ISMTE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MANAGING AND TECHNICAL EDITORS

EON
Editorial Office News

Column: *Editorial*

What You Can Expect in 2010

Welcome to the third volume of *EON*.

In this first issue you will find another excellent article on managing a journal's Facebook page from Erin Dubnansky (page 3). In this article Erin focuses on setting objectives and measuring the effects of a Facebook page—excellent information for those who use, or plan to use, social media to promote their journals and enhance communication in their journal communities.

Melissa Dodd provides Tips & Tricks for managing offshore vendor relationships (page 10) in this month's column. Communication, knowing your own requirements, factoring in time for the unknowns, and being open to innovation are key elements.

Also in this issue, you will find updates from seven ISMTE committees (pages 2, 7-9, 13-15). These committees are hard at work supporting and growing our Society. Exciting new developments on our website and in the resources and training areas will provide members with more functionality, content, and opportunities for their membership dollars. 2010 will be an exciting year to belong to ISMTE.

The *EON* team will continue to provide readers with interesting and important information on issues relevant to editorial office staff. We welcome your comments and suggestions. We are recruiting new column editors for the Taming Technology and Tips & Tricks columns, and we would love to have you join our team. Please contact me if you have any interest in these areas.

Lastly, and perhaps most exciting, the 2010 meetings committee has announced the dates and locations for the ISMTE annual meetings in the United Kingdom and United States (page 2). The agendas have not yet been set, but the preliminary information promises two more worthwhile, exciting meetings for attendees. Check *EON* and the website for updates as the meetings committee finalizes their work.

Kristen Overstreet
EON Editor
kristen.overstreet@mac.com

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2010 ISMTE Meetings Announcement

Planning for the 2010 annual ISMTE meetings in the United States and the United Kingdom is well underway.

The US meeting will be held **August 3-4, 2010** with an opening reception and registration the evening of August 2. The meeting will take place in **Alexandria, Virginia**, conveniently located just outside Washington, DC and Ronald Reagan National Airport. Alexandria has a wonderful downtown which should serve as an ideal meeting location. The planning committee is currently finalizing the details of the agenda but expect to see sessions on copyediting, copyright rules, Impact Factor and other metrics, Excel®, social media, and more. And of course there will be our dynamic exchange forum where you get to ask your colleagues for their insight, tips, and tricks on handling a range of issues that affect you.

The UK meeting will again be in **Oxford** at St. Hugh's College on **October 19, 2010.** I know everyone who attended last year thought the location was just about perfect. This will be a one-day meeting with a reception afterwards, much like last year's meeting. The planning committee is currently working to engage speakers and sessions, similar to the US meeting, and we should have more information very soon.

We strongly encourage you to attend one or even both of these meetings. The 2009 meetings were an incredible success with double the attendance from 2008. The speakers were enthusiastic and presented a wide range of topics for the attendees to consider, and the discussion among colleagues was lively. I think it is safe to say everyone took away something valuable from these meetings.

Start your planning now to attend and be sure to pass this on to your colleagues. We look forward to seeing you in 2010.

Glenn Collins
gcollins@acc.org

New Contact Information for ISMTE

Leslie McGeoch, Executive Director
International Society of Managing and Technical Editors
1107 Mantua Pike Ste. 701 # 122
Mantua, New Jersey, USA 08051-1606
Phone: +1 856 292 8512
Fax: +1 856 292 8513
E-mail: ismteoffice@gmail.com

ARTICLE

A Strategy for Your Facebook Page: Maximizing Success Through Measurement

by Erin C. Dubnansky
Senior Director of Scholarly Publishing
American Gastroenterological Association
edubnansky@gastro.org

I was at lunch with a publishing colleague recently when she raised the subject of the Facebook pages my staff and I had developed for our journals. With a slight smirk she asked, "So what's the point, *really*?" I smiled. She was not the first person to ask me this question and I doubt she will be the last. In fact, I had asked myself the very same question when the journals' online editor suddenly took my casual suggestion of Facebook pages seriously—within weeks we were fully entrenched in the Facebook community despite my doubts about its value to the journals. "Well," I said, "the point is that Facebook expands awareness about our journals' research, allows our readers to discuss our content in an online forum, and offers the gastroenterology community a convenient networking tool." Her smirk a little smaller this time she replied, "But how do you know if you're actually *achieving* any of that?"

Is Measurement Necessary?

