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ISMTE North American Conference 2016

This year’s 9th annual conference was another excellent ISMTE event filled with thought-provoking presentations, interactive sessions, and record-breaking attendance (237 attendees!). The ISMTE introduced a useful conference app that allowed users to create a customized schedule, ask questions, and rate each session. A new logo, brand story, and tagline were also unveiled to the membership and the ISMTE’s refreshed look and feel will be rolled out over the coming months. Posters were displayed (see the August EON supplement) and the 2016 ISMTE Award Winners were announced. In terms of topics covered and new skills learned, the conference demonstrated our new tagline to empower Editorial Offices around the world.

COPE North American Seminar 2016

COPE’s North American Seminar was held Wednesday, August 10 and covered the theme of ethics in peer review. Alison McCook, Editor of Retraction Watch, began her presentation with a discussion of the current trends in fake peer review. Examples of compromised peer review include reviews submitted from a fictitious email account and reviews submitted under a real name but that used a fake email address. According to McCook, some warning signs to watch for are non-institutional email addresses, author-recommended reviewers, and unanimous positive reviews from all referees. She concluded her presentation by reminding the audience that not all reviews are fake and that there are only about 700 retractions a year out of 2.3 million papers published.

Kristen Overstreet, Managing Editor and Senior Partner at Origin Editorial, LLC, and ISMTE past-president, asked the question: Who reviews the reviewers? Overstreet recommended that Editorial Offices have clear policies in place to protect against
fake reviews. Reviewers should alert editors of any potential conflicts of interest and Editorial Office staff should be vigilant about flagging these. Transparency plays an important role in peer review as well. For example, editors should not perform reviews for manuscripts they are handling. They should assign reviewers or at the very least be transparent that their comments are from an editor, not a reviewer, to avoid any misrepresentation. Overstreet stressed the importance of educating reviewers, making sure they are properly trained and provided resources.

In the last presentation, Dr. Elizabeth Moylan, Senior Editor (Research Integrity) at BioMed Central, discussed the new challenges and solutions in peer review misconduct. Moylan highlighted many of the trends mentioned in the earlier talks and reiterated that it is necessary for everyone—researchers, editors, and publishers—to work together to raise awareness about and use available technology to investigate peer review misconduct.

More information on COPE can be found at their website, http://publicationethics.org.

Thursday, August 11: Keynote Session
Journals in the Post–Sci-Hub World

Reported by Margot Puerta, Managing Editor, Molecular Medicine

John Bohannon, PhD, a Contributing Correspondent for Science, kicked off this year’s North American conference. The scholarly publishing industry will last no more than 10 years in its current form. In support of this perspective, Bohannon presented several disruptive technologies and how they have already begun changing the publishing environment. Bohannon presented 24 hours of Sci-Hub server usage data on a map, which showed usage to be widespread globally, not restricted to developing nations. “This is not a map of poverty,” commented Bohannon. Usage is clustered in university locations suggesting academics are using the ease and convenience of Sci-Hub to access otherwise restricted work. This is an example of the massive pressure the publishing industry is currently undergoing.

According to Bohannon, with more than two million articles published per year in over 20,000 journals, that pressure in the industry is growing steadily. Disruptors, such as Sci-Hub, offer academics an almost irresistible short cut past the industry’s paid access gates. Publication models based on iTunes and Spotify have the potential to change the industry as well, but will libraries pay for these services? According to Bohannon, “Scholarly publications are married to academia and the worth of a scientist is tied up in their publication record.” With such high stakes involved, how will the industry look in the future? Bohannon made the following predictions for the publishing industry over the next five to ten years: pressure on the industry will increase, PDF-digital rights management will antagonize academics further, Open Access will grow, subscription journals ranked in the lower 50% will fade away, and the cost of publishing will decrease (partially driven by OA). Will these predictions come true? We will have to wait and see.

Thursday Breakout Sessions
Managing Editor-in-Chief Transitions

Reported by Deborah Bowman, MFA, ELS, Senior Managing Editor of Clinical Publications, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

The two presenters were Laura Creighton, Director of Society Products and Audience...
Engagement for IEEE, and Lindsey Topp, Managing Editor for the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*. Creighton and Topp came at this topic from two very different points of view.

Creighton’s organization, IEEE, is the world’s largest technical professional society. They have 370,000 members, 454 Societies and Technical Councils, and over 190 journals and magazines. Her part of this session covered “Managing Editor-in-Chief Transitions for Large Portfolios of Journals.” In any given year, they transition about 33 editorial teams, so they hold an annual training event with over 200 editors and staff in attendance. They work on skill-building as well as strategy and operations. Their goal is for outgoing and new editors to overlap and have a seamless transition. They find that two of the most important topics to cover are “Who does what?” and “What are the rules?” Individual Societies sometimes hold their own formal training sessions, but the foundation of their training comes from Creighton’s team.

Topp’s experience is quite different; she manages three Society journals in an office with only her and one Editorial Assistant. Her part of this session was entitled “When Big Change Happens to a Small Office.” Their Editors-in-Chief transition once every five years. She stressed the importance of planning, being organized, making lists, and getting the support of your organization and publisher. To begin with, get a seat on the selection panel, if at all possible. Begin working with the new team as soon as you can and communicate new ideas to your publisher far in advance. Make a timeline and stick to it, and make an Editor Handbook, both for the new team and for yourself, to help you look at the editorial process in a new light. Recognize that your role will transition too; even though your title stays the same, the new ideas that the incoming Editors bring will change your job as well. You have to let go of “It has always been done this way” and open your mind to new ideas. A surprising dividend from going through this process is that it gives you the chance to make positive changes. Take a look at what isn’t working and start the new team off on the right foot.

Taken together, the two parts of this session gave the audience some great ideas of what to expect and how to handle Editor transitions. Don’t forget to follow up to find out what worked and what didn’t so you can fill in the gaps in their training and so you will be better prepared for the next transition, which will come before you know it!

**Editorial Office Reporting / Using Reports for Good Decision-Making**

*Reported by Sarah Forgeng, Editorial Process Manager, Journal of Investigative Dermatology*

Attendees had the opportunity to learn how other Editorial Offices use reporting in this session. Judy Connors, Associate Director for Editorial Services at the Drug Information Association, discussed the reports she uses to monitor the health and growth of a journal, including details about submissions and individual performance. By using these reports, she is able to gain insights into which editors’ terms to renew, spot emerging trends, and identify key reviewers for recognition. Gwen Baker, Senior Trainer for ScholarOne Manuscripts, then discussed some of the most requested reports by ScholarOne users. Attendees were shown how to create a few reports for their own use, including submissions by region and task-related performance reports with conditional formatting to highlight outliers.

**Reputation Management**

*Reported by Kurt Spurlock, Quality Manager, Research Square*

Thursday morning’s session on reputation management was presented by Erin Wiringi, Assistant Director for Marketing Communications & Outreach at ACS Publications, and Iratxe Puebla, Managing Editor at PLOS ONE.
Wringi began the panel by noting how important and how delicate a journal’s reputation can be as she described the path to developing a journal’s reputation. Drawing in particular from the recent launches of ACS Central Science and ACS Omega, Wringi moved beyond some reputation management basics like “define brand voice” to some great advice for a journal, especially a society journal, which carries a built-in audience and a sense of mission and purpose that precedes any new venture. A key point about maintaining and drawing from the broader ACS brand while offering something new was to carefully match the Editorial Board with the journal to create a coherent vision that everyone involved not only understands but believes in.

