploit it, cannot be developed.

Print Runs and Stock

Research through some older files indicated that UNIDO was faced in the not-too-distant past with an enormous stock problem, over 400,000 unsold titles. This stock problem probably came about through a non-market orientated publishing policy, coupled to a poor selling strategy with little promotion or aggressive marketing, and a stable print-run policy. Print-run/sales analysis activities are absolutely essential if costs are to be controlled and prices set to reflect market need. In fact, without these, it will be impossible to publish properly.

Conclusion

The present system is "back-to-front". Staff are either looking for volumes that might enhance their unit's image, or are looking for titles with some kind of market potential; instead of looking for markets where UNIDO is strong, detailing these markets and then identifying how best to exploit UNIDO's talents so as to gain the best image (and sales). To do this properly requires the support of professional publishing staff and a recognition that nothing dates faster than information. The present system is too slow — no publishing house can work by committee. Projects evolve rapidly, markets change. A symposium that appeared on the fringe of a field when it was planned (perhaps reluctantly) can suddenly become key to an international movement. Late registrations, and cancellations, can alter the content of a symposium volume so that it suddenly must be published.

However, the work of the Publications Board in stimulating co-publications and the fact that certain of these are working well, shows that UNIDO has the potential to produce a saleable list; and cut internal costs.

5 UNIDO's Calling Cards

This consultation concentrates upon UNIDO's *sales publications* but such a distinction is difficult to make. Currently, as reported above, every title is potentially a sales title and UNIDO's image is largely defined by the publications it produces.

Broadly speaking, three classes of sales publications have been identified:

Functional
UNIDO Charter/PR
Mastheads.

Functional Titles

These can be typified as the Manuals, Guide to ... , Monitors and Directory volumes. They usually have a direct relationship to the needs of the developing world but many would also be useful outside this area.

It is clear that placing a high price on some of these books will be counter-productive. While there is sometimes a case to be made for "conferring value" (no price no value) many of those in the developing world that should benefit from such volumes do not have the funds to buy. A "for sale" policy will therefore work against the relationship between the engineer and his target group (if his advice is no longer free but is difficult to obtain and costly) and, for some of the cheaper volumes, it will cost more than the sales price to collect the money. Thus a "free volume" saves UNIDO, improves PR and serves the user community better. Perhaps UNIDO could set a "lower limit" for sales prices.

Many titles have sold well during the past few years (e.g. *Manual for the Preparation of Industrial Feasibility Studies, Guidelines for Project Evaluation, Guidelines to Guarantee and Warranty Provisions in Transfer of Technology Transactions, Manual on the Use of Consultants in Developing Countries*). It is clear that they are written for their clientele and have a good sales potential. These markets can probably be identified among the under-developed countries and so marketing effort can be concentrated there. The "developed" market is probably less interested.

This could mean that UNIDO should look more at how to distribute such titles through developing world outlets. In certain cases it might be possible to let local publishers have the rights for certain titles; implicit with this right goes the need for the company to do its utmost to sell volumes at local rates and to give UNIDO accurate market feedback. In that way market need and new titles will be identified.

Other functional titles, such as the MONITOR series (e.g. *Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology Monitor*) might be treated in the same way, although these often also have sales potential outside the developing world. Here UNIDO might again consider a split market approach, with local publishers producing at cheap rates for certain countries and using a "western" co-publisher for the industrialised market. Thus, if it was decided to commercialize the Monitors, UNIDO might consider to:

- produce the masters in Vienna, on a regular basis;
- send the CRC to satellite co-publishers in the developing world for local reproduction and sale;
- sell the CRC, or finished product, in the developed world through a co-publishing or other agreement.

UNIDO Charter/PR Titles

Organisations need "calling cards" and UNIDO is no exception. The Global Report is seen by most senior staff, and certainly by the Director-General (see preface in the 1987 edition) in this light but, at the same time, few staff (spoken to) really seem to feel that it succeeds.