I left my lunch feeling a little unsettled—I wasn't sure if it *was* necessary to know if we were achieving our objectives. After all, we don't spend any money on our Facebook pages, save for a little staff time, and we aren't looking to generate direct revenue from them. But several weeks after that lunch, two events occurred that compelled me to think about this matter more carefully. First, *EON* editor Kristen Overstreet asked if I would write a second article on Facebook, focusing on the progress our pages had made. Second, our journals' online editor asked me to start reporting our social media (including Facebook) efforts to our association's governing board. It was then I realized I had to determine if we were meeting our Facebook page goals. The question was: *How would I do that?*

Apparently, others have asked themselves the same question. According to an online poll by SmartBrief—a media company that aggregates news and information for trade associations, professional societies, non-profits, and corporations—nearly 50% of respondents said they'd *like* to measure their social media efforts but aren't sure *how*. Fortunately, a lot of thought has been given to this subject, as evidenced by the significant number of results yielded from a Google search of the terms 'facebook, success, measure'. Blogs, discussion boards, and articles abounded with information about measuring the success not just of a Facebook page, but of social medial efforts in general. Much of this information suggested that the key to measuring the success of your Facebook page is knowing which questions to ask. And ideally, those questions are an extension of your original goals for the page.

My research for this article, as well as for the monthly social media report I needed to develop for our governing board, slowly but surely convinced me that measuring our Facebook efforts was a critical step in leveraging the powerful social networking tool.

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continued

Additionally, I soon learned our original goals were a little 'soft' and somewhat immeasurable. As a result, I've started to rethink what our objectives with the Facebook pages should be. In this article I will suggest several types of measurement, as well as how we changed our own Facebook strategy based on the data collected from these measures.

Types of Measurement

Website Traffic

According to a recent social media survey conducted by MarketingSherpa, nearly 90% of respondents think social media is either very or somewhat effective at driving website traffic. Directing Facebook fans to our journals' websites was a chief tactic in our overall strategy to raise awareness about the content we offer. I was somewhat discouraged to learn only a small fraction of total referrer visits to our sites are from the Facebook pages. Also somewhat disappointingly, once Facebook fans arrive at our site they act differently than the average visitor in that they remain on the sites for approximately half the amount of time.

Despite these somewhat discouraging data, I immediately saw several ways we could drive more traffic to our sites and encourage our fans to spend more time on the sites browsing through content. For example, we decided to boldly indicate in our Facebook posts when content on our journal websites is free. In addition, we started to post as much free content as possible, including snippets of editorials, news stories, reviews, and short biographies on pioneering figures in the field. All posts ultimately direct fans to the full content on the journals' websites.

Additionally, we had historically posted the full abstract of select articles on Facebook, with a link to the article on the journals' websites. Only members and subscribers could access the full article, so we surmise fans quickly became aware that if they were neither subscribers nor members, clicking on the link was fruitless. Therefore, we recently started to post only a portion of the abstracts, directing our fans to 'read the results and conclusions'—the meat of the abstract—by clicking on a link leading to the full abstract.

To encourage our Facebook fans to stay longer and browse the content, we started to promote various sections of our websites on our Facebook pages. For example, we now routinely select an article from our several online collections (news, reviews, medical position statements, special sections, etc.) and highlight it in a Wall post. Additionally, we encourage fans to check out our most-cited and most-downloaded feeds, which are located on our journals' homepages. In other words, we now regularly are making our Facebook fans aware of the variety of content available on our journal websites.

We're hopeful the above measures will result in more traffic to our websites over the next several months, resulting in the potential for more online advertising and an increase in subscribers.

Number and Quality of Interactions

From the outset of our Facebook page program, one of our overarching goals has been to engage the gastrointestinal community in an online discussion about the research we publish and about the field in general. The number and quality of interactions our Facebook pages receive have therefore been important measures of our success with this objective.

On average, the pages of our two journals, *Gastroenterology* and *Clinical Gastroenterology and*

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Hepatology (*CGH*), receive 30 and 15 interactions per month, respectively. From the time we launched the pages in May through December 2009, the number of interactions has steadily grown each month, albeit only by a nominal amount. Typically, the majority of interactions the pages receive are *likes*—the virtual equivalent of a thumbs-up sign. Less frequently, our posts receive comments ranging from fans attempting to answer an image challenge to thanking us for posting valuable information. Occasionally, fans will post something entirely new, either posing a question to the fan base or advertising an open position in their geographical area.

I'm not really surprised our pages haven't yet developed into the robust networking, information-sharing community we had hoped them to be. According to an article[1] in Allen Press' *Frontmatter* by Eva Amsen, editor-in-chief of *Hypothesis*, most people consume social media passively—that is, they may read content provided on social media sites but they're not as likely to comment. For scientists, there are other challenges to participating in social media sites including fearing retribution for comments on others' work, sharing too many private details about their research, or not directly benefiting from participating in social media—in other words, what a scientist posts is not considered a published work.

Despite this grim appraisal of the science community's willingness to participate in our Facebook pages, I remain convinced there are ways we can encourage our fans to interact with our pages more frequently and to subsequently raise the quality of our posts. In an article by Nick O'Neill on www.allfacebook.com, he explains Facebook measures the quality of posts by the number of comments and likes each post receives. This means we not only need to get our fans to interact more, but we also need to start understanding what kinds of posts they like and feel compelled to comment on. To this end, we've started to collect information on the interactions we receive. For each post we make, we record the type of post, the content of the post, the type and number of interactions the post receives, and the content of the comments (if there are any). We will collect these data for several months and then analyze them to see if any trends emerge, therefore affecting our posting strategy.