Puebla continued the theme of just how much work goes into building a journal’s reputation and just how precarious that reputation can be when something goes awry. Beyond standard metrics such as Impact Factor, Puebla pointed out that journal reputations have a wide variety of influences, from transparency and integrity to Editorial Boards and publication models. How then to manage all those sources of a journal’s reputation when things do not go according to plan? Puebla emphasized repeatedly that a swift but informed response is best, but that a deliberate process should override any calls for speed. Even strong public criticism is no cause for panic because a strong, clear plan can guide all internal and external responses to a crisis. Puebla noted that a journal should not get drawn into personal exchanges or social media debates, but public criticism is a great learning opportunity as long as it spurs introspection into a journal’s editorial processes.

Managing and Rewarding Editorial Boards and Reviewers

Reported by Michael Willis, Senior Manager, Peer Review, Wiley-Blackwell

Every journal editor knows the challenge of finding and holding on to good reviewers and Editorial Board members. Indeed, providing appropriate recognition for peer reviewers is the theme of this year’s Peer Review Week. A straw poll of those attending this session showed that a good number provide tokens of appreciation to their Board members and reviewers, such as a complimentary journal subscription or discounted publication charges. The session provided differing perspectives on how to show appreciation to those who support journals in the core activity of peer review.

Dr. Bruce Baum, Co-Senior Editor of Oral Diseases and Scientist Emeritus at the NIH and NICDR (Bethesda, MD, USA), presented the perspective of an academic journal editor. Quoting Hillel in the Babylonian Talmud, Baum stated his golden rule: “That which is despicable to you do not do to your fellow.” His particular journal, although a relatively small sub-specialty journal, has 18 Associate Editors and nearly 80 Editorial Board members, the purpose being to spread the workload evenly among the entire group, who all work on a pro bono basis. Associate Editors and Board members are thanked personally and frequently by the Senior Editors to remind them that they are appreciated and to keep them engaged. Other initiatives show reviewers that their work is valued by the Editors: a partnership with Publons, enabling reviewers to obtain public recognition for their work; annual publication of all reviewer names in the journal; an annual “Best Reviewer” prize of $200 and a certificate; promotion of the best reviewers to the Editorial Board; and invitation of the best Editorial Board members to be Associate Editors for the journal. Soliciting the advice and insights of reviewers and Board members and then acting on that advice counts for a great deal and, as is so often the case, honest, professional, and courteous
communication by the Senior Editors themselves is clearly invaluable in cementing relationships with the Editorial Board members and reviewers.

Patti Lockhart, Managing Editor of The Plant Cell and Plant Physiology, then presented the perspective of the Editorial Office. Although these journals are flagship publications of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB), their 150 or so editors handling around 3,000 submissions annually, they have still grappled with the need to keep a loyal pool of reviewers—the pool is currently over 5,000 strong and represents over 40 countries. Feedback from editors and reviewers indicated that the journals could help themselves by upgrading their website technology to make things easier for those reviewing, for example by making articles easier to navigate and read, enabling reviewers to login using third-party accounts (e.g., Google, Twitter, or ORCID), and—for editors—attaching calendar files to reminder emails, and making it easier to identify reviewers. Reviewers are able easily to add their reviewing activity to their ORCID profile. But the trump card in the ASPB’s strategy for cementing reviewer loyalty is their “Journal Miles” programme. Based on the concept of air miles, 10 Journal Miles are awarded to a reviewer for each review completed in a timely manner. The Journal Miles accumulate with each completed review, active for 24 months, and can be redeemed for products from the ASPB (e.g., luggage tags or journal posters) or Society membership. The scheme has proven to be hugely successful, with the Editorial Office frequently receiving letters of appreciation from grateful reviewers. One niggling concern I had was about the cost in time and money to maintain the technology and database, but it’s a great example of how a Society journal can engage its reviewers in a relevant and appropriate way to benefit both journal and Society.

Science for English Majors (Or, Understanding the World of the Researcher)

Reported by Stephanie Kinnan, Editorial Assistant, GIE: Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Justin English, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow, Roth Laboratory, University of North Carolina Department of Pharmacology, discussed the differences between how editors and scientific researchers view the world of publishing. He began by mentioning the 3 steps of the scientific process:

1. Ask a question
2. Find the best answer
3. Communicate

Scientific researchers spend the majority of their time collecting and analyzing data. Preparing a manuscript for publication is the last step in a very long process. As members of the editorial/publishing field, we only see the finished product without being aware of the months or years of work that have gone into it. He also stressed that where and when you choose to publish is an important part of the scientific process. As one can imagine, the manuscript review process and rejection can be very frustrating, as authors want to publish their findings quickly and in the most prestigious journals.

Negative results are not usually accepted by high-tier journals but are just as important to the scientific community. Another excellent point is that editors and scientific researchers look at graphs and images very differently. As editors, we want high-quality, visually appealing images. A figure that looks high quality to us may not be considered so by a scientist if it offers little to no scientific value.

Overall, English’s presentation was informative and engaging. The session left attendees with a better understanding of their journal’s authors and the scientific process.
Thursday Interactive Workshops

Improving Your Journal’s Instructions to Authors

Reported by Michelle English, Director of Operations, J&J Editorial

Kurt Spurlock, Quality Manager, and Erika Kessler, Academic Formatting Specialist, both of Research Square, gave an interactive and informative session on improving your journal’s instructions to authors. Why would you want to do this? Many reasons—to make the process easier for authors by letting them know up front in a clear and concise manner what is expected of them, and because journal staff’s time is valuable and sending back to authors for formatting problems is a waste of time. They recommend clearly defining the journal’s figure and table sizing requirements, providing examples of reference style rather than just saying “Use XYZ publisher’s style,” and listing all required components such as disclosures, necessary forms to upload, etc. They say the best author guidelines are ones that follow a checklist or table style (very easy to read, helps non-native English speakers) and are clear about what you do and don’t want (nothing vague). Attendees of this session loved the examples of both good and bad guidelines, and had time at the end of the session to workshop some examples the presenters brought to make them better.

Two other interactive workshops were held concurrently: Detecting Misconduct in Images and Mastering Microsoft Word.

Plenary Session

Research Integrity and Our Industry Responsibility

Reported by Margot Puerta

Dr. Elizabeth Moylan, Senior Editor (Research Integrity) at BioMed Central, presented in place of the listed speaker, Dr. Jigisha Patel. Her lecture contained the following sections: prevalence of research misconduct, what drives misconduct, challenges in maintaining research integrity and practical steps from the BioMed Central Research Integrity Group. Retractions seem to be increasing and this may be due to the pressure to publish for career advancement. All stakeholders involved in the culture of scientific research are responsible for maintaining best research practices. The research integrity field is growing and resources should be allocated to support it. The Research Integrity Group of BMC is a team dedicated to promoting ethical conduct, evaluation, and reporting of scientific research. They conduct audits, provide training, and hold workshops. Research integrity concerns may only be solvable through collaborations between researchers and institutions.

Dr. Bettie M. Steinberg presented her institute’s misconduct policy, responsibilities of the Research Integrity Officer (RIO), the process of dealing with misconduct in an academic setting, and discussed two case studies of misconduct. There are four steps to dealing with misconduct which are akin to the legal process: assess possible problem, evaluation by inquiry committee (“grand jury”), in-depth study by investigation committee (“jury trial”), and final determination recommendations (“sentencing”). Resolutions are usually reached within 90 days. Extensions require justification. There were rousing cheers when Dr. Steinberg commented, “we take their hard drive and ten years’ worth of emails.” An informative Q&A followed.