This "reluctance to admire" might come from the obvious fact that the Global Report dominates the entire UNIDO publishing system. The need for translation into French, the huge amount of editorial control and effort, and the tight schedule means that other projects are delayed, budgets are skewed and tempers frayed. It is clear that the total cost to the organisation must be huge — is UNIDO getting its worth?

The sales figures, obtained for the current volume, are very poor: less than 150 copies of the English and less than 30 copies of the French editions had been sold. True, 1200 copies had been taken by the UN sales points but these had not resulted in actual sales — who does read the Global Report? Clearly questions must be asked as to whether this project is satisfying its main aim of representing UNIDO. If sales indicate interest then there is little interest. Yet if so much skill and effort goes into the volume surely this data is required? Comparisons with the World Bank Annual Report need to be made. Studies on market awareness, who knows it, who buys it, why do not others buy it are essential.

If UNIDO is to streamline its publication services then they will have to modify the production system so that other projects can be prepared in parallel to the Global Report. Much might be done with the preparation of the Global Data itself, presumably the basic data is already stored in a database and perhaps this could become a central file which is updated and used for new editions. Is the format correct? Perhaps the Global Report offers too much information? Does the market actually require specific sections? In that case the Global Report might be divided into more subject-specific sections and cumulated for internal needs. One might even consider a different type of presentation.

Another more common PR tool is the Annual Report; from international banks to social societies, this is the medium used to attract the attention of the outside world. Hopefully, the UNIDO Annual Report is not used in this way as it is difficult to read, poorly produced and, at best, gives a general impression of being an internal document. This is a wasted opportunity. The content should be essential reading for hundreds if not thousands of journalists, planners and developing-world-watchers. If the content truly reflects the progress of the agency then it should be produced as a quality booklet and distributed free. Few political figures will read, or understand,

the Global Report but they might browse an Annual Report and see how important UNIDO is to the developing world.

Politically, it is apparent that these volumes, even if not needed by the buying market, are required by UNIDO staff, supporters and donor agencies. The content should therefore be properly analysed, the target groups identified, and the products tailored to these needs; costs might then be reduced. A "glossy" Annual Report supported perhaps by the Global Report, again produced to the highest standards with perhaps a cheaper version for sale, might serve UNIDO better; and generate more financial support in terms of donations/budget support from participating nations. Finally, sales might also be improved, perhaps the Global Report needs to be supplied as a statistical programme in magnetic media. Overall, it might be wise to remove these two projects from the usual editing/production route so that they do not interfere with the rest of UNIDO's output but still receive the treatment they require.

Masthead Titles

Income will come from titles aimed at the market. Some of these will be among the functional titles but the rest can generally be referred to as Masthead Titles, as UNIDO should do all it can to ensure that all sales publications enhance UNIDO's image; in fact the sales publications must be of a sufficiently high standard that they "sell" because they are UNIDO. In addition to in-house generated titles, opportunities to produce quality products from commissioned activities, symposia, courses and even major lectures, should be taken. In all cases these opportunities should be set to market need.

A number of books and software programmes have sold very well. Some of these filled a market niche and others have been co-published. UNIDO therefore has a clear number of areas where successful co-publishing, or perhaps later self-generated, sales can be made. Basically these areas will be high quality, perhaps rapidly moving or requiring UNIDO added-value. Wherever possible, a subscription service is better than a single sale (it is cheaper, one gets the money "up-front" so aiding cash flow, and one develops a captive market from which to sell other, related, products).

The present Industrial Development Review Series published with Blackwell is an excellent example, fulfilling all these criteria. UNIDO should not expect huge sales but if Blackwell manage to sell some 650 copies of each volume and you produce some 5 volumes per year then this project could generate some £150,000.00 turnover per annum for the publisher (on a discounted income of, say, £50.00 per sale). Such amounts could form the basis for UNIDO to finance a future acquisition and marketing team.

Journals and Periodicals

Primary journals are a publisher's best friend. They generate positive cash flow, they can be filled with cheap, unsolicited, material, and they enhance images. For instance, the European Molecular Biology Organisation managed to add more gloss to its image by publishing the EMBO Journal, along the lines of the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) publication, i.e. publishing quality comes from institute quality. While UNIDO's market area is such that it will be hard pressed to follow suit, there are opportunities that should be followed in terms of supporting journals whose "allure" can rub off on UNIDO.

