

DEMAND GENERATION

DIGITAL EDITING SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE

\$154 → \$9.80 CPO, A 93% COST REDUCTION (B2C)

\$483 PER SALES QUALIFIED LEAD (B2B)

This case study shows how a traditionally human-led academic editing service was transformed into a scalable SaaS product powered by an LLM trained on expert human edits.

It focuses on 1 of 38 customer journeys I built for Springer Nature, designed exclusively to drive SaaS subscriptions and intentionally separated from parallel funnels supporting research and editorial services.



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Cedric has spent the past decade working across both B2B and B2C environments. He brings certifications in analytics, search engine marketing, and UX design, along with a strong track record of applying data-driven thinking to real business challenges.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

→ The Challenge	Page 3
→ What is AJE Digital Editing?	Page 4
→ Audience & Behavioral Insights	Page 5
→ Controlled Adwords Test Results	Page 6
→ Introducing Demand Generation	Page 7
→ New Paid Search Strategy	Page 8
→ Weekly Journey & Results	Page 9
→ Lead Qualification Framework	Page 10
→ 93% CPO Reduction	Page 11

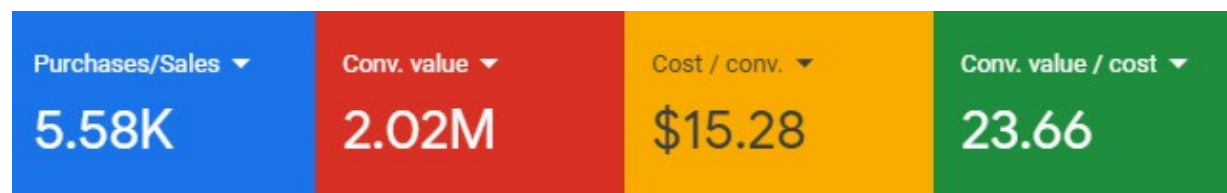
The Challenge

The company faced a strategic inflection point.

Academic editing was historically delivered through professional, human-led services, high quality but expensive and difficult to scale. A new AI-powered Digital Editing product promised faster turnaround and broader access, yet internal concerns centered on cannibalization, pricing pressure, and unclear market demand.

Key questions included:

- Would users trust AI-assisted editing for scholarly work?
- **Would the product erode higher-margin professional services, which had a 23.66X ROAS?**
- Could the product scale beyond individual researchers into institutional adoption?



Example: a non-native English-language university produces 1,000 English-language research papers in a year.

Traditional editing (by a human) costs USD 400 for an average length paper. The budget of USD 80,000 covers 200 papers, but provides no support for the remaining 600 papers. This causes unnecessary work, unfair treatment, and reduces the university's and researchers' impact.

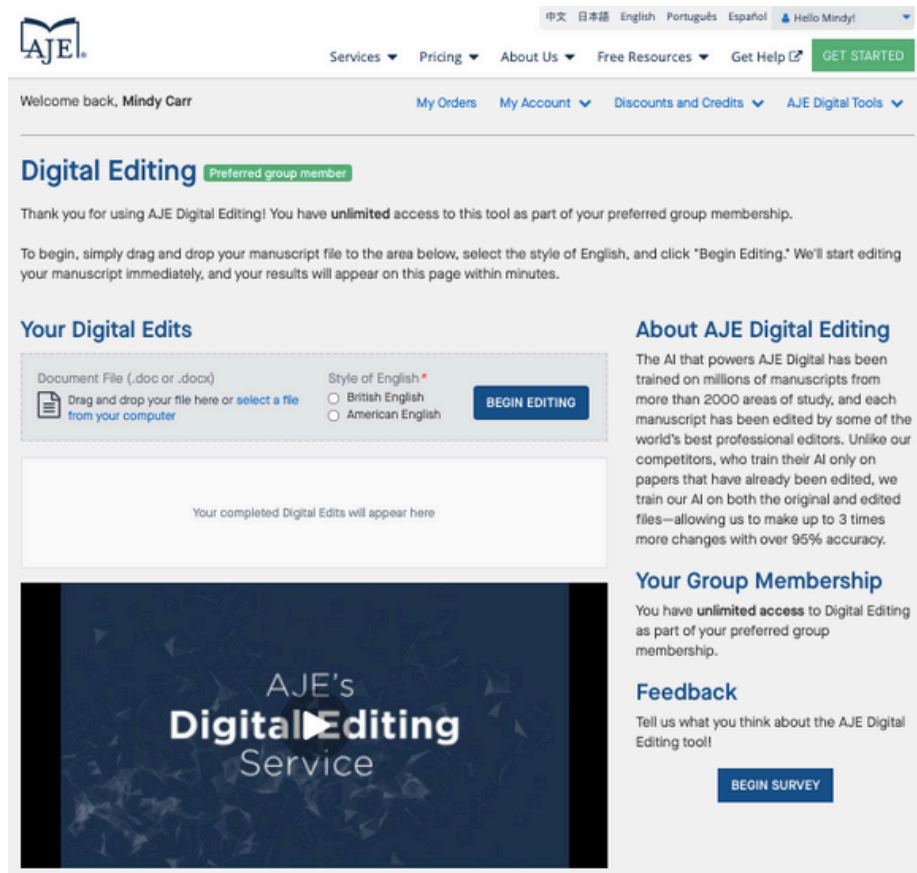
A subscription to AJE Digital allows the university to *provide for all researchers* within their budget of USD 80,000 while ensuring high quality editing for ALL papers.