Vendor Breakout Sessions

Attendees had an opportunity to attend a variety of breakout sessions with vendors including ScholarOne, eJournalPress, Aries Systems, and Elsevier.
Dr. David Crotty had the unenviable task of condensing the “state of scholarly publishing” into only 30 minutes. Any one of his topics could easily been the subject of an hour-long session. Crotty, who is the Editorial Director of Journals Policy at Oxford University Press, as well as a long-time contributor to the widely read industry blog The Scholarly Kitchen, managed to cover several important issues in a limited amount of time.

Crotty started by saying that, in general, scholarly publishers tend to be cynical and pessimistic. The idea that “The sky is falling” often is the attitude of conferences and meetings. Chicken Little (or Henny Penny for the British, as he points out) has become an industry mascot of sorts. Crotty also got his first good laugh from the audience by stating “There’s a very old joke about how the first book off of the Gutenberg printing press was the Bible and the second book was about the decline of the publishing industry.”

He went on to say that even though there is a feeling of negativity by some, scholarly publishing, unlike other types of publishing, continues to thrive, to grow and develop new ways of communicating.

However, sometimes the subjects that publishers argue about do not reflect the real-world issues that need attention. That disconnect comes from losing sight of the real needs of our community. Publishers often listen to the “loudest, and often the angriest voices from the research community, and often these tend to be edge cases that do not represent the needs or desires of the mainstream.” The reality is that when asked about the problems that scholarly publishers lose sleep over, most members of our community often are completely unaware or uninterested. So, while trying to keep in mind all of the issues everyone involved in our community struggle with, it is important to know which of those truly “matter.”

Crotty started his high-level overview by discussing the consolidation within our industry. This proved to be quite prophetic as weeks later the acquisition of Atypon by Wiley was announced. Mergers and acquisitions have resulted in the biggest publishers getting even bigger, making it difficult for independent or small publishers to compete. The introduction of “The Big Deal” now dominates the market, and the bigger publishers can offer a larger package of journals, resulting in smaller publishers and societies often getting squeezed out.

Next, the idea that out of necessity, publishers are starting to move their business models away from depending solely on the sale of content and more towards services which they provide. Crotty mentioned Elsevier as a good example of this. In recent years Elsevier has acquired Mendeley and the Social Sciences Research Network, as well as building their own systems like Scopus. Another good example is Digital Sciences, from Springer Nature, which shows a publisher investing in services and tools around publications, instead of just the publications.

Of course, no tour of the scholarly publishing world would be complete without a mention of Open Access. Crotty noted that many surveys reflect that Open Access (OA) is still a low priority for most researchers. The top reasons researchers submit to journals are still the journal’s reputation.
and relevance, the quality of peer review and, for better or worse, Impact Factor.

Crotty then asked the key question: “If OA isn’t a priority for most researchers, what’s driving the expansion of OA?”

Not surprisingly the main driving forces are economic. Library budgets are more limited than ever. OA allows publishers to serve the needs of their community without impacting the budget of libraries. OA gives publishers an alternative revenue stream, in addition to the current market. It brings in money from funding agencies and researchers, rather than libraries. Funding agencies want return on their investment, and they see OA as a means to that end. Many funders are instituting new policies regarding OA (or public) to research they’ve funded. Funders with these policies are now actually starting to enforce them by withholding funds from researchers who are not in compliance. And, Crotty said “where the funding goes, the researchers are certain to follow.”

The next subject was misconduct. Crotty asked “Why are we seeing such a rise in retractions across the literature? Are more and more people either being sloppy or cheating? Or is there just better scrutiny these days, and better technology for detection of misconduct?”

Digital publishing makes a host of new scams possible, including “citation rings” among journals looking to boost their Impact Factors, the use of fake peer reviewers, or predatory publishers, who don’t bother with peer review at all. Though scholarly publishing is 20 years old, in many ways it is still the “Wild West.”

Crotty then finished up by covering the grey areas and the dark side of our professional world. In the former category are scholarly collaboration networks, such as ResearchGate and Academia.edu, which are privately-owned, for-profit, venture-capital–backed business ventures. Crotty pointed out that it is important to remember that these are profitmaking organizations, with business models that range from selling ads to “spying on researchers.” They sell data on what their users are reading and discussing to anyone willing to pay for it. Both are backed by investment dollars, but neither currently seems to have a viable business model. Disturbingly, it’s not clear that the research community is using either site for social interaction, other than what has become the life-blood for both sites, the “quasi-legal” downloading of articles.

Last but not least, Crotty tackled flagrant piracy. In many ways, piracy is just an accepted part of this age of digital publishing. However, there is more that can be done to minimize the damage. Sci-Hub, the website accused of both copyright infringement and criminal hacking and stealing of passwords, has forced our industry to take a hard look at how publishers use technology, provide access, and implement security. While legal actions against Sci-Hub may make the site harder to find, it is not realistic to think that it will go away entirely.

“One valuable lesson from Sci-Hub is an industry-wide recognition that our security and authentication systems are no longer fit for purpose,” Crotty said. Journal access based on IP range is a technology that woefully outdated. It is time for journals and publishers to catch up with companies such as Facebook, Google, and the rest of the world by moving to more secure systems. Crotty feels that “This will make it harder for pirates to gain illegal access to journals, and make it easier to track and shut down any security breaches.”

Another important idea is related to access. A few studies have shown that many users of Sci-Hub are researchers who have legal access to the content, but they use Sci-Hub because they offer an easier way to get to the articles they want. The experience to gain access for many readers is awful,
and frustrating. Those who have access via their university find that getting access when away from campus or on a mobile device is nearly impossible. Publishers must find new ways to grant secure access to users so that legal access is easier than piracy.

This last point really struck me and stuck with me. Will Sci-Hub’s legacy be that it forced publishers to finally make access easier and faster and to tighten their security?

Crotty concluded by explaining that all of these topics come with both dangers and opportunities. We can “go the Chicken Little route and see everything in terms of doom and gloom,” or we “can rise to the challenge of navigating uncharted waters and turn threats into new services and assets.”

Friday Interactive Workshops

Figures 101: Understanding the Technology of Images and Helping Authors

Reported by Michelle English

Lindsey Brounstein, Managing Editor of Cellular and Molecular Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and Lauren Bragg, Client Manager at J&J Editorial, presented a session all about figures. The session was aimed at educating Managing Editors who see figures all the time but struggle with how to help authors with them. Topics were covered such as “What is resolution?” and how one can improve it; raster versus vector files; lossless figure types versus “lossy” ones; file compression; color modes, and more. Journal requirements vary largely based on if a journal is print-only, online-only, or both print and online, as well as the technology the scientist or researcher has available to them to create the figures (for example, an echocardiography machine). The main takeaways from this session were that figure editors can often work magic on a seemingly poor quality figure, but it is always easier to ask for the highest quality figure from the beginning.

Social Media: How to Make It Work for Your Publication

Reported by Jan Higgins, PhD, ELS, Managing Editor, Genetics in Medicine

Katie Murphy, Assistant Managing Editor/Social Media Manager at the American College of Medical Genetics, gave an excellent talk on how your journal can use social media to help promote your content, among other things. Before you even start you should ask yourself four questions about your social media: Why? Who? What? and How? These are crucial to help you decide on your reasons for being on social media, which audience you are trying to reach, what does that audience want, and finally how will you deliver that? Katie shared an example of her monthly schedule for just one of the journals she does social media for, and it was quite large, sparking quite a few questions from the audience. Murphy stressed that being organized with such spreadsheets is important to maintain a frequency of posting, and you need to post regularly to keep your audience engaged. Understanding going into it that this is a time commitment will help you to decide how much content, and thus time, you will be able to provide. Murphy also stressed the importance of “measuring” your success, giving many examples of free metrics software that will help you understand how well you reached your audience and what were
the most popular posts. This will help you refine what your audience wants, and be sure you are spending your time on social media appropriately.