Interestingly, one sure way to encourage fans to interact is to post controversial content. We recently posted an editorial that quoted a war general and used warfare terminology, and at least one of our readers felt Facebook was a great vehicle to express his concern with the editorial.

Fans

An obvious measure of a Facebook page's success is the number of fans it accumulates. While it's certainly pleasing to have a sizable number of fans for our pages (1,424 for *Gastroenterology* and 689 for *CGH* at the time of this writing), I must admit these numbers are largely meaningless. I know next to nothing about our fans—why they decided to become fans, or if they're even professionals in the field of digestive disease. Facebook does have a program called *Insights* that provides some information about a page's fan base. The information is strictly demographic however, and only provides data on gender, age range, and countries of origin. While I find this information interesting, it's not particularly valuable in measuring our efforts. What I think *could* be valuable is a short survey of our fans, asking them to provide information about

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[1] Amsen, E. (2009, June). Scientists and Web 2.0. *Front Matter* (Allen Press), p. 5.

A Strategy for Facebook *continued*

themselves as well as what they like and don't like about our pages. Such a survey could be easily achieved with an online survey tool such as SurveyMonkey and is something I'm considering doing in the next several months.

Even though the number of fans is a metric without context, I do think the trend of steady fan growth we've seen since the program's launch is an important indication of success. Both pages saw the greatest increase in new fans one month after we launched the program. After that, *Gastroenterology* has received approximately 160 new fans a month compared to 70 new fans a month for *CGH*. An even more valuable metric is the number of fans who've chosen to unsubscribe. Fortunately for our pages, less than 10% of our fans have unsubscribed. It is important to monitor this number to ensure your page isn't losing fans at a concerning rate—if it is, you may need to rethink your posting strategy.

Page Views

In addition to providing demographic information about your fan base, Facebook Insights also shows you how many views your pages receive across time. Again, this number by itself is rather meaningless because there aren't any standards in scholarly publishing for how many views a page should receive to be considered successful, let alone comparisons within subject areas. However, it is valuable to monitor the trends of your pages' views to ensure the direction is upward rather than downward. On average, *Gastroenterology* and *CGH* receive 2,246 and 1,565 page views per month, respectively. Of those, 468 and 234 are unique. To increase those numbers, we've started posting five instead of three days per week. Additionally, we ensure the pages' *status* or the titles of our *notes* are as newsworthy and compelling as possible in order to attract more fans to our pages from the general news feed of Facebook.

Next Steps

Over the next several months we will continue to monitor how the recent changes to our Facebook page strategy affect the results gleaned from the metrics I've discussed in this article. In the second half of 2010 we will analyze the data to determine what's working and what isn't. Even if the data still aren't as compelling as we'd like, I remain convinced Facebook is a valuable communication tool for our journals. In the past six months I've used it in ways I hadn't originally envisioned—promoting association meetings, requesting applications for an open editor position, and reaching out not just to professionals in the field, but also to patients suffering from digestive diseases. And, thanks to a lunch conversation and a request from a newsletter editor, I'm now in a much better position to respond to the skeptics who think Facebook doesn't have a place in scholarly publishing.

ISMTE Website: What's New?

New ISMTE Website in Development

As ISMTE grows and matures, so must its website. We realize that since last autumn our website has not included the current news or information that you have come to expect.

We were well served by our Webmaster in 2009, but the Board has determined that we must take full ownership of our site and take it to the next level in order to keep it as fresh and valuable as possible.

To this end, I am pleased to announce that ISMTE has reached an agreement with new Gold Level Sponsor **PLANet Systems Group** (PSG, www.planetsg.com) to implement an updated, feature-rich ISMTE website that will bring you valuable, up-to-date information and educational materials unique in the publishing industry.

The PSG content management platform being implemented for ISMTE will ensure a robust Web presence for the Society as it grows and extends its reach in the scholarly publishing industry. We will be in control of our site's content, able to post current news and information on a daily basis. *EON*, the Society's well respected newsletter, will be fully searchable going forward. Conference and membership management will be managed on the system, as will the Society's online Career Center and Discussion Forum.

Another very exciting and value-added offering ISMTE will bring to you on its revamped website is **online educational videos**. In addition to its content management system and Web hosting, PSG provides professional video production and will provide these services to ISMTE as part of its sponsorship package for the development of online, ISMTE-branded educational resources. This is an amazing opportunity for the Society to provide you and your colleagues with highly relevant and useful information. We do not know of any other professional society or publisher that is offering its members or staff online educational videos. Already in the works is an instructional video on figure quality (how to obtain and publish the highest quality figures possible).

Scholarly publishing relies heavily upon volunteers (reviewers, editors), and ISMTE is no exception. I would appreciate hearing from you if you are willing to volunteer some of your time to help manage the ISMTE website. Finally, please let me know if you have ideas for the ISMTE website itself or for possible topics for educational videos.

