This issue marks one full year of my Editorial Team working on EON. I am writing this just before Thanksgiving, and I have so much to be thankful for. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me get EON out every month, including each person who has written articles as well as all the ISMTE Board members who have given their support and help. Special thanks to Meghan McDevitt, my Associate Editor, who has helped in a myriad of ways with every issue.

I’ve just returned from my journal’s fall meeting, which was held in Kona, Hawaii (where it was warm but windy, as you can tell from the photo). I find it amazing that I have a job that allows me to play with words all day, organize an international journal, work with doctors, and take some pretty amazing trips. I’m thankful for the people at The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, who were willing to take a chance on having a remote Managing Editor. I’m also grateful to the ISMTE and the resources it has that help me to do my job better. This issue of EON features an article about working with peer reviewers by Nikki Lazenby and Ashlie Carlson and an article about using peer review reports as a tool by Elizabeth Blalock and Michael Willis. Michael has also sent us a report on the European ISMTE Conference; see what you missed if you didn’t make it to the U.K. for that meeting.

Our Whistling in the Dark article this month is on iPeer review by Lisa McLaughlin. In addition, Sherryl Sundell tells us about the process she went through in creating and submitting the winning poster for the first annual poster contest at the ISMTE conferences. See the item in this issue on creating your own poster in 2013. And see the
benefits your membership gives you. As we face together the publishing changes and challenges that 2013 will bring, remember to let me know what topics you would like to see written about in EON, and especially which topics you could write about. I’m thankful for each of you and for the talent and imagination that you bring to the ISMTE.

The end of the year brings the time for renewing your ISMTE membership; please don’t let yours lapse. I’m sure you won’t want to lose all the great

summary of the wonderful ISMTE webinar that was held in November on Image Manipulation. If you are a member, you can now access the webinar and slides; information on how to access it can be found in the summary.

The Philosophy of Editing

Install versus instill:
Some people say, “My parents tried to install the work ethic in me.” Unless they put you together like a robot, the correct word is “instill.” You instill attitudes; you install equipment.

Reign versus rein:
Queen Elizabeth reigns; you put a rein on a horse. When you say you are giving someone free rein or are reining someone in, you are comparing the situation to handling a horse, so use “rein,” not “reign.”

For sale versus on sale:
When you put something on the market, it is for sale. When it still hasn’t been sold after six months and you lower the price in desperation, it goes on sale.

Retch versus wretch:
If conditions are horrible, they are wretched. Living in wretched conditions might make you retch (vomit), but don’t confuse the two.
The goal of reporting is to provide information that facilitates understanding and good decision-making. This principle will determine how frequently reports should be supplied, and in what format and style the data should be presented. Reporting on editorial office (EO) peer review activities may be required occasionally by publishers, owning societies, editors and editorial board members, or third parties such as communications agencies, but undertaking routine data collation and analysis is essential for two reasons: first, measuring current journal performance provides guidance for improving efficiency within the EO; second, measuring performance directs future strategy, as current data can be compared with previous performance and used to set targets for future development. A crucial maxim for successful EO operation is never to look at EO activity in isolation from the rest of the publication process and journal strategy. A change in the rate of submissions without a corresponding alteration in the acceptance rate will affect copy flow and could lead to either an excess or a shortage of copy. Similarly, increased turnaround times in the peer review process will lead to delayed publication.

**General principles of reporting**

**Be mindful of your audience**

Before preparing your report, consider your audience and your goals. This will help you to determine the data to report and to anticipate the level of detail that might be required. For instance, your Society’s Board of Directors may be interested only in annual, snapshot data to show the health of the journal, while the Editor may require frequent, fine detail by sub-editor and topic to determine a strategy for inviting review articles, developing special issues, etc.

**Be transparent**

Before querying for data, define your criteria for selection clearly. What articles are of interest (i.e., original reports vs. letters vs. reviews)? What activity is to be measured (i.e., decisions made, submissions received, etc.)? What timeframe is to be considered?

**Be clear and consistent**

When reporting data, define the source of your information and clarify your terms (e.g. are you reporting calendar or working days? Are submission statuses final, current, or first decision? Do time periods for acceptance ratios relate to date of original submission or date of decision?), and be consistent. It is vital that the format and criteria used to generate data are the same from one report to the next, to ensure accurate comparisons over time.

Once you have made your queries and generated data, it is then critical to engage with the data, interpreting the statistics and responding appropriately to what they tell you is taking place in the EO. Further data may be required to enable further analysis of the information. Hence, providing EO reports can be as much a circular as a linear process (Figure 1).

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**Figure 1: Engaging with data**
Presenting data

Carefully consider how your data may best be presented. A visual graphic may convey much more than a mere table of numbers for some statistics (Figure 2).

**Figure 2(a)**

**Figure 2(b)**

**Figure 2(c)**

Figure 2: Examples of visual presentation of data: (a) a bar chart illustrating the growth in submissions compared with previous years, by article type; (b) a ‘word cloud’ (‘Wordle’1) showing the relative volume of submissions for a given period by subject area; (c) a “heat map” showing distribution of submissions for a given period by country. All data are fictitious.

1 See http://www.wordle.net/ (accessed 14 September 2012).

Be timely

If your reports are to facilitate good understanding and decision-making, your audience must have adequate time to digest the information presented. Be sure to prepare your reports well in advance and to distribute them in a manner that is acceptable to your audience.

Having examined a number of basic principles, we turn to look at EO reports under four headings: submissions, turnaround times, peer review outcomes, and user data. There is a degree of overlap among them, but we have tried to tackle each discretely.