Production Best Practices

Two different reports on this session are provided

Matt Tomasheski, Team Leader Production at Elsevier, shared his experience building a successful partnership between the Editorial and Production offices. Tomasheski classifies this partnership as having four distinct elements: aligned goals for editorial and production offices, production process and best practices, knowledge exchange, and a changing production climate.

With its mission of leading the way in advancing science, technology, and health, Elsevier places great importance on aligning the goals of the Editorial and Production offices: to produce and distribute high-quality content as quickly as possible while providing outstanding customer service.

Incorporating their best practices, Tomasheski explained the detailed production schedules they employ. Additionally, he provided graphical examples of the article publishing processes including the responsibilities of the editorial office, authors, typesetters, and the production office. Once the articles are available, Tomasheski documented the issue publishing process and provided explanations of the roles of each department.

Tomasheski also noted the importance of knowledge exchange between the Editorial and Production office, asking the audience “what’s the one thing you wish your production office knew about the editorial process that would make for a more efficient workflow?” Audience replies were quickly forthcoming.

Tomasheski concluded with an overview of the online systems that Elsevier has deployed to improve workflow efficiency, information gathering, and the author experience.

Reported by Steve Musser, Sales Representative, The Sheridan Group

For this interactive discussion, Matt Tomasheski, Team Leader Production at Elsevier, took us through the process from the moment an accepted article is transferred to the production department until the final version is published. Tomasheski began by reviewing a typical production schedule, noting the various key deadlines. He then walked the audience through both the article publishing process and the issue publishing process, inviting suggestions of areas where others’ experience may differ. Certainly there is some variation based on whether or not a journal publishes a print version still, although other areas of potential difference were seen in publication of accepted, not-yet-typeset manuscripts, as well as in the procedures and participants for reviewing article proofs.

Tomasheski noted that prior to the session he had invited colleagues to suggest “one thing that you wish your Editorial Office knew/understood about the Production process that would make for a more efficient workflow.” The audience correctly guessed that the importance of deadlines would be a popular response (it was #1), followed by understanding of turnaround times, the reasons why a manuscript should be complete as possible at the time of transfer to Production, the timing of content review, and communication of key information. The question was then turned around—what did Editorial Offices wish Production departments understood better
about the Editorial process? A need for flexibility was emphasized, as several respondents spoke about challenges with getting authors to provide required materials earlier in the process.

In the final section of the presentation, Tomasheski focused on changes to the Production process over the past few years, including a move toward distinguishing between editorial requirements and production requirements during the submission process, so that authors could focus more on the latter at the point of revision; the development of online systems for handling forms and proofs; and services such as CrossMark.

Reported by George Woodward, Senior Publisher, Elsevier

Friday Breakout Sessions

Data Sharing: Requirements & Best Practices

Reported by Michael Willis

The topic of big data generates numerous questions for the Managing Editor: how should data be shared and with whom? What data should be shared? Should data be peer reviewed? Meredith Morovati, Executive Director of the data repository Dryad, opened this session by showing that there is strong support among researchers themselves—irrespective of discipline—for their data to be both accessible and re-used by others. This is fundamental to the principle that scientific research be reproducible. The older the article, the harder it will be to find the source data for that article, with authors typically storing the data in their own institutions or on their own computers, with the risk of data loss and making the data nigh-impossible to find and re-use. Enter data repositories such as Dryad, which allow data to be stored, curated and publicly accessed. Persistent identifiers such as a DOI also make it simple for users to find the data which is then seamlessly connected with the article to which it refers. Good practice dictates that data should be deposited at the time of an article’s publication.

So much for how and where to store data. Dr. David Crotty, Editorial Director for Journals Policy at Oxford University Press, presented next on how publishers and journals should develop policies around data collection and storage. Publishers—not to mention funders and institutions—have a duty, but also an opportunity, to help researchers collect and store data. But, Crotty noted, publishing a data policy without monitoring its compliance is an empty threat.

This led neatly to the third presentation in the session, in which Dr. Brooks Hanson, Director of Publications at the American Geophysical Union, demonstrated various examples of data policies which publishers and journals might adopt. Publishers, funders, and institutions have been aligning themselves around principles such as the “Transparency & Openness Promotion Guidelines for Journals” (TOP), which provide eight standards, not specific to any discipline, and each with three levels of increasing stringency. The standards focus on transparency of data, research methods, design, and replication. Journals can select which of these standards they wish to adopt and select a level of implementation—disclose, require or verify—for each standard. FORCE11 devised the Joint Declaration of Data Citation Principles, which covers credit and attribution, identification, access, and flexibility across disciplines, and are endorsed by most major publishers. Having adopted a policy, the next challenge for a journal is to require that authors follow the policy by, for example, ensuring that authors provide clear statements in their manuscript about how and where to access the data; making it available for peer review and asking reviewers and editors to verify that the data are available; and having data referenced in
the main reference list. Journals should even consider publishing an editorial statement of concern after publication if data are not available.

The Business of Publishing

Reported by Steve Musser

Industry consultants Kathey Alexander, Publishing Consultant, and Joe Esposito, Management Consultant, offered a lively session that contrasted different business models in the scholarly publishing industry.

Alexander led off by describing the costs, challenges, and risks that a self-publishing society incurs versus a partnership with a commercial publisher. She noted that every journal is a business and it’s important to have a complete picture of costs prior to entering into any commercial publishing partnership. Contrary to some views, not all commercial publishers are evil entities. Societies consider partnering for a number of reasons including declining revenues, staff being pushed to be lean, increasing costs, and realizing that publishing is not always the society’s core competency. A commercial publisher can offer many advantages including global sales, technology innovations, publishing expertise, and guaranteed payments to the society.

Alexander shared that there is no one-size-fits-all arrangement in a commercial publishing partnership and that it’s important that both parties communicate and work in the spirit of a partnership. A consultant can be very helpful in this process.

Esposito brought forth his vision of the future of publishing, first describing the span of publishing. Publishing is among the most diverse industries touching most human activity, while every book and article is an innovation that can be presented in many formats like print, digital, and audio. Meanwhile each segment of the publishing industry has many sub-segments. Academic publishing can be further segmented, for instance humanities and social sciences vs. science, math, and technology and books vs. journals.

There are a number of issues challenging the STM publisher. This includes flat library budgets, industry consolidation, a growing governmental role (Open Access mandates), and the growth of alternate services and new metrics. Therefore, how you play depends on who you are.

Very large publishers may seek to dominate library consortia. Independent publishers may seek a relationship with a larger publisher while some libraries may seek more clout by organizing into consortia. It’s clear now, too, that large publishers are re-envisioning themselves as data companies.

In crafting scenarios and strategy, Esposito proposed an unconventional approach eschewing lofty mission statements, suggesting instead anchoring goals in specific well-defined scenarios and assigning responsibility for each projected outcome. It is important to revisit goals and progress quarterly and to keep in mind that not all goals are necessarily financial or quantitative. “The business of publishing today involves projecting a set of goals for an organization tomorrow.”

Online Security Risks in Academic Publishing

Reported by Kristie Overstreet, Senior Partner, Origin Editorial, LLC

Abhinav Mittal, CTO, Highwire Press, Inc, and Tony Alves, Director, Product Management,
Aries Systems, presented a breakout session on why journals should worry about online security.