The difficulties for UNIDO are that such journals have to be well organised, appear on time and have well refereed material. Presently, the production services would not allow for a great expansion of irregularly flowing material but the journals could be contracted out.

There are a number of *periodicals* that can be used to start this line. Some of these could be abstract journals, others newsletter and still others a mixture of various inputs. One example which might be rapidly exploited is the journal "Industry and Development". An international editorial board, with an external editor, could be appointed to attract manuscripts; this board would also referee the input. The UNIDO input could be merged with these submitted manuscripts to ensure a lively journal and maintain UNIDO's image abroad. This would be a potential co-publishing project.

The Monitor series are also possibilities. If these appeared on schedule and were better produced (i.e. 16-24 pages, stapled or saddle stitched, A3 folded) they could probably be sold for around \$ 150.00 per volume of 12 issues in the industrial market. However, care would have to be taken about the content. Some publishers presently turn a blind eye to the reproduction of their material in these newsletters seeing, as they do, that this product is sent free to the developing world².

UNIDO also has considerable experience and data in such areas as "Materials". The INECA Abstract Journal has enjoyed a good start but this again appears too infrequently (it is essential that UNIDO publishes at least one issue this year to prevent people thinking it has died). If the INECA publication was internationalised, with an editorial board accepting original

² I have checked with two companies whose material MONITOR reproduces. Both say that they would protest if UNIDO began to flout copyright convention and then competed in their market place. Thus greater care would have to be taken in clearing the right to reproduce articles and sections if these magazines were sold in the developed market.

as well as journalistic articles and brought to a three or four issue per year schedule (in the first place), UNIDO would have a calling card in this area; and an income.

Symposia

Symposia offer an opportunity and a challenge. For instance, UNIDO recently organised the Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development (ESID) conference which turned out an important success. The decision was then taken to publish this, to consolidate the lead UNIDO had established. But present procedures will mean that the volume might be delayed until as late as June 1992. By that time all the good will and political advantage gained in October 1991 will have disappeared, as will the sales potential of the volume.

UNIDO must be involved in many such symposia a year. The organisers should ensure that they choose the speakers in line with the potential market, that if possible, and if participants are paying to attend, they sell each participant a copy of the book by including it in the registration fee; and that the product, even if it means missing some of the papers, is produced rapidly (again if UNIDO is financing the symposium, the organisers should only pay the promised travel costs to the author (s) when his/her manuscript has been received). Furthermore, deciding whether or not to publish the proceedings at the symposium itself, is too late. The best authors will not submit, those that do will be late, and the organiser has no sanctions left to persuade otherwise. Better to plan to publish and then cancel.

Databases

Industry and Environment, a guide to sources of information, is an excellent example of how UNIDO can use an internal database to produce an up-datable publication. The database can be programmed to produce CRC and the material can be checked by spelling software that can be adapted to catch most UN errors. Furthermore, subsequent editions can be produced from the up-dated database reducing the bulk of the checking and the typesetting.

Increasingly, publications will come from computer files and UNIDO must investigate what files it has that might be sold as paper, and as magnetic media. Some of the statistical volumes might well lend themselves to being sold as a magnetic tape with an accompanying printed summary of conclusions and findings.

Again, the Industrial Development Review Series might also consider mounting their basic material on a database host, rather than selling it on diskettes or CD ROMs. In general, online databases need to *change* by more than 25% per annum so as to lure the user back to the base at regular intervals. There are a number of database hosts that take material, mount it,

promote it to their users, and pay the producer a fee according to use. In Europe, Datastar is developing a good business programme but there are more specialist services such as NEXIS. UNIDO should avoid exclusive contracts unless there is a very good reason. Furthermore, pricing should be done in comparison to the competing databases on the system (normally, the database host sets a fee and the producer sets his own).