Taylor Bowen
ISMTE Vice President
Aegis Peer Review Management
taylor@aegis-prm.com

ISMTE supporter, **ScholarOne Thomson Reuters,** is offering a 25% discount to ISMTE members on registration rates for its User Conferences and ScholarOne University. Contact ISMTE Executive Director, Leslie McGeoch, (ismteoffice@gmail.com) for more information when each event's registration opens.

Resource Committee: 2010 Activities

With the potential of a new and improved ISMTE website, the Society is looking to dramatically expand its resource offerings in 2010. Our intention is to provide both member-only materials in association with freely-available materials that may entice others to join.

The first phase of development will feature several useful links, tools, and repositories. By spring we will post:

- a definition of publishing terms;
- a list of websites of other societies and resources (e.g., COPE);
- a list of free online tools and downloadable software (with a brief statement on what the resource delivers);
- a repository of articles published by ISMTE members in publications other than *EON*; and
- two full length articles – the first on setting up an editorial office (complete with a checklist) and the second featuring a history, through the eyes of an editorial office, of changing practices over the last 20 years.

The second phase of development will see the publication of a series of definitions of the various roles performed by our members (following a survey to be conducted shortly) and a listing of various tasks we, collectively, undertake. This list should not only inspire us to consider engaging in new activities, but it will also help better inform publishers as to what is expected of an executive editor, managing editor, editorial assistant, etc.

Later this year, we will launch a new database of journal articles published in journals that cover every element of peer review. The database will be based on the Wiki concept, with any member being able to contribute an article to the repository. More information on this project will be provided in an upcoming issue of *EON*.

Concurrent with these developments, ISMTE will be launching a new resource publication on a quarterly basis. The publication will feature a definition/explanation of an issue followed by a system-specific guide to developing a solution. We anticipate this project could generate a lot of interest from beyond the membership, raising ISMTE's profile accordingly.

We are also in the early stages of providing starter resources in two areas: undertaking the development of a publication ethics policy for your journal and improving reporting standards using reporting guidelines and checklists such as CONSORT, STARD, etc. The latter resource should appeal particularly to members at biomedical journals.

As always there is room for anyone to contribute. Please let ISMTE headquarters know if you are willing to get involved or have an idea or two to share.

Jason Roberts, PhD
journal@ahsnet.org

Training Committee: February Update

The primary mission of ISMTE is to enhance the professionalism of individuals working in the scholarly publishing sector. Critical to achieving this mission is offering ISMTE members appropriate training opportunities and educational resources. To this end, in December 2009, the Training Committee administered a short online survey of ISMTE members to determine their training and education needs. The purpose of the survey was to aid the Committee in developing relevant and timely training and education resources, and to deliver those resources in formats most preferred by the membership. Forty percent of the ISMTE membership completed the survey—an outstanding response rate that speaks volumes about the commitment of ISMTE members to the society.

The majority of responders classified themselves as managing editors or editorial assistants working on medical- or science-related journals. Top areas of training interest included publishing ethics, social networking/media, digital repurposing of content, readership surveys, and marketing. Of the training formats suggested in the survey (downloadable content, webinars, and short courses), survey participants responded favorably to all three, but did indicate a slight preference for short courses.

The Training Committee also was happy to see several members expressed interest in developing training materials for the ISMTE membership—we're very appreciative of this interest and believe such willingness to share expertise will provide tremendous value to the ISMTE membership. The Training Committee thanks everyone who took the time to participate in the survey.

Based on the survey results, the Committee intends to develop a robust offering of training and education resources over the course of 2010. Given the current economic climate and the resulting budget challenges editorial offices are facing, the Committee will strive to make the resources either free or affordable. The overarching goals of the Committee for 2010 are to provide ISMTE members with the necessary tools to advance their professional growth, improve their current editorial practices, and to offer them new ideas and strategies for their publications. Several training materials are already under consideration by the Committee, including a slide presentation on producing podcasts, a video on obtaining high-quality images from authors, and a manual for training new journal managers.

We look forward to serving your educational needs in 2010 and welcome any feedback or ideas that will fulfill the objectives of the Committee.

Erin C. Dubnansky
edubnansky@gastro.org

Managing Offshore Vendors

by Melissa Dodd
Production Manager
BMJ *Journals*
mdodd@bmjgroup.com

The initial driver for offshoring work is partly financial. Costs can be greatly reduced by using suppliers in countries where the cost of living is cheaper and labour cost is lower. However, costs are on the rise everywhere and what these suppliers have done to combat these increases is to automate processes and constantly look at their efficiencies. There are huge numbers of highly skilled professionals coming out of universities in places like India. Software development is a major industry in India and, as technology has evolved, not surprisingly, much is being applied to the publishing industry.

There are many typesetting/content processing suppliers out there. The messages in this article are based on you having selected one of the well-established, tried-and-tested, 'good' suppliers.