Abhinav Mittal: We live in an insecure world where cyberattacks are increasing, have become more sophisticated, and are targeted to breach pay-walled content (e.g., Sci-Hub). We have a lot of data to steal. Although security can be painful (e.g., air travel), it is important in order to avoid theft, protect service availability, and to avoid malicious action such as deletion or modification of our data, defacement of our sites, or allowing gateways to launch other attacks. However, the publishing industry has not taken security seriously yet. We need to be proactive and make security a priority; we should have policies about security that document our proactive efforts and our procedures in case of a security breach, how to manage new and existing users, and the software development lifecycle. To protect ourselves we
• should not collect information we don’t need (“They can’t steal what’s not there”);
• use multifactor authentication to counter phishing;
• employee end-point (e.g., hard drive) encryption; and
• secure remote access.

Key Takeaways
• Security is a moving target, but you have to try to protect yourself.
• Know your risks and plan accordingly.
• Be ready. Document a procedure in your Policy & Procedures Manual before an issue arises. You have to react quickly to a security breach. Speed is important.
• Be transparent. If you have an issue, let your users know what happened. Have template responses ready in your Policy & Procedures Manual.
• Make security a priority.

Tony Alves: There are a number of threats to our online security:
• Denial of Service (take down of service)
• Hackers—stealing / disrupting / deleting
• Disgruntled people—staff who have admin access to the data

How do you protect your journal from your journal staff? What can you do to be sure your journal data is safe?
• Encrypting passwords
• “Salted hash”—makes it more difficult to crack a password
• Proxy restriction—admins can’t access or modify sensitive info like passwords
• Password profiles
• PDF security
• Brand and watermark—this doesn’t prevent someone from accessing and reading the PDF, but it identifies the content as an unofficial publication

Journals need to weigh security against the value of the item they are trying to keep secure. Security measures can be painful, so you have to determine the worth of what you are trying to secure and make the security measures proportionate.

Consider adding text about these items to your journal’s Policy and Procedures Manual.
1. Determine if it is acceptable for staff/editors to keep journal data on their personal computers.
2. Review system users to identify those who are not really an author, reviewer, and/or editor. These people could have created accounts for malicious reasons.
3. Remove access rights from staff/editors who have left the journal.
4. Determine how often users are required to refresh their passwords. Those with more rights should refresh more often.

Plenary Session
CHORUS

Reported by Meghan McDevitt, Assistant Manager of Clinical Publications, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Howard Ratner, Executive Director of CHORUS, concluded the conference with a presentation on CHORUS and its efforts to provide cost-effective public access to funded research in the United States. Established as a not-for-profit membership organization,
CHORUS builds on and integrates into existing infrastructure (CrossRef Open Funder Registry, publishing platforms, ORCID, and more) and works across various funder policies and publishing business models. CHORUS focuses on five services:

- Identification (e.g., naming the funding source)
- Discovery (CHORUS’ optimized search application, common search engines)
- Access (CHORUS directs users to the best available versions of articles)
- Compliance (tagging can be easily added to the article submission process)
- Preservation (archiving and preserving research)

Ratner also announced the launch of a CHOR pilot project with the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), leading to continued international expansion in the space of public access compliance. Learn more about CHORUS online.

Conference Wrap-up

Congratulations to Elizabeth Blalock and the rest of the conference planning committee, Julie Nash, Board Liaison, Lindsey Brounstein, Michelle English, Sarah Forgeng, Steve Musser, Margot Puerta, Jessica Rucker, Kurt Spurlock, and George Woodward for the excellent planning and execution of another great ISMTE North American Conference.


View handouts and conference materials from the meeting online at the ISMTE website. Hope to see you next year in an exciting new location: Denver, Colorado, USA on August 10–11, 2017.

Editor’s Note: Photos courtesy of Kristie Overstreet, J&J Editorial, Meghan McDevitt, Michael Willis, and Steve Musser.
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The journal whitelist.

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Peer Review Evaluation

#ISMTE2016
Being Intentional with Branding

By Kathy Kassera Mrozek (ORCiD 0000-0003-1681-8803)
President and Creative Director
Windmill Design

We all judge books by their covers, despite the popular adage to the contrary. Have you ever chosen a product for its packaging or slogan? Or assumed something about a person by the way they dressed or the words they chose? In a world where books are, in fact, picked up based on their covers, it’s important that your organization’s book cover—your brand—is intentionally created to encourage those who would find the story irresistible to look inside.

More complex and multidimensional than a book cover, your brand is the culmination of how your organization looks, talks, feels, and communicates with the outside world—from the wording of your social media posts, to the visual concept of your logo, to the user experience that people have when they visit your website. When branding is done well, it creates a cohesive, consistent personality and message. People feel like they really know and understand you as a company or organization: what you stand for, what you do, and why it’s important.

Whether You’ve Thought About It or Not, Your Organization Already Has a Brand

If you haven’t created your brand strategically, your organization may be sending mixed messages or presenting a personality to the world that’s inconsistent with how you want to be seen. There’s also a chance your brand may be stuck in its own past—many a logo has been hastily created in the early days of founding a company. If you’ve grown, it’s likely time for your brand to also grow up and evolve strategically to reflect not just where you came from but who you’ve become and where you’re going.

How to Know if It’s Time for an Update

- Do you have a clear, consistent way of talking about what’s unique and important about your organization?
- Do your marketing and communication materials match? (Think website, brochures, stationery, etc.) Are they clearly distinguishable as yours?
- Do your visuals and language cause the right clients, members, and prospects to gravitate toward you without confusion?
- Are you making a strong and positive first impression as a polished, professional organization that inspires trust?

If the answer is no, maybe, or I’m not sure, your existing brand may be holding you back.

Branding is Not One-Size-Fits-All

The branding process can be a large or small effort, depending on the current state of your brand and how far it is from where it needs to be. The key questions an organization needs to ask are, “Who are we?” and “Why do we matter to our customers?” Some organizations need to start at the very beginning and first identify the answers to those questions. Others already know the answers but need help communicating them more clearly. Some may have a solid brand that simply needs updates, like a brightened color palette or more authentic language. Working with a professional agency will bring perspective and put your brand on the best path to where it needs to go.

A branding initiative starts with a lot of learning, talking, thinking, and planning. One of the most thrilling parts of an agency’s job is learning the ins-and-outs of clients’ organizations—what makes them unique and compelling, and what best attracts their clients and prospects.

The process results in tools that define and guide your brand and marketing efforts, such as a brand value proposition, brand promise, brand story, and brand tagline. These are accompanied
Being Intentional with Branding

by the **logo and visual identity**, which build the overall brand look-and-feel.

**Brand Value Proposition**

Your brand value proposition represents the core of your business model and is carefully crafted as a simple statement to address three main points:

- Who are your target customers, and what do they need?
- Why should the customer use your brand?
- What are you delivering?

Look at ISMTE’s brand value proposition, as an example:

**TARGET**
For managing and technical editors at scholarly journals around the world

**NEED**
...who need support they can trust to further their professional development

**OFFER**
...ISMTE provides the only community dedicated solely to managing and technical editors that combines networking, training, and industry-proven best practices

**VALUE**
...allowing them to engage with other professionals, broaden their day-to-day skills, and be proud of the journals they produce.