UNIDO also has a responsibility to providing the developing world with such material. The database management system micro CDS-ISIS, although criticised by some "western" computer programmers, is a work-horse that can be used for many years to come. It provides UNIDO with a cheap mechanism of sending database products to the developing world and should be used and possibly even supported by the organisation.

In this regard the directors should take care to ensure that the present "computing consultation exercise" pays attention to those that build and distribute databases and other files. Computer consultants do not always listen to the users, who know what they use the computer for. This can mean that perfectly acceptable systems are replaced by more efficient but non-transportable solutions. Ironically publishing does not need the most efficient and modern computer technology; most commercial databases are running on 60's searching software. It does however need good support so that the user has a reliable technology and can rely on being able to buy new on-going products for that technology.

New Media

Many of UNIDO's products lend themselves to new media. While books are typically seen as "the publication", databases are increasingly important and many statistical products can better be sold as tape or diskette products rather than lists of figures.

In addition, there are a number of in-house UNIDO databases that produce information for publications. These might be exploited themselves, in association with other organisations/content, or used as the basis for further projects.

The INTIB databases are also potentially useful "publications"; for instance, the METADEX diskette is another example of how UNIDO material, joined to outside data, makes one good product. In certain cases UNIDO might like to look for co-sponsors, agencies/publishers who have relevant material that can be combined (e.g. the Industry and Environment publication). In others, the INTIB database can provide filler material for periodicals, MONITORS etc.

6 Recommendations

"..... Advise on ways to systematize the selection of documents for publication".

Acquisition

Each step in choosing a title for publication within a commercial publishing house can be found in UNIDO. However, as said earlier, the process is not "demand-led" but is developed from other, parallel, UNIDO activities.

Thus UNIDO has an Editorial Department, and some of these staff are well equipped to handle such matters as co-publishing, external printing, and even sales. Nevertheless, their main task is to produce well written texts; not build a comprehensive publishing list³.

UNIDO's present system for choosing titles is also a compromise; a Publications Board, even staffed by experienced authors, is really too unwieldy an organ to design and manage a commercial list. Simply put, if volumes are to be "published" then the process must be managed on a daily basis; this requires an acquisition editor.

The Acquisition Editor will, initially at least, work on the internal list. His/her tasks should include:

- designating, with the help of experienced UNIDO staff, the best market segments for UNIDO publications;
- analysing which present UNIDO titles do well and why;
- developing a publishing policy by subject area;
- alerting managers to the need for volumes fitting these market profiles;
- establish project guide-lines for managers to follow when looking for titles;
- actively acquiring titles according to these profiles;
- establishing per-project budgetting so that books, once agreed, are not delayed due to funds;
- selecting and managing external editorial and refereeing panels;
- monitoring all aspects of production;
- arrange for co-publishing agreements where necessary;
- monitoring sales performance.

³ The roles of desk and acquisition editor are virtually always divided in commercial publishing houses as they demand very different skills and training.

Such an appointment would improve the present situation and yet not disturb the present UNIDO infrastructure (a great deal). The editor should report to a senior director and the results of the programme might still be discussed and monitored by the Publications Board. However, it is essential that this position is not open to pressure from internal staff anxious to use "publications" as a tool for internal and external PR.

It is for this reason that publishing guide-lines are essential (*who will buy it, can they afford it, can we reach them, can we compete with others, is our material new, is a book the best medium, if not - why not?*); and also a further reason for appointing external editors and/or referees to support decisions that might be upsetting for some.

Volumes must be:

- chosen to fit into market profiles agreed on by the publisher/publishing board;
- refereed by one or more outside experts;
- written in an unambiguous manner, with light editing or with a co-publisher checking for style and errors;
- fitted into series or groups of allied texts;
- marketed through co-publishing agreements, or through direct sales activities.

The size of this commercial list will actually decide UNIDO's future policy. Basically, one needs sufficient (selling) titles in an on-going list to support an acquisition editor, marketing manager and support staff. Broadly speaking UNIDO will need more than 20 new book titles per year plus other sales products (journals, software etc.), to become independent.