Small World? Cultural Differences

We've all seen the HSBC adverts informing us of cultural differences still in existence despite globalisation and the need to be mindful of them when working together. Although these adverts are aimed to reassure us our money is in safe hands because the bank understands these differences, the message is of relevance to any publisher dealing with suppliers, customers, and associates worldwide. Some logistical differences such as time zones and national holidays are easily overcome. For instance, many suppliers will still provide a service on their major bank holidays, albeit a skeleton service, and will employ their staff on a shift basis so your account is never unmanned during your working week (most offshore suppliers manage a 24/6 operation…an interesting contrast to the UK print and publishing industry which tends to stand by tradition and close for the Christmas period).

It is the subtle communication differences that can be the downfall. For example, in response to my over-polite English way, I was warned pretty quickly that, when working with a Chinese supplier, direct instructions are a lot more comprehensible and are more likely to be actioned according to my request than asking gently. Phrases such as 'Can you do me a favour?', 'I would be really grateful if you could. . .', and 'Would you mind doing. . . ?' were more likely to be misunderstood and not received as direct instructions, and thus not implemented. However, when working with Indian suppliers, the desire to only say yes and the 'Customer is always right' view can lead to an alternative set of problems. It is important to open up the chance to be told 'no' rather than risk being told 'yes' until the delivery date and have no warning and time in which to flex requirements when the product is not delivered. Having said that, suppliers generally have very tight tracking procedures and statistical evidence of their successful deliveries.

The other key, to continually reiterate feedback, is always welcome. When an incomplete or ambiguous instruction is provided by the client, the tendency of the supplier is to guess what the answer is, rather than doubt the client and respond accordingly. This can lead to frustration on both sides.

Offshore Vendors

continued

Lots can be lost in translation and it is easy to miss these subtleties, so it is important to keep an open mind and remember we are dealing with suppliers who have considerable expertise, have invested in research and development, and who utilise highly skilled professionals to deliver our requirements.

Understand Your Own Requirements

I have heard colleagues in the past make the statement 'I don't care how they do it, whether it is done standing on their heads or with ten times the staff we would use'. In my opinion this is a mistake. I do care how they do it, and I think this is a fundamental requirement in the success of an outsourcing project.

It is important to see their set-up and have an understanding of how they are using your content, instructions, and documentation in order to achieve the output. Without this knowledge it is all too easy to point the finger and accuse, with no foundation. It also provides valuable input into streamlining your own workflows.

Remember They Are Experts

You can think you understand your own requirements and products better than anyone else can. It also is tempting to think you know the best solutions to your issues and how to resolve them. Do not forget, you are probably dealing with experts who have experienced staff employed for a number of years in the industry and who have been investing time and effort in providing services. Although you may have a better understanding of your products—that is your area of expertise—your supplier has a more holistic view across their client base and may be able to provide you with alternative and better proposals, if you are open to them.

Constant Evolution

Although suppliers are watching their rivals and are in a very competitive field, with new businesses setting up all the time, it is important to keep reviewing all suppliers even if you are happy with your set-up. Technology keeps evolving and so should you in order to keep ahead of, or not fall behind, your competitors. At the very least you might be inspired by other suppliers and what they are doing; any additional services they are developing or have already activated could be of benefit to your business. This constant review process might help you formulate your business plans and ideas further, which you can take to your current providers if you are not in a position to switch. Remember, this helps both you and your supplier; what they develop with you can be marketed to existing and potential clients. Also remember not to box yourself in, in any area of your business, and avoid having fixed ideas and plans.

Last word

As you can tell, I am very pro offshore outsourcing. But I hope I have provided a balanced view because it is not without its problems. Distance can be of frustration because it is less easy to hold regular face-to-face meetings, because when things go wrong the physical distance and time difference can sometimes cause an impression of lack of communication, and because when things are running late the desire for instant response and action can feel lacking. Moreover, the colloquialisms and different uses of language and understanding can feel like a real barrier. During

Offshore Vendors

continued

the set-up phases it is easy to vent irritations and take an imperialistic and patronising view, which should be guarded against. Added to this is that generally the majority of your staff will not be able to meet and visit the suppliers so it is less easy to build a good rapport, leading to the temptation to voice annoyances very forcefully behind the scenes and to stop providing the benefit of the doubt or a willingness to take any responsibility in-house, creating an easy blame culture.

Summary of Key Points

Communication

I cannot stress enough how important it is to communicate with your suppliers with regular site visits (at least annually and more frequently during the set-up phase), weekly conference calls, and regular e-mail correspondence over issues. Try to bring as many of your staff into these communication strategies as possible.

Understand Your Own Requirements

All too often we get used to an established relationship, whether it be in-house or with an existing supplier, and assume knowledge transfer will occur like osmosis. This is not the case!

Factor in Time for the Unknowns

You can never have everything nailed down in documentation, spreadsheets, and information sharing when you begin the relationship, and by overdoing that you can overwhelm everyone. Ensure you and your staff have factored in time for the initial questions and feedback. Remember, the longer you sit on something requiring a response the longer it will carry on going wrong.