**Brand Promise and Brand Story**

Your brand promise is the promise you make to your customers, employees, partners, vendors, the media, and other key stakeholders. This statement becomes the cornerstone for the marketing language. For example:

ISMTE is a unique community for managing and technical editors at scholarly publications worldwide, that combines networking, training, and industry-proven best practices—allowing them to engage with other professionals, broaden their day-to-day skills, and be proud of the journals they produce.

A brand story is the emotionally infused story of how your brand delivers unique value in a crowded marketplace. It is your brand’s personality brought to life, and it sets the tone for visuals and overall voice. Another example:

Between you and your next publication date, there’s an endless list of to-dos. Deadlines to meet. Manuscripts to process. Authors and editors who need responses. But you find a way to make it work no matter how hectic things get or how many obstacles emerge. Because you won’t settle for a product that’s anything less than your absolute best. That’s why you need to engage with ISMTE.

ISMTE is the world’s only professional organization dedicated to managing and technical editors. Whether you’re just starting out in your career or a veteran of many years—whether you’re part of an editorial team at a large journal in London, or working alone in Sydney—ISMTE is the place for you.

We’re a community of managing and technical editors around the world. Our society helps you make the most out of your job and professional life, with clear, trusted information and fewer problems along the way.

Need an answer to a seemingly unanswerable question? We can help. Need advice from people who have been in the trenches, seen your troubles firsthand? We can help. Need a connection to a global network of like-minded, ambitious professionals? We can help with that too.

We all need a little guidance sometimes. Our deep-rooted culture means you’ll have one-on-one support wherever and whenever you need it. Because the issues you face don’t always keep conventional hours, you can access ISMTE support anytime, anywhere.

No matter what this job might throw at you, ISMTE keeps you ready, productive, and engaged.

**Taglines**

A tagline is often created to provide deeper meaning and add context around the brand name. While the name and tagline may not be able to say it all, the combination can give people a very good idea of what you do and entice them to learn
more. The tagline should reflect your brand value proposition and resonate with your key target audience. ISMTE’s new tagline is “Empowering editorial offices around the world.”

**Logo and Visual Identity**

The logo and visual identity are an extension of the strategic messaging. These visuals, in combination with the language used, instill passion and confidence in your brand and make it stand out from comparable organizations.

To get there, an agency may start with a series of mood boards showing related, but distinct, visual personalities. This can include typography, color palettes, and styles for photos, illustrations, or charts. There’s a subjective aspect to this portion of the process—strategy comes first, but the logo and visual identity also need to feel right culturally to internal decision-makers and become a flag that employees rally around. Multiple concepts are presented for collaborative feedback and are ultimately refined to a singular iconic brand logo that works well large or small, in color or black and white, on everything from pens to billboards to social media (Figure 1).

If an existing logo is well-recognized, the agency might recommend only minor changes to maintain brand recognition while updating typography, spacing, color, or styling to be more current and polished. Refreshing an existing logo, while keeping the basic concept, is very common—think about how logos for Fortune 500 companies like UPS and Starbucks have evolved over the years. However, when an organization is making a shift in direction or audience priority, or has an existing logo that is largely unrecognized, a new logo is often the best option.

**Brand Look-and-Feel**

This is where the brand comes to life in print and digital materials, further defining graphic elements, language styles, and typography treatments. After the general look-and-feel is established, the brand is extended across all channels, from major items like the website, social media, and printed materials, down to small details like envelope mailing labels and email signatures. This creates a revitalized and cohesive brand in which all of the pieces your organization uses to communicate speak the same language.

**The Power of a Brand**

Your brand is the book cover for your organization. It creates a loyal connection with your audience, turning them into brand advocates and loyal customers. Your brand can differentiate and position you in the marketplace, helping you to command a premium price or position among your peers. Branding affects the success of your organization in a way that’s beyond subjective—effective branding even contributes to the valuation of any business that is changing hands or seeking investment capital.

Branding, done well, parallels infrastructure and talent as one of the most important investments you can make in your organization, and it can help you become the next best-seller.

Kathy Kassera Mrozek is the President and Creative Director of Windmill Design, a Minneapolis-based agency that has strengthened brands through brand strategy, graphic design, and web design and development services for over 10 years, both within and outside of the scholarly publishing industry. See the agency’s work at windmilldesign.com.

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**Ira Salkin Scholarship**

The Board has established an annual scholarship in Ira Salkin’s memory that will take effect in 2017. The objective of this scholarship is to uphold Ira’s goal of ensuring that Editorial Office professionals are educated and vigilant in matters of publishing ethics.

Applications will be taken in the form of an essay relating to a topic in publishing ethics. The award recipient will receive funding to attend one of our three annual meetings.

More information coming soon!
Producers and Consumers of Peer Review—A Possible Publisher Metric

By Cath Cotton
CEO
Federation of European Microbiological Societies

For one week last month, 21 organizations came together to celebrate academic peer review and recognize the valuable contribution of the people who make it happen. This was the second year of international Peer Review Week, founded in 2015 by Sense About Science, ORCID, ScienceOpen, and Wiley-Blackwell to highlight the importance of peer review in the global knowledge economy. That first week in turn was founded on the back of efforts from the scholarly community to get the contributions of peer reviewers meaningfully recognized by funding bodies. In July 2012, a group of early career researchers in the United Kingdom calling themselves the Voice of Young Science wrote an open letter to the Higher Education Funding Council to recognize reviewing within the Research Excellence Framework; two years later, a similar letter was sent by Australian academics to the Australian Research Council.

This time round the Week focused specifically on reviewer recognition (as explained in a Scholarly Kitchen post from Alice Meadows, chair of the Peer Review Week planning committee) and was coordinated by the cross-sector initiatives ORCID and COPE, along with organisations providing publishing services, professional associations in publishing (including ISTME), a handful of scholarly associations, and a couple of initiatives specifically focused around peer review. The coordinating group also included one journal (eLife) and Sense about Science—a campaigning charity working to challenge the misrepresentation of science in public life. The largest group by some margin, and representing seven organisations, comprised scholarly publishers.

It seems that for now Peer Review Week still has the most resonance for publishers, given that the academic sector is unaware of—or perhaps unconvinced by—the campaign. This is significant given that peer review has only been widely institutionalized since the 1960s,1 the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences only introducing direct submissions with standard peer review as recently as 1995.2 But while the role of publishers in systematically organizing peer review may be relatively recent, scholarly publishers have become key players in the peer review process, investing significantly in reducing the burden for academics and better coordinating and professionalizing the service peer reviewers provide. This has involved many initiatives including introducing innovative processing systems, providing dedicated support and editorial staff, as well as training in academic publishing, brokering discounts for authors with editorial services, and developing new ways to help editors find suitable reviewers.

This quality control function—along with the cross-publisher publishing ethics body, COPE—throws up the question of whether publishers are en route to becoming something akin to a regulating body for the quality of scholarly publications, and potentially of research quality itself. It’s unlikely, though, that this is what either publishers or academics actually want, but it’s the logical outcome of publishers being perceived as responsible for quality control. Like all scholarly societies that publish journals,

1 Larsen PO, von Ins M. The rate of growth in scientific publication and the decline in coverage provided by Science Citation Index. Scientometrics. 2010;84(3):575–603. CrossRef
Producers and Consumers of Peer Review—A Possible Publisher Metric

both as a means to disseminate quality scientific content and as a source of funding for our charitable investment in science, the Federation of Microbiological Societies (FEMS) sees the impact of this issue equally from both sides. On the one hand peer review is regarded as valuable to the academic community in improving the quality of the published body of knowledge available for researchers to consult, on the other it is perceived as a growing burden on the very community it serves.