An average book title will have to sell around 1000 copies at a basic price of around \$100.00 to generate the required income.⁴ Choosing such books, and maintaining this choice so that the list remains constant, will need skilled acquisition. The final choice should remain with the editor. He/she should be judged on the success of the list, the managers on the success of their departments.

Reviewing

The basic decision to publish a particular title should be taken in advance of the project being written, especially when outside staff are concerned, so that modifications to the content can be made to suit market needs.

⁴ It must be remembered that, even if UNIDO sold themselves, they would not receive, on average, more than about 55% of the list price of books; journals are better, agencies receive no, or certainly no more than 10%, discount on the list price.

Wherever possible, books should be reviewed by outside referees. Internal refereeing nearly always causes tension and accusations of wrong-doing, through technical incompetence and/or bias; true or not.

The co-publisher will have his referees and so this task can be delegated to them in certain cases. However, if UNIDO appoints an editor, he/she should build up contacts with teams of reviewers in universities and other like institutions. Many reviewers will require a small fee (publishers often send them books). \$50-\$100 offsets a lot of irritation but some professionals charge up to \$500. For this they must add value to the volume, acting more as an editor than a scientific/economic expert.

The reviewer should be asked to check the book for content, expertise, clarity and market acceptance. Where a symposium is concerned, the reviewer should also comment on balance (geographical as well as content) and, if possible, the ability of the speakers to write good English (or the language chosen).

UNIDO might actually establish a series of Editorial Boards, in subject areas where they can produce a number of volumes per year (or two). Such boards could be involved at an even earlier stage and might, for instance, aid the acquisition editor in selecting internal manuscripts for publication. They would also be able to help with the selection of speakers at conferences. It is important to remember that the earlier the review of the manuscript can begin, the more chance there is of modifying the final product to the market need.

Desk Editing

There is little chance that all UNIDO material can be scheduled to pass through the editorial department satisfying both internal (report deadlines etc.) and external (commercial) demands. Some editing will be required if UNIDO continues to co-publish and more will be necessary if these books are sold directly. Better author instructions will help, as will the use of PCs with "tailored" software (e.g. pre-formatted manuscript styles in WORD or WORD PERFECT, spelling checks with the relevant UN rules on names in pre-designed checks). UNIDO should also examine the possibility of delegating one or more desk editors solely to commercial publications.

Self supporting sales and co-publications

The present system of selling is inefficient and threatens to become even more so unless UNIDO titles can be better profiled and targetted at their markets. A sales system that does not provide market feed-back is of little use when a list is being developed.

Nevertheless, the UN logo means something and one would expect the uninitiated customer to look to the UN sales office for UNIDO titles. Therefore they should surely remain one outlet; but others are required. Also, cynically, while the UN sales office take a bulk sale of all UNIDO volumes there are budget considerations for UNIDO to be taken into account; if UNIDO breaks with the UN sales service before they have established alternative better sales outlets, they will lose passive income.

It is also virtually impossible to move, in one step, from the present situation to one where UNIDO handles everything. The UN bureaucracy will prevent many commercial solutions to handling staff (setting targets, end-responsibility etc.). Thus the best choice would appear to be to establish your own system by evolving away from the present through co-publishing agreements.

Co-publishing

Co-publishing does not produce a great deal of profit to UNIDO as far as royalty income is concerned; there is no such thing as a free lunch and, to put it bluntly, publishers will expect to make a profit; and at as low a risk as possible. In addition, international book sales are presently low, usually in the region of 1000 for "best sellers", and the UNIDO name still has to be "established". So the greatest attraction to a co-publisher is the implicit "buy-back". In many cases this will remove their production risk but eat away UNIDO's royalty as UNIDO has to buy back at prices set by the publisher's production rules (in some cases the total royalty will be spent in this way).