Innovation

Be open to suggestions from your suppliers. Remember they are working for a host of publishers and are constantly evaluating the industry and the need to retain their clients and economise their processes. You can benefit from these developments too.

Establishing a Local Group of ISMTE Members

One of the things about ISMTE that inspired me when it started was its stated aim to be a network of peers. However, those peers were scattered all over the States and beyond, and when working in your own home office, isolation is a problem. I was lucky enough to meet a few other managing editors in my area and at the last ISMTE meeting in Baltimore floated the idea of creating a local group of ISMTE members in North Carolina. There was general enthusiasm, so I asked our president and our executive director how we could go about setting up a local group.

Firstly, I liked the name 'chapter', however it has legal connotations and requires by-laws and elections. So *Local Group* was suggested, and given our area is the Research Triangle Park (known locally as RTP), we would be called the *RTP Local Group of ISMTE*. I primarily wanted our meetings to be a networking opportunity, a chance to discuss issues on my journal with other professionals, to give advice to others where I had experience, and, if I'm honest, a chance for me to get out of the house once in a while! There would be no costs to attend the meeting (just the cost of eating/drinking at the place the meeting is held—a local restaurant), and we would hold the meeting at lunchtime.

I put together an e-mail proposal, got input from a few local people, and sent it to Jason Roberts, our then president who presented it to the Board. I asked for literature on ISMTE to hand out at meetings, a webpage to post our local events, and a list of all the local members so I could e-mail them about the new group. In addition, I Googled variations of 'Editorial Offices, NC' and came up with a dozen or so journals in the area to include on our e-mail blast.

The plan was to have discussion topics for each of our meetings, but for the first one I invited incoming president Elizabeth Blalock, who is based in Chapel Hill, NC, to come and talk about our society. Elizabeth also kindly scouted some local restaurants and found one willing to take a private party of 25 or (depending on turnout) give Elizabeth and me a table for two in the corner! That flexibility was great as I have no idea how many people will be interested in attending.

The next step was drafting an e-mail introducing our new *RTP Local Group of ISMTE* (a copy is available from me) with an invitation to attend our first meeting in late January 2010. I sent that out two weeks before our planned meeting and will send a reminder e-mail one week before.

As *EON* goes to press, that's the stage we are at, so I will report back on our inaugural meeting (or Elizabeth's and my lunch) in a following issue. If you would like to become the local organizer for your group, or to find out if your area already has a local group, please contact Leslie McGeoch, ISMTE executive director, at ismteoffice@gmail.com. Leslie will work with the membership committee to identify members in your area.

Jan McColm, PhD
Managing Editor
Genetics in Medicine
jmccolm@med.unc.edu

Membership Committee: February Update

As our Society moves into the new year, the membership committee would like to take a moment to speak to you about the most valuable part of ISMTE—our members. Members have not only provided a financial base for ISMTE to grow as an organization, but they also have volunteered to foster the growth of ISMTE. During August 2009, Camille Fisher from J&J Editorial stepped up to volunteer with the membership committee, joining Wendy Krank. Together, we are working hard to learn the needs of our fellow managing and technical editors.

Many of you have mentioned the need for educational growth through ISMTE, and the resource committee is developing the Resources section of the ISMTE website. Manuals, publishing materials, and technical information will be available on our website and act as a remote tool for your professional growth. [Editor's note: See article on page 8.]

ISMTE plans to offer training opportunities in the near future. Similarly, the jobs posting section of our website has been cited as an important resource to our members; this is now up and running and we urge you to take advantage of its free resume- and job-posting opportunities.

Our membership committee is eager to hear your feedback on how ISMTE can provide better services to its members, so please let us know what you would like to see more of.

Our most exciting piece of news is that, in an effort to connect members more intensively, a Local Group of ISMTE is currently being formed in North Carolina. The first meeting is scheduled for late January 2010; we look forward to reading about their inaugural gathering. There are many editorial offices and independent managing and technical editors in the greater Raleigh, NC area, and Jan McColm has undertaken efforts to connect these professionals. [See article on page 13.] We in membership hope this first Local Group of ISMTE will maximize the Society's effectiveness and provide the wider organization with a model for future local groups. If you are interested in starting a Local Group of ISMTE members in your area, please let us know.

We hope all our members plan on attending the conferences slated for 2010, the locations of which were recently announced as Alexandria, Virginia, and Oxford, England. [See article on page 2 and box on page 19.] Many efforts will be made to plan the professional development workshops for this conference, and we welcome your feedback on what you might like to see offered. Furthermore, we hope these locations are convenient for all who plan to attend; if for any reason you have reservations about your ability to make it to a conference, please contact the membership committee or ISMTE headquarters with questions. We endeavor to provide as much information as possible to our members to encourage discussion, dialog, and participation with ISMTE, your professional organization.