This perception of a burden is supported by a recent survey of our community—the preliminary results of which were published during Peer Review Week—that found that 76% of respondents had seen an increase in requests to peer review over the last 10 years. Moreover a total of 45%, providing free-text comments on recent changes in peer review, cited trends such as the requirement for faster reviews, and submissions of more, and sometimes poorer quality, papers.

What’s certain is that the increased publication of “sound science” in mega-journals such as PLOS One and Scientific Reports, and the growing scientific investment in fast-growing knowledge economies of Asia and Latin America (as chronicled in the STM Report), is generating higher volumes of content requiring review.

Our survey also revealed that while researchers see the benefits of peer review as both authors and reviewers, where peer review is not designated a “core” activity by university administrators or funders, it is becoming increasingly difficult to accept invitations to review. This is an issue raised by the UK House of Commons Science and Technology Committee during its discussions on peer review some years ago. In testimony before that committee regarding the burden of peer review to the academic community, Professor Rick Rylance, from Research Councils UK, noted that “Peer review should be part of professional development for researchers… [i]t is quite important that their employers recognise quite how much labour is put into it and how important it is in terms of not just their personal but their general benefit.” This sentiment was supported by the British Medical Association, who suggested some system of professional recognition for peer review. In some cases this is already done, the Royal Society of Chemistry’s Robert Parker noting that refereeing is often used as a criterion for tenure in the United States. But this is not the same across all institutions or all countries, and for many academics their contributions as a reviewer do not really “count.”

Logically the solution seems quite simple: peer review should be made to count. This was the key message from the Australian researchers to the Australian Research Council in their 2014 open letter, requesting that they be set review targets by their institutions alongside the publication targets already in place. There are precedents to suggest that this should be feasible, as demonstrated by both the adoption of journal Impact Factors in assessing the scientists behind submitted funding proposals, and the recent rise of Open Access publishing. In both cases it was research funders that led the way, and in both cases the availability of a single simple measure—be it the Impact Factor or the adoption of a particular publication license—that helped to implement the change.

A similarly simple measure for peer review—used at the country, institutional, or some other level—could feasibly be based on the numbers of reviews generated (manuscripts submitted and rounds of revisions) as a function of the number of reviews provided. This principle of net consumers and producers of peer review is illustrated in Figure 1. And while this example is purely illustrative, a cross-sector measure generated from publishers’ collective data could potentially identify, at various scales, the net producers or net consumers of reviews.

Such a simple measure might provide the ability to track and balance the number of reviews generated or provided at national or institutional levels, or to identify centres of excellence with notable peer review expertise. This in itself

3 Cotton C, Bowater L, Bowater R. Microbiology survey shows authors have most to gain from peer review. FEMS Microbiol Lett. 2016; in press. Crossref
might be interesting given that an earlier Wiley-Blackwell survey reported that 77% of researchers express an interest in peer review training. A more recent survey conducted by PRE (Peer Review Evaluation) a program of the AAAS—published during Peer Review Week 2016—takes this a step further, exploring how such training might be implemented: What would it consist of? Who would pay for it? And how would it be delivered? A simple measure of net peer review could go at least some way to identifying relative gaps and expertise in peer review provision, and help to target where future initiatives would have most effect.

However last month’s peer review activities play out in the future, our hope is that by building up on the events of the Week, and by continuing to look for simple, realistic solutions, this critical issue can start to attract the same kind of attention from funding bodies and national governments that the Impact Factor and Open Access have in the past. The goal would be to establish proper recognition for the contribution of peer review, meaningful professional development consequences for its delivery, and the long-term sustainability of the key quality control process in the growth of the global body of knowledge.
Let’s start with some interaction, to get you warmed up! Hands up if the things you did at school helped inspire and shape your adult career. Now, keep your hands up if, after you finished school, you put your school books on display so that future students could learn and be inspired by some of the things you did.

I’m guessing that most of us took our hands down at that second step—when our school work was all handwritten, it was pretty impossible to share it with anyone.

Today it’s different. Today’s pupils are writing up their school projects collaboratively in the cloud, and publishing them online to help inspire the next intake of students. How do I know? Nearly six years ago, I left academia to start working on the driverless taxi system called Ultra PRT, whose first fleet is now in operation at Heathrow Airport in London.

My colleagues and I were conducting cutting-edge research into control systems for the large-scale deployment of driverless vehicles, and due to the background in science and academia of Professor Martin Lowson, the company’s founder, we were encouraged to publish and present our findings widely rather than keeping it all in-house.

As a team, we found a great tool called Etherpad—the precursor to Google Docs—which made it easy to quickly compose text together. However, it had no support for anything that required typesetting or referencing, such as the ability to introduce formulae, images, etc.

So, over one long weekend, my then colleague and now co-founder built the prototype for Overleaf (originally launched as WriteLaTeX). This is an online collaborative writing platform which allows co-authors to work on a typeset version of the document together in the cloud. Because it is cloud-based, we always knew we were working on the latest version, and we could access our work from any computer. We used it to collaborate with co-authors on most—if not all—of our papers.

Fast-forward to today and Overleaf is being used by over half a million authors in over 180 countries worldwide. But, to our surprise, it’s not just researchers and graduate students who are using it; school kids are using Overleaf for their collaborations too.

There’s one particularly inspiring story I’d like to share—it’s the story of the Nano Ninjas, an all-girls FIRST Tech Challenge team formed of 15 passionate 7th and 8th graders who won an award for the engineering notebook they created and published on Overleaf. In the FIRST Tech Challenge, teams of middle and high school-aged students design, build, and program a robot to play a variety of floor games against other teams’ creations. The Nano Ninjas entered their first competition this year, and were hugely successful—they won numerous awards, and made it through to the Super-Regionals stage, all the while being up against teams with a lot more competition experience. They used Overleaf to record their team’s and robot’s journey throughout the season, and the judges were so impressed, they awarded them the THINK award for the way they’d documented their team’s journey. In the words of Nixon Xavier, Nano Ninjas Team Coach:

“The Nano Ninjas’ experience using Overleaf couldn’t have been easier! Even as middle school...”

students… they were able to create a professional engineering notebook…. One great component they loved about using Overleaf was that it was capable of real time collaboration between users, which came in handy for such a big team.

In higher education, Overleaf is also now being used at universities around the world to help encourage collaboration. Overleaf is making it easier for teachers to interact with their classes, for students to write and submit their project reports and dissertations, and for researchers to collaborate on writing grant applications and journal articles.

In a recent trial at Stanford University there was a five-fold increase in use of Overleaf (from 400 before the trial to over 2,000 at the end of the first year) as it was made available across campus, and similar trends are being seen at other institutions who are adopting new cloud-based tools such as Overleaf for their students. As Helen Josephine, Head of the Terman Engineering Library at Stanford, noted:

The one-year trial hosted by the Stanford University Libraries resulted in the adoption of Overleaf by over 2,000 users who created over 14,000 LaTeX documents. Based on the information from users who filled out a profile, we determined that 60% of users are graduate students, 30% are undergraduates and 10% are faculty, staff, or research scientists.

We’re also working with partners in the publishing industry to help streamline the creation and submission of articles to journals and repositories, through the provision of easy-to-use templates and direct submission links into manuscript management systems. For example, we’ve worked with the life science journal F1000Research for the past three years, and a recent case study found that over one-tenth of their annual submissions are now authored in and submitted through Overleaf. As part of the case study, Michaela Torkar, Editorial Director at F1000Research, was interviewed about the journal’s experience with Overleaf:

Many bioinformaticians and biologists who use computational models have told us that they generally prefer using the LaTeX format over [Microsoft] Word. By working with Overleaf, we can offer this group of authors an alternative to Word, and this helps improve their overall experience with F1000Research…. Prior to the integration with Overleaf, F1000Research could not easily accept LaTeX submissions. Now, approximately 10–15% of all submissions come in via the Overleaf template and submission link.