What is AJE Digital Editing?

For readers unfamiliar with scholarly publishing, academic editing relies on highly specialized language, discipline-specific conventions, and citation standards that are rarely found in general web text. As a result, generic consumer AI tools are often insufficient, particularly for researchers in APAC markets where translation accuracy is mission-critical. This required either human-led translation services or a purpose-built large language model trained on academic manuscripts.

Against that backdrop, the company introduced a state-of-the-art LLM-based editing and translation platform designed to deliver fast, highly accurate English refinement for research submissions. Internally, there were legitimate concerns that releasing the product could weaken professional-service revenue.

Digital Editing was offered both as an \$80,000 annual institutional license and as a \$130 individual subscription, allowing the market to validate its role across both B2B and B2C segments.



Professional Services Customer Insights

Principal Investigators and Professors (B2B)

Repeat english editing purchasers who typically transact once per quarter through their institutions, reflecting longer research and publication cycles.



PhD Candidates and Thesis Writers (B2C)

Predominantly single-transaction english editing purchasers with shorter decision cycles driven by deadline pressure.



3-month order volume of Professional Services (Not Digital Editing)

Ex China

Conversions: **22,523**
% of Total: 10.33% (218,120)

Conversion Value: **\$8,414,213.94**
% of Total: 35.10% (\$23,971,798.46)

Time Lag in Days	Conversions	Conversion Value	Percentage of total
			Conversions Conversion Value
0	10,246	\$3,892,246.98	45.49% 46.26%
1	831	\$343,442.41	3.69% 4.06%
2	547	\$216,831.79	2.43% 2.58%
3	440	\$177,058.59	1.95% 2.10%
4	365	\$149,774.40	1.62% 1.78%
5	310	\$126,080.05	1.38% 1.50%
6	307	\$125,319.80	1.36% 1.49%
7	288	\$122,731.39	1.28% 1.46%
8	201	\$81,501.57	0.89% 0.97%
9	150	\$63,383.47	0.67% 0.75%
10	152	\$60,581.96	0.67% 0.72%
11	182	\$76,830.79	0.81% 0.91%
12-30	2,204	\$844,120.85	9.79% 10.03%
31-60	2,336	\$806,117.88	10.37% 9.58%

Controlled Adwords Landing Page Experiment: Digital Editing vs Human Editing

Test Hypothesis

- Users would behave primarily as value maximizers, substituting professional services (\$400) with Digital Editing (\$130) due to cost savings.

Primary Success Metric

- Total Orders

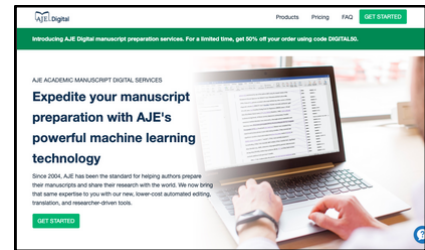
Test Methodology

- I ran a controlled A/B experiment using branded Google Ads traffic on the "AJE" keyword. **Users were sent to different entry pages, but all completed checkout in the same cart. Visitors who entered through Version A were shown an option at checkout to use AJE Digital Editing.**

Product Variants Tested

- Version A: Digital Editing: LLM-powered academic editing, priced at \$130 per subscription
- Version B: Professional Editing: Human-led academic editing, priced up to \$1,000 per manuscript

Version A Digital Editing



Version B Human Editing



Results: 68.6% of customers preferred professional services over AI services, even when shown savings of up to 90%.