But such arrangements are attractive for UNIDO. They save the costs of internal production and UNIDO becomes, in effect, the author with less risk of a financial loss. In addition, they test markets, give sales feedback, and boost the UNIDO image. As this grows, and with careful planning and better use of UNIDO's strengths (e.g. delivery of finished texts and even production — see later), co-publications could give a significant income which, in time, might be used as the basis for UNIDO's own publishing arm. UNIDO should therefore ensure that any agreement with a second party is such that, eventually, UNIDO can "go it alone" (i.e. the agreement should furnish UNIDO with market feedback).

One can also divide co-publishing according to geographical market. In the developed world I recommend that UNIDO considers a more aggressive stance on terms, but a less rigid position on the contract (see later). In particular, the complimentary copies should be handled differently. The Commission of the European Communities produces their "official copies" in a cheap and clearly non-commercial form. UNIDO's present arrangement with Blackwell has "Complimentary Copy" on the cover. Both options

should satisfy the publisher that his market will not be sabotaged by a free distribution and will keep the costs to UNIDC down. This will, in turn, increase your negotiating power.

A major reason for co-publishing is to transfer the responsibility for editing to the publisher. Again care should be taken here as few publishers approach this task with the thoroughness UNIDO does; and many prefer to do no controlling at all, relying upon camera ready copy to transfer blame back to the author. There is therefore very little chance that a publisher will take a poorly edited co-publication. Nevertheless, with "light editing" one seems to be satisfying both UN and the publisher's needs and this would seem to be the best way forward for these publications.

For small print runs, UNIDO's costs of production are low. Remembering that the present buy-back arrangements are, in some cases certainly, absorbing all of the royalty, UNIDO might consider offering to produce the books for the publisher. The co-publishing agreement would then be more one of marketing and distribution and UNIDO would sell the titles in the same way as they now do to the UN sales offices; only to a commercial company. This seems the best way of maximising income at present.

Variations of this theme are possible. Thus you could consider a chain of terms such as:

UNIDO delivers:	For:
words on paper, edited	10% royalty
pre-formatted text on diskette or camera ready copy	10% + say, \$7.00 pp, or perhaps 12% royalty
complete bound book including logos etc	UNIDO cost price plus a percentage, say 25-33%, or, for 35-45% of the agreed selling price set by the publisher and UNIDO.

UNIDO should also investigate co-publishing agreements with individual developing countries. Often local publishers have good distribution channels, print cheaply and sell in local currencies. They are reluctant to buy in volumes in hard currencies but could be "sold" the films or CRC for their own production. This would allow them to serve local markets and provide a better feedback as to what is required and it would also reduce any possible cries about UNIDO "exploiting" the developing world. Such agreements will be very local and UNIDO should take into account the opinions of UNIDO's local staff.

Direct Sales

UNIDO will, in the long term, best benefit from exploiting its own publication list. The marketing of books and journals basically requires the following steps:

- production of flyers/ mailing pieces;
- obtaining and maintenance of mailing lists;
- liaison with the trade;
- contracts, sales and despatch;
- maintenance of sales/customer lists;
- liaison with acquisition concerning second edition, market feedback.

Nothing is, per se, difficult, but it requires constant attention; the mailing lists in particular require up-dating and weeding - mailings are extremely expensive and therefore lists need to be accurate; also, if possible, mailings should be combined — two or more titles per folder in one envelope dramatically reduces the unit costs.

Contrary to common belief, advertising seldom does more than alert the market i.e. few people actually send a cheque. Catalogues are however, useful and the fact that a publisher "packages" UNIDO titles among his own gives them more exposure. Advertising can help in this regard as it can be used to impart an *image* to the titles. E.g. one can use *The Economist* to reach a certain type of reader and so give the impression that he/she needs the UNIDO volumes (figure 1).

UNIDO could do a lot with little investment. If one area was chosen that would produce some 15-20 titles per year, preferably with a periodical added, then a marketing policy could be adopted and folders/mailings produced and executed. Mailing lists can be purchased from many "mailing houses". One of the better for this level of work is

IBIS Information Services Ltd
Waterside, Lowbell Lane,
London Colney, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, UK.

Charges vary but a typical mailing list for research libraries in Western Europe costs around \$22.00 per 100 addresses.