It’s exciting (and slightly overawing) to know that a tool we originally built as a side-project to help with our own research is now being used by so many others around the world. Our team is especially proud to have helped support the Nano Ninjas in their robot adventures; their awards and achievements are a testament to all the effort they put into both their robot and the accompanying notebook recording their journey.

The Nano Ninjas hope to inspire other teams in the FIRST programs to use collaborative tools for their engineering notebooks and other documents—and it looks like they’ve achieved that too, as we’re now talking with another team who are planning to use Overleaf in this year’s competition!

You can read more about the Nano Ninjas on our blog, and if you’d like to find out more about Overleaf please feel free to get in touch.

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The ISMTE was created and exists to enhance the professional lives of Managing and Technical Editors. To do that more efficiently, the ISMTE Professional Development Committee conducted a survey of ISMTE members to learn more about their demographics and needs.

The survey was created and conducted by the ISMTE Professional Development Committee, Jan Higgins, PhD, ELS, Jodi Harrell, MPA, and Jeff Grigston, PhD, MBA. Their aims were to define the core competencies as performed by ISMTE members in their Editorial Office positions, to identify the educational needs of members, and to inform a future certificate or certification process for the ISMTE. They began by having two focus groups of about 30 Editorial Office professionals tell them about their day-to-day tasks. That provided the basis for the survey. The survey was then sent to all ISMTE members in June 2016. This first in a series of articles about the survey results will deal with the demographics of the respondents.

The Committee received 188 responses out of 780 who received the survey, or a 24% response rate. Most of the responses came from the United States, followed by Europe (with a heavy concentration in the United Kingdom) and Australia.

One hundred fifty-five respondents were female and 33 were male. The academic qualifications of the respondents were varied: 2% have an MD, 15% have a PhD, 31% Master’s, 44% Bachelor’s, 1% Associate’s, 4% High School diploma, and 3% “Other.” The major areas of study for the respondents were mixed as well: the majority (31%) had studied Science, followed closely by English at 26%, then Humanities/Social Sciences 15%, Other 14%, Journalism 6%, Medicine 6%, and finally Engineering 3%.

When asked what respondents did before their current position, most (39%) said they worked in a different career entirely. This was juxtaposed with the second-largest number, people who have always worked in publishing, which came in at 32%. Sixteen percent reported that they did something very similar to what they do now, and 13% said “Other.”

The titles we put after our names go far beyond “Managing and Technical Editors,” although the majority (44%) did identify themselves as Managing Editor. A whopping 39% said they are “Other,” and 8% are Editorial Assistants. Technical Editors made up 4% of the total, Director of Publishing 4%, Assistant Editor 3%, Associate Editor 2%, Journal Office Administrator 3%, and
Editor-in-Chief 2%. No Publishers answered the survey. The “Other” category contained a number of interesting titles. A few of these were Content Development Editor, Editorial Manager, Senior Editorial Assistant, Peer Review Manager, Research Manager, Marketing Manager, Publishing Consultant, and Editorial Processing Specialist. Eighty-two of the 188 respondents have more than 10 years of experience; 45 have 6 to 10 years, 48 have 2 to 5 years, and 11 respondents are relatively new to the field with less than 2 years of experience.

The subjects of our journals range from 102 Medical journals; 65 Science; 13 Social Sciences or Humanities; 12 Nursing/Allied Health; 10 Other; 9 Business, Finance, or Economics; 8 Multi/Interdisciplinary; 7 Technology; 6 Veterinary or Aquaculture; 3 Agriculture; 3 Math or Statistics; and 2 Law or Criminology.

Finally, when asked whether they receive a performance appraisal, 67% said Yes, 22% said No, and 11% had no response. Most of these appraisals come from the respondent’s place of employment (63 responses), 20 come from the journal’s Editor-in-Chief, 13 from the journal’s Editorial Office Manager, 10 from the Publisher, and 14 from “Other.”

Be sure to check out the next issue of EON for more details on the ISMTE Core Competency Survey.
Discovering Our Roots: Who You Gonna Call...

By Stephanie Kinnan
Editorial Assistant
GIE: Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

The lights flicker and go out. A door slams but the air is still. Objects appear to move of their own volition. Then, to your horror, an unearthly figure apparates before your eyes! Better call all the Ghostbusters because you’ve got a haunting on your hands. Whether it’s Casper the Friendly Ghost or the Poltergeist, Halloween just wouldn’t be the same without a good supernatural sighting. As pop culture television shows us (thank you, *Ghost Hunters*), ghosts like to hang out everywhere from decommissioned prisons to creepy hotels, and you are guaranteed to find one or two in any condemned insane asylum. Surprisingly, despite the widespread availability of these enticingly spooky hangouts, spirits find some of their favorite haunts (pun intended) in old libraries. Yep, you can come across quite a few apparitions who are particularly loyal to their *bibliotecas* hanging around timeworn books, journals, and encyclopedias drawn to the mountain of texts that are as ancient and forgotten as they are.

One of the world’s most famous haunted libraries is the Willard Library in Evansville, Indiana. In 1885, Willard Carpenter built his legacy and namesake in Victorian Gothic style so that it looked extra creepy (my opinion, not his). It stood for over half a century as a perfectly boring book dispensary before its first supernatural occurrence gave the building a little *pizzazz* in 1937. Upon arriving for his shift on a blustery winter morning, a custodian headed for the basement boiler room to crank up the heat only to run smack dab into a woman dressed in gray from head to toe. The man stared in disbelief as the figure faded into nothingness before his eyes. (I don’t know about you, but it would take an army to drag me down those basement stairs again.) It quickly became apparent that this Grey Lady planned to take up permanent residency among the shelves. Many at the time believed that the ghost was right at home because she was Willard’s daughter, Louise Carpenter.

Since that day in 1937, there have been over 1,000 ghostly sightings in the halls of the Willard Library. Patrons and employees have reported falling books, moving furniture, phantom footsteps, and sudden temperature drops. When the Grey Lady is near, many have caught a faint whiff of lavender perfume and felt icy fingers running through their hair and over their jewelry (apparently this lady has a soft spot for bling). Over the years, several paranormal investigators (yes, including the very well-respected *Ghost Hunters*) have even confirmed the existence of an otherworldly presence in the library. So, if you are bored in the Midwest on All Hollow’s Eve, mosey on down to the Willard Library, and you may just see a g-g-g-g-g-ghost!

Adapted in part from:
Calendar of Events

ISMTE European Conference
October 31-November 1, 2016
Brussels, Belgium
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Be a Better Freelancer™ – Profiting in Publishing
October 28-29, 2016
Rochester, New York
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Editing medical journals – short course
November 2-4, 2016
Oxford, United Kingdom
www.pspconsulting.org

Predators, “Pirates” and Privacy: Educating Researchers on New Challenges in Publishing
November 2, 2016
Charleston, South Carolina
www.sspnet.org

Publication Ethics: Fraud and misconduct
November 4, 2016
London, England
www.alpsp.org

ISMTE Asian–Pacific Conference
March 27-28, 2017
Beijing, China
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ISMTE North American Conference
August 10-11, 2017
Denver, Colorado
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Eighth International Congress on Peer Review and Scientific Publication
September 10-12, 2017
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