



Navigating to Calmer Waters

- a Publishers experience of the economic downturn

Roger Horton, CEO, Taylor & Francis Group

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- What do we mean by an economic downturn in academia?
 - Severity felt in other media areas, including trade, magazines, conferences and advertising.
 - The time lag of budgets and cash
- Are there any mitigating issues?
 - Student numbers usually increase to mask unemployment but will they this time.
 - Content collections are protected before redecoration.



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- 2009 was the year of pessimism and uncertainty
 - Volume of concern grew from all parties about funding going forward
 - Worldwide recession was impacting US where private universities had funds linked to stock market. Some States like California were running out of money.
 - 2010 became the hardest budget year to predict and budget for.



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- How should we respond as a publisher?
 - Needed to be able to be flexible, creative and find ways to offer deals that would soften the budget concerns
 - 1-2-3 was the first initiative
 - E-book packages
 - Pricing
 - But without endangering our market share and position



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- What should our approach be?
 - More communication
 - More representatives
 - More face-to-face and discussion
 - Make sure we understood, listened and responded even if we couldn't meet all the requests



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- Investment or a cut in spending?
 - Tempting to rein in on everything to protect margins
 - Invested in efficiency and that means millions of pounds on delivery platforms including Informaworld and SAP.
 - Treat every journal and every book list like a mini business.
 - Don't make the obvious cuts to travel and staff, don't remove service. Try harder to get it right.



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- So are we in calmer waters? Almost certainly not.
 - But the steadier the ship, the steadier the course will be through the currents.
- 2010 and 2011 will be tough and the combination of online initiatives, pricing and the effects of the global recession probably means that 2012 and beyond will be different for all of us. – but different doesn't mean worse.