UNIDO should also consider selling through a sales desk in the VIC. A small sales team, selling direct to visitors but also mounting exhibitions outside the many workshops and other related meetings UNIDO hosts, should cover costs (remember that co-publishing will only bring in between 10 and 35% of the sales price of the book — there is therefore a healthy margin). UNIDO

Figure 1



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might consider invoicing visitors for later payment in their own currency at home and offering a "take-away" discount (saving on the mailing costs). However, this policy cannot be executed with co-publications unless an agreement has been reached with the publisher.

UNiDO might nevertheless consider taking on a marketing manager to establish the basis of a sales service. In the first instance this person would work closely with the acquisition editor, helping to select the best potential markets, and then begin to develop the required infrastructure. UNiDO has the internal computing and database staff required to establish mailing lists etc. and so would not need to build a new infrastructure at present. The action could begin with a few non-co-publications and then be expanded as it succeeds/evolves.

The acquisition editor and marketing manager would be responsible for setting price and print-runs. To do this one requires accurate sales figures. It will be essential to separate the complimentary copy distribution from sales and accurate warehousing administration is essential. For this reason it is probably best to develop the UNiDO list on the back of co-publications; see how individual and series volumes perform under another regime before taking them over yourself.

Pricing depends upon the ultimate goals of the organisation; and here must presumably be taken into account the *information serving* role of UNiDO as well as the desire to make some money. Dual pricing, developed and developed markets, is possible. Fears that, say, Western companies will buy the volume through their Eastern subsidiaries, are usually unfounded. Any savings are nearly always eroded by the increased administration, delays and transport cost. Price sensitivity could therefore also be investigated by co-publishing with local publishers in these countries (selling the rights for, say, India, to an Indian publisher). The same can be tried with the newly emerging Eastern block countries, many of whom have established STM publishing houses with well established distribution routes.

The basic premise to remember is that the "publisher", UNiDO in this case, must build financial expectations on a minimum of 35% of the sales price. The commercial book trade will ask for a discount to stock and sell your titles. This could be in the region of 45% discount off your price. When pricing, it is important to remember the basic rules:

buying in: multiply by 3 to reach sales price

producing: multiply by 5 to reach sales price.

The new media CD ROM, magnetic tape, floppy diskette, products are still extremely difficult to market and price. There is little doubt that sales of

magnetic media will increase and some of UNIDO's statistical and database material is ideal for this media. All these media are hardware-dependent — the customer/user has to have the requisite technology (player) to use the product. For that reason many publishers sign with CD ROM publishers who make compendia of different products or individual discs and also maintain good links to those libraries with the technology. Silver Platter, for instance, is establishing a fairly sound reputation but they, like most others in the market at the present time, aim at library sales. Other smaller, specialised, companies can be found. Their problem is reaching the market.

Budgeting, none of the above recommendations, not even a stable co-publishing policy, can be implemented unless UNIDO devises a revolving fund. Publishing requires continuity and this, in turn, requires financial stability. Reducing the budget to zero every 2 years is counter-productive as many activities, e.g. promotion, follow-on acquisition, have to be continuous. Equally important, projects, once they have been agreed, must be allocated the funds they require so they can be produced on-time. Delays are disastrous and will mean major losses on projects which miss their market niche.

Publishers usually attribute direct and indirect costs to each product, sometimes in the form of actual figures, others as a percentage overhead. UNIDO would probably not have to do this for their writing staff but editorial costs should be divided over the number of titles covered (most acquisition editors in a commercial house would carry some 10 on-going journals and 20 book titles per annum and an assistant could help with the back-list).

Production

UNIDO currently uses an in-house pre-printing unit and then UN printing facilities. The typesetting facilities are reaching the time when they will have to be replaced. The present system was good in its day, and can still produce good products, but it is cumbersome and slow.

The rise of desk-top publishing (DTP) has been swift. For most products, DTP is sufficient although a better quality printer is required than that used typically at present.

DTP has the advantage that many departments can deliver good basic material. The production department can then modify this, arranging it better etc. A good interaction between typists/secretaries and authors and the production people often brings unexpected bonuses as both help the other.

