

# 1. RDB Rechtsdatenbank – Peter Guggenberger

MANZ-Verlag in Vienna: is publisher and bookseller in Vienna for literature for legal topics. What is the connection to *Open data*? Content was put into a database. This content was then sold to costumers. Manz-Verlag started in 1984 by launching the *Rechtsdatenbank* – RDB.

- data was received from the Austrian government.
- It was covering law, taxes and jurisdiction etc.
- Costumers are B2B: lawyers, notaries, judges, all public institutions, etc. and B2C: students

**Version 1:** The first online-database was set up for professionals working in the legal community. The Company was founded in 1982 and the database is live since 1984

*Primary content* was:

- Austrian law
- jurisdiction
- it was published by MANZ for the Austrian government, it was full text and free of charge for all users (even the unregistered)

*Secondary content* was magazines

Pricing – paywall:

- highly monthly connection fee (Dial in)
- Plus low document price

This business model worked until 1997, when the Austrian government started to give free access to the same content on the *Rechtsinformationssystem* – RIS. That forced MANZ to make a radical change in their business model. First step was to make a law suite against Austria, but the case has been suspended. However, the business model didn't need to be changed, since costumers still paid for accessing the primary content within the RDB. It had no real commercial effects.

When the internet became more popular, we launched web based service with new features and techniques. More value was put in the data by making access easier for costumers, adding new search engines and new enriched data by researches. Costumers also benefited from linked data.

In 2004 a competitor showed up: lexis nexis

**Version 2:** In 2002 a new web-based platform was launched:

- new features
- new pricing model
- new search engine
- introducing linking techniques

Primary Content was:

- Austrian law
- Jurisdiction (case law)
- Published by MANZ for the Austrian government
- Full Text -> free of charge to all users (including unregistered)

Secondary Content was:

- Magazines
- Books since 2006
- Scientific text
- Forms

2003: Adjusting price models:

- monthly minimum fee was introduced

- pay per view was introduced; lost 20% of revenue – reason? High connection fee and habit of costumers changed

2007: Introduction of subscription pricing models:

- additional pay per view models
- still paywall
- full access to all the content for fix monthly subscription fee
- No pay per view (document)

**Version 3:** December 2014 a launch of a new web-based platform was introduced:

- New features
- New Search engine (open source)
- Introduction of backlinks from primary to secondary content
- No Paywall
- Primary Content
- Austrian law
- Jurisdiction (case law)
- Published by the Austrian government

Secondary Content

- Magazines
- Books (commentaries)
- Scientific text
- Forms
- ~ 400 different sources from more than 30 publishers

2015 – Changing Business Model

- Freemium
- Free Search for all types of users in Primary & Secondary Content
- The complete Content is visible to the outside world including Google
- Elimination of all existing Pay per View pricing models
- Primary Content -> full text free of charge to all type of users (including unregistered)
- Secondary Content -> preview text free of charge for all types of users
- Secondary Content -> full text access on individual monthly subscriptions
- Impact -> revenue increases!

Techniques were replaced, and it was decided to put many more sources into secondary content.

The Online database now offers a Premium model: no Paywall anymore; for all users (primary and secondary)

Primary content is accessible in full text → impact: database was open. 75% of documents that are open now are accessed externally: users make a research in google, find a document, then they go to link and in the end find their way to our database. Google is indexing the content and it is now possible for costumers to get access to single documents. Since the database is now open, we have to rethink our business model.

Market is changing, printing industry is moving to digital world. MANZ is working on the difficulties and are making progress. Is our story an example of 'best practise'? Difficult to tell, but we managed to make the transition from print media to a digital one.

Key to success: know what your costumers needs, create a working business model and deliver trustable products.