- Approximately 30.4% of customers chose Digital Editing over Professional Editing, despite price differences that often exceeded 90%. An additional 21.7% selected Digital Translation over other translation services.
- In other words, nearly 70% of brand-search users still preferred human-led services, even when a significantly lower-cost digital alternative was presented at the point of purchase.** This confirmed strong product segmentation rather than cannibalization, reinforcing the role of Digital Editing as an additive channel rather than a replacement.

Product	Count of ...	Product ...
Premium Editing, 10 days, 18000 - 18499 ...	6	\$10,211.78
Premium Chinese Translation, 12 days, 45...	1	\$5,922.16
Premium Editing, 3 days, 4500 - 4999 words	1	\$4,864.34
Portuguese Translation, 8 days, 2000 - 249...	1	\$4,364.58
Premium Editing, 3 days, 2500 - 2999 words	1	\$4,156.34
Advanced Editing, 5 days, 6500 - 6999 wor...	1	\$3,848.16
Standard Editing, 5 days, 7500 - 7999 words	33	\$3,290.09
Standard Editing, 5 days, 4500 - 4999 words	14	\$2,482.15
Standard Portuguese Translation, 5 days, ...	6	\$2,240.59
Standard Editing, 2 days, 1000 - 1499 words	1	\$1,732.5

Introducing Demand Generation

Demand generation was required because subscriptions can't be sold like one-time editing services. Traditional PPC captures existing intent, subscription products require education before intent exists.

This example focuses specifically on the Google paid search journey. I designed new paid search campaigns that used different educational entry points rather than direct conversion pages. Some ads drove to whitepapers or webinars, which did not begin with a free trial. The vast majority of paid subscriptions ultimately originated from free trials acquired via Google Search.



Libraries and library professionals have a history of being at the forefront of information developments, from card catalogs to e-books. However, they are often slow in adopting new technologies, waiting until the market saturates and public demand rises. This practice presents challenges, causing service delays, training gaps, and difficulties in keeping up with new technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). The current wave of AI tools is leaving libraries scrambling to incorporate changes across their institutions. This article examines the impact of AI on libraries and explores how existing AI uses interact with potential new applications, presenting five fundamental ways in which AI can shape the future of libraries.

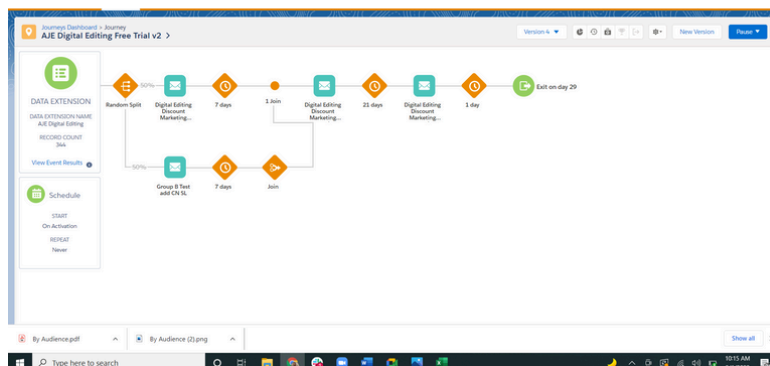
1. Information Professionals

Salesforce Email Funnel

We set up a total of 38 email journeys. For the Free Trial use case, I designed a subscription funnel in Salesforce as a clear, sequential journey that moved users from curiosity to commitment.

1. **Introduced the free trial**
2. **Implemented a 30-day email journey**
3. **Added a time-bound discount**

This structure transformed passive interest into active subscription intent and created a repeatable path to conversion.



New Paid Search Strategy

We were able to acquire both B2B and B2C customers through traditional keyword search marketing. However, we wanted it to work better.

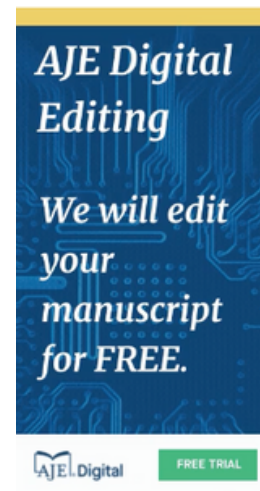
Paid Search (PPC)

Targeted high-intent competitor keywords such as Grammarly, Editage, Enago, and Papertrue, capturing users actively comparing academic editing solutions and directing them to free-trial and educational landing pages rather than immediate checkout.