Wendy Krank
headachecurrents@q.com

Camille Fisher
camille@jjeditorial.com

Leslie McGeoch
ISMTE Executive Director
ismteoffice@gmail.com

Finance Committee: Update from the Treasurer

The finance committee, composed of Leslie McGeoch, the ISMTE's Executive Director, and myself as the Society's treasurer, was busily involved in the following matters during the last half of 2009 (1) reviewing all financial records maintained by our late Executive Director, Beverlee Anderson, (2) transferring the Society's funds from a local bank in Santa Fe to a branch of the Bank of America that will permit access to the Society's accounts throughout the United States, and (3) developing the initial draft of the Society's budget for 2010. After being reviewed and edited by Ms. McGeoch and me into a final draft, the budget will be presented to the Board of Directors for their critical evaluation and eventual approval.

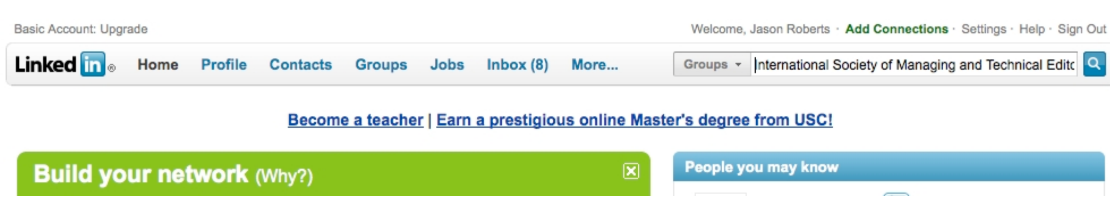
To better ensure stability and transparency with respect to the Society's finances, all bank records will now be reviewed by Elizabeth Blalock, the Society's President, our executive director, and the treasurer. Oversight of the Society's books by these three individuals should provide greater assurance to our members that their funds are being appropriately managed and allow for continuity if there is a sudden and unexpected change in the composition of this three-person oversight group.

Ira Salkin, MD
ISMTE Treasurer
irasalkin@aol.com

ISMTE is now on LinkedIn

An ISMTE Group has been created in LinkedIn. If you are already a LinkedIn user, simply join the group and make connections with your peers. If you are new to LinkedIn, it only takes a second to join and it's free.

To find the ISMTE group go to www.LinkedIn.com. Then from your profile page, go to the search box in the upper-right. It defaults to the People search setting. Use the down arrow to pull up the menu options and select Group, as in the example below:



When you have located the ISMTE group (search using 'International Society of Managing and Technical Editors') click **Join This Group**, fill out any specifications regarding notifications of updates, then hit the blue **Join Group** button.

When you have joined, make sure you take time to set up connections with your peers.

Feeling Perfectly at Home

by Anne Borcherds
Managing Editor, Terra Nova
anne.borcherds@wiley.com

I have been managing the editorial office of *Terra Nova* for five-and-a-half years now, and I can honestly say that there has never been a single second where I have wished that I was doing any other job. So, what is so great about managing *Terra Nova*?

Well, first of all there is the subject. I have been fascinated by geology ever since I was a child, and was interested enough to spend three years studying it at university. *Terra Nova* is a broad geology journal, covering the whole of the earth sciences; our mission is to publish 'short, innovative, and provocative papers of interest to a wide general readership'. So, I am lucky to have the opportunity to read some fascinating articles before they are even published, and, by helping authors to get their work into the public domain, I like to think I am playing a small part in furthering our understanding of how the Earth works.

The second great thing about managing *Terra Nova* is that I can work from my home in Birmingham, which is something that I have always wanted to do. No tedious commuting; the freedom to work flexible hours and to arrange my office just the way I like it—what could be better? My office is in a quirky room with seven walls, a sloping ceiling, and a dormer window overlooking the back garden. My typical day starts after I drop my twin daughters off at nursery; luckily their nursery is only a five-minute walk away, so I can drop them off at nine o'clock and be at my desk with a cup of fruit tea by ten past nine. I then work through until about quarter to twelve, which is usually long enough to deal with all the e-mails that have come in overnight. Mornings are also when I make any necessary phone calls to colleagues in Wiley-Blackwell's Oxford office, and I often find that there is time for a quick e-mail exchange with the journal's production editor in Singapore first thing as well. I collect my daughters from nursery at midday, and they normally keep me busy all afternoon, so I don't get back to my desk until either about five o'clock, when my husband gets home, or, if he is working late, after seven o'clock when the girls are in bed. I'll usually work an hour or two in the evening to clear the e-mails that have come in during the afternoon. I also like to use the evenings to work on any ongoing projects, write reports, et cetera, as I am less likely to be distracted by incoming e-mails. I also have one editor based on the west coast of the United States, who appreciates being able to phone me in the evenings.