UNIDO prints a huge number of pages per year and basic per page costs are therefore very competitive. However, on an individual title basis, care should be taken that run-on costs from an outside printer are not cheaper as the basic costs of a print-run are always carried on the first copies.

The recent political changes with regard to Czechoslovakia might also offer UNIDO cheap, good quality printing opportunities. Eastern European printing can be good and competitive. Care should be taken to deliver, if needed, films and even paper, but costs could be cut.

7 Next steps

The potential for UNIDO to establish a good quality publication list exists. This list can probably be developed so that it supports a small, specialist staff. Costs can be cut by passing production to co-publishers or earning back by delivering finished copies and so the overall benefit to UNIDO is potentially great.

UNIDO needs to improve its publishing list as far as image is concerned before it would be "safe" to establish a UNIDO imprint. Again, this can be done through co-publishing with minor modifications such as, for instance, the delegation of one or more desk editors to deal solely with commercial publications.

As a stop-gap before an acquisition editor is warranted, or can be paid for, UNIDO might consider appointing a publishing agent or consultant to carry out some of the above editorial tasks to gauge commercial interest and potential sales. These should include discussing the potential of certain files with database hosts and CD ROM distributors. Some market testing will be required and this might require a period (up to 2 years?). In the meantime, new titles can be entertained, new journals, bulletins, as well as links to publishers.

8 Sub-contracting to an outside publisher

It is not unknown for organisations to contract an outside publisher to handle all their activities. Strict demarcations between internal and external publications are required and it is usual that the complete list is handled.

Such a publisher must have good European and American sales outlets and a proven record in this area. It would also help if it published journals in the area (say Economic forecasting) as these give a continued presence in the field.

Such an arrangement would benefit UNIDO and the publisher. It might be possible to maintain your own imprint with the other organisation ... e.g. "published by XYZ and Co. on behalf of UNIDO" and this would allow the "list" to become better known. Such negotiations, from location to contract, could also be part of the consultant's task.

UNIDO contract

I have tried to persuade three commercial publishers to "sign" this contract. All three were very reluctant.

- 1 The contract is drawn up with UNIDO as the copyright holder, *acceptable*.
- 1.2 Acceptable but *you could be more specific and describe and define areas more specifically if you require*.
- 1.3 I think you will help your own case if you *define official distribution* so that it is clear that this will not spoil their sales.
- 1.4 Clear
- 1.5 Clear but see 1.6
- 1.6 I find this confusing. Who is the copyright holder. If UNIDO is, it can hardly ask the publisher to protect it. After all, someone might pirate one of your official distribution copies and reproduce it elsewhere. *What has this to do with the co-publisher?*
- 1.7 Clear.
- 1.8 Clear.

Overall, I find that UNIDO is asking the publisher to become *the publisher* but not the *copyright holder*. This is often the case in single author novels but not in the case of STM volumes. The profit margin on a single book is not that great and so UNIDO must take care that they do not place too great a burden on the publisher who might decide the potential profits do not warrant the responsibility.

- 2.1 Clear, perhaps too detailed. UNIDO might also like to add here the various types of possible delivery.
- 2.2 Clear, see 2.1.
- 2.3 Who has the final responsibility then — UNIDO editors or the publishers? This could be important in any case of errors, etc.

The rest of section 2 seems clear and usual.

Section 3 should be looked at in terms of a more flexible delivery pattern from UNIDO and increased royalties.

Section 4 and 5 are clear and basically normal.

Section 6.1 again brings up the question of responsibility. If UNIDO edits the material, delivers CRC (or an electronic form of the same) and retains the copyright, why should it ask the publisher to indemnify it against anything?

This clause is perhaps ambiguous, or my legal understanding inadequate, as it does indicate that the publisher has some protection ... "except for those arising from obligations by UNIDO under this agreement." However, once again, we are not talking about huge profits for a publisher who, faced with ill-defined responsibilities, might decide "not to bother". Thus this should be clarified as to what such indemnification could mean.

The rest of the contract appears acceptable.