Display Advertising

Built lookalike audiences based on AJE.com visitors and competitor site traffic, allowing Digital Editing to be introduced earlier in the decision cycle and reinforcing awareness through repeated exposure.

7.12% CTR GIF Display Ad For a Free Trial



The Strategic Shift Quickly Reversed Product Performance

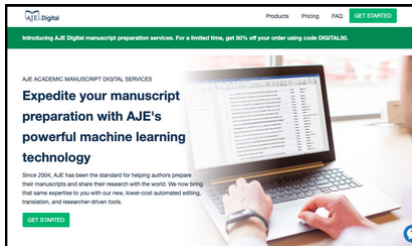


Weekly Journey & Results



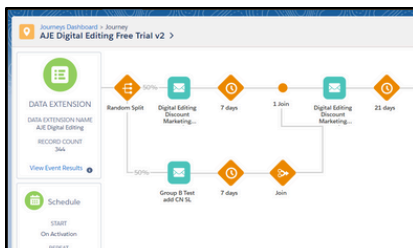
Google Display & PPC Ads

7.12% CTR



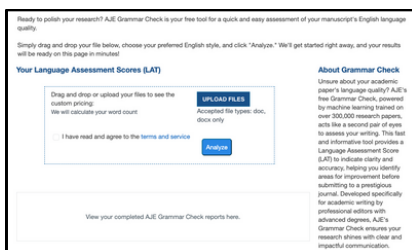
Product Page (9.6% Email Capture)

9753 Clicks



Salesforce Journey Free Trial

941 free trials per week



Paid Subscription (5.5%)

47 Paid B2C subscriptions per week (\$9.80 CPO)



Enterprise Form Fill (2%)

2 highly qualified B2B leads per week (\$483 SQL)

Lead Qualification Framework

Sales Qualified Leads represented large universities and research institutions, not individual consumers. In several cases, including the University of Taiwan and the University of Uzbekistan, a single qualified opportunity resulted in institution-wide purchases of \$80,000 in subscriptions, reflecting multi-year, high-value contracts rather than one-off transactions.

Each lead was evaluated across three core dimensions:

- **Job Title** – indicated decision-making authority and purchasing influence
- **Institution** – reflected organizational scale, budget capacity, and fit
- **Number of Engagements** – measured depth of interest across touchpoints, not single actions

Once a lead met the qualification threshold, it moved beyond marketing metrics:

- Sales Qualified leads were passed from the sales enablement team to the Springer Nature B2B sales team
- This created a clean handoff, a shared definition of quality, and tighter alignment between marketing and sales

Group Registration

Register your group with AJE today to get started. We can help speed up the publication process for entire labs, research teams, departments, institutions, societies, and publishers.

Name *

Email *

Phone number *

Affiliation or institution *

Country/region *

Group type *

Institution

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT BY SUBMITTING THIS FORM I AGREE TO BE CONTACTED BY AN AJE ACCOUNT MANAGER

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT, NEWS AND UPDATES FROM AJE

Sign up

93% CPO Reduction

\$154 CPO → **\$9.80 CPO**

Results: These results reflect a successful shift from transactional service marketing to a scalable SaaS growth model powered by demand generation.

First, the system produced 180 new monthly subscriptions at a \$9.80 cost per acquisition. This outcome confirmed that academic researchers would adopt a subscription product when introduced through education, trial access, and structured journeys rather than direct checkout pressure. The CPA was not achieved through bid compression alone, but through funnel design that converted awareness into sustained usage.

Second, the initiative delivered a 93% reduction in CPA, lowering acquisition costs from \$154 to \$9.80. This improvement came from replacing one-off paid search conversions with demand-led workflows, including free trials, email journeys, and activation-based conversion triggers. Paid media shifted from harvesting intent to creating it, dramatically improving efficiency

\$483 SQL (B2B)

Third, the model unlocked \$360,000 in B2B SaaS contracts within one year. Institutional buyers, including universities in Taiwan and Uzbekistan, entered the funnel organically after repeated exposure, trial validation, and educational touchpoints. Enterprise demand surfaced as a downstream effect of product adoption rather than through cold outbound sales. Taken together, these results show that Digital Editing was not just validated as a product, but established as a scalable growth engine. Demand generation reduced costs, normalized subscriptions, and opened a parallel enterprise revenue stream without cannibalizing premium services.