That leads me on to the very best thing about *Terra Nova*, which is the fantastic team that makes the journal work. I am lucky enough to not only enjoy my job but also to be surrounded by people who all enjoy what they do. First, and most importantly, there are the authors, without whom the journal could not

Perfectly at Home *continued*

survive. *Terra Nova* is primarily a European journal, and in 2009 almost 70% of our submissions came from Europe; although we also receive articles from every part of the world. Our large European base means that more than 80% of our authors are not native English speakers, which brings some challenges. Then there are our reviewers, who give their time and effort for very little reward and who mostly return their reviews on time or at least are very apologetic when they don't. Our very broad scope makes it impossible for *Terra Nova* to maintain a pool of regular reviewers. The majority of our reviewers have not reviewed for *Terra Nova* before, so it is particularly important that we make the process of reviewing an article as straightforward and intuitive as possible. Our online system, ScholarOne Manuscripts, is a great help here, and a survey last year showed that the vast majority of our reviewers found the system easy to use.

Then there are the six scientific editors and almost 50 associate editors who work tirelessly to maintain the quality and efficiency that our authors and readers have come to expect. It was a new experience for me to work on a journal where there is no single editor-in-chief, and when I joined *Terra Nova* my manager warned me that one of the hardest parts of the job was to get consensus among the scientific editors on any matters of journal policy or development. But, I have not found this to be a problem in practice. The scientific editors are, without exception, a joy to work with, and they are all dedicated to the continuing success of *Terra Nova*. It can sometimes be difficult, however, to keep track of, and work around, their various travel plans. Like most geologists, the scientific editors have fieldwork commitments that can take them to remote parts of the world for weeks at a time with erratic (or often no) Internet access. This can affect our ability to process manuscripts quickly, but by careful planning in advance and keeping the scientific editors informed of the review status of manuscripts they are handling, we manage to keep delays to a minimum. Fortunately, our authors have fieldwork commitments of their own and tend to be very understanding. We try to get the scientific editors together for a meeting once each year, although I don't think we have ever been lucky enough to find a date when all six of them could attend. These annual meetings are a good time to discuss journal policy and come up with new ideas, which can then be developed in e-mail discussions later.

The last crucial group of people who complete the *Terra Nova* team are my colleagues at Wiley-Blackwell, who deal with production, marketing, subscriptions, and all those other tasks that are sometimes overlooked but nevertheless critical to making the journal a success. When I first joined *Terra Nova* I used to travel down to the Oxford office occasionally to meet my colleagues face-to-face, but teleconferencing has taken over in the last couple of years and, although I miss being able to meet my colleagues in person, there is rarely any real need for me to go into the office now.

I have been working in journal publishing for 16 years, and *Terra Nova* is the fifth journal I have managed. Over my career I have seen journal editorial offices change from paper-based to almost entirely electronic. In my first job, with a small society publisher, half of the wall space in the office was given over to filing, and I used to judge my workload

Perfectly at Home *continued*

by how many inches of manuscripts were piled in my in-tray. Now, the paperwork for *Terra Nova* occupies one drawer of a filing cabinet, which I open perhaps once a week. E-mail and the Internet have changed journal publishing in ways that I never imagined when I started out. I have no idea what lies ahead for the world of journal publishing, and what changes we may see over the next 16 years, but I very much hope that *Terra Nova* and I can move with the times from the comfort of my home office. It took me ten years to find a job where I truly feel at home—and I have no desire to change it any time soon.

ISMTE ***EON***

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A note on English: ISMTE aims to be a truly international society. English will represent our lingua franca, but we would like to stress that in materials published in EON *or online that variations in idiomatic usage and spelling should reflect the origins of the author. No one version of English is preferred over the other.*

ISMTE Executive Office: 107 Mantua Pike Ste. 701 # 122, Mantua, New Jersey, USA 08051-1606

Phone: +1 856 292 8512 Fax: +1 856 292 8513, E-mail: ismteoffice@gmail.com

Calendar of Events

ISMTE Annual Meetings - 2010

Alexandria

The US meeting will be held **August 3-4, 2010** with an opening reception and registration the evening of August 2. The meeting will take place in **Alexandria, Virginia**, conveniently located just outside Washington, DC and Ronald Reagan National Airport.

Oxford

The UK meeting will again be in **Oxford** at St. Hugh's College on **October 19, 2010.** I know everyone who attended last year thought the location was just about perfect.

More information will be available on the website soon (www.ismte.org).

Web 2.0: Online Communities and Social Media
10 February 2010
London, UK
www.alpsp.org

Project Management for Publishing
23 February 2010
Oxford, UK
www.alpsp.org

Introduction to Journals Marketing
2 March 2010
London, UK
www.alpsp.org

How To Be a Successful Journal Editor
25-26 March 2010
Oxford, UK
www.alpsp.org

Emerging Trends in Scholarly Publishing
8 April 2010
Washington, DC, USA
www.allenpress.com

ScholarOne User Conference
2-4 May 2010
Charlottesville, VA, USA

Taking eBooks to Market
11 May 2010
London, UK
www.alpsp.org

Council of Science Editors
14-18 May 2010
Atlanta, GA, USA
www.councilscienceeditors.org

Editorial Manager User Group Meeting
17-18 June 2010
Cambridge, MA, USA
www.editorialmanager.com

International Academy of Nursing Editors
11-14 August 2010
Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
www.nursingeditors-inane.org/events.html