Submissions

Submissions are generally measured as the number of unsolicited contributions received by the journal in a given timeframe. More refined data on the types of submissions (e.g. original research article, case report, and letter); their country of origin; and the relative assignment of the submissions to each member of the editorial team (to evaluate the editorial workload) may also be useful. Current data should be compared with that for earlier timeframes to evaluate areas (geographical or topical) of growth and weakness. This in turn can be fed into strategic editorial decisions which might, for example, lead to commissioning articles within a certain specialty, focusing marketing activities in a particular region, or recruiting more editorial assistance for a particular subject area.

It is worth considering the scale of detail to include in your report. For example, is a breakdown of submissions by country appropriate for this particular audience? Is it preferable to report on submissions by geographical region instead? Will country of origin be determined by submitting author or by corresponding author? What criterion will you use in the case of an international multi-centre study? Taking article types as another example, a medical journal may find it helpful to distinguish between clinical trials and retrospective analyses, or basic and clinical studies. Review articles could be subdivided into

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3 If categorising by geographical region, it is advisable to use a recognised standard such as the UN classification: see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm (accessed 7 November 2012).
systematic reviews with or without meta-analyses, and narrative reviews.

**Turnaround times**
There are a number of reasons for reporting on turnaround times. Surveys of authors consistently show that they value highly swift and efficient peer review, and a journal with a reputation for rapid decision-making is likely to attract authors, as well as to convey the impression to the academic community that the journal is a vibrant vehicle for communicating research. One might also argue that there is an altruistic or ethical responsibility, particularly in the case of biomedical research, to ensure that scientific output is reviewed and, if appropriate, published quickly. Reporting on the time taken to undertake various stages of the peer review process can assist in improving overall efficiency.

Data on any of the following peer review stages might be reported, although journals typically report those marked with *:

- Initial, pre-review processing/screening by the editorial office
- Time to triage decision (i.e., rejection without external review)
  - Note: triaged submissions should be excluded from the data reported below, to avoid skewing the data
- Submission to first decision*
- Average number of reviewer invitations extended
- Average number of reviewers agreed
- Average number of reviews returned
- Time taken by external peer reviewers
- Overall time with handling editor
- Time from completion of peer review to editorial decision
- Time with authors for revision
- Time from original submission to final decision*
- Time from acceptance to initial publication/indexing*
- Time from acceptance to final publication

As with submissions, it may be appropriate to supply a greater level of detail depending on your purpose or audience. One might report on trends across time and variations among handling editors or article type: after all, a case report is often dealt with more quickly than an original research article, and it is generally not appropriate to include material not sent for external review (such as book reviews, commentaries, meeting reports, or editorials). It is also valuable to see whether times have improved or worsened over the course of the past few years.

Data on turnaround times should not be viewed in isolation from other metrics. It may for example be useful to cross-refer turnaround times with submission levels; a higher than usual volume of submissions in the first quarter of the year might well result in slower handling times during the second quarter. Another factor in turnaround times is the number of peer reviewers invited to comment on a submission, and the number of reviewers who did submit a review; there is likely to be a close correlation between length of time in review and the number of reviewers invited. Again, the time from original submission to acceptance may vary depending on the number of revisions requested from the authors. This may be one factor which leads a journal to limit the number of revisions requested from authors before a final decision is made.

Analysis of all these data should then dictate what action, if any, may be required to enhance the efficiency of the review process or to anticipate difficulties in the future. Here are some practical illustrations:

1. **A long mean time for new submissions to be processed by the editorial office** might point to difficulties experienced by authors in following submission guidelines. The guidelines might require rewording, ancillary documents such as checklists and forms might need to be made more accessible, or the online submission process might need to be streamlined.

2. **A long mean time from acceptance to initial publication** might be due to authors’ not having supplied all required documentation, such as a copyright assignment form or full disclosure statements. EO procedures could be
wide variation of methods in calculating that rate. Here are three examples:

1. **Number of papers accepted in period X, divided by the number of papers submitted in period X.** This is quick and easy to calculate but arguably reflects copy flow rather than quality of submissions and editorial control. The two sets of data – number of submissions and number of accepted papers – are unlikely to relate to the same set of papers.

2. **Number of papers accepted in period X, divided by the number of all final decisions (i.e., all accepted and rejected) in period X.** This accurately reflects the editorial decision-making process; however, this method does not take submissions into account and risks missing potential difficulties with copy flow.

3. **Number of papers accepted which were originally submitted in period X, divided by the number of all papers originally submitted in period X.** This gives the most realistic picture, as it is based on the exact final outcome of all submissions, and for that reason it is a useful figure to give to authors who enquire about the journal’s acceptance rate (e.g. “What are the chances of my paper being accepted?”). Its weakness is that the exact rate cannot be calculated until all decisions have been made on those papers, which may – for submissions in a given calendar year – not occur until well into the first quarter of the following year.

Clearly state how the acceptance rate is calculated and ensure that it is calculated consistently from one report presentation to the next, to allow accurate comparisons over time.

**Triage**

As the number of submissions to a journal increases, and with increasing pressure on the pool of peer reviewers and (for the traditional journal model)

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The three examples which follow were just some of those in use by ISMTE members, undertaken on the members’ discussion forum in July 2010.
limited page budgets, a triage process plays a significant role in the efficiency of EO operations. A journal which has adopted a triage process of any kind, whereby papers are rejected before being sent out for review, should report separately on the rejection rate of those papers.

Further analysis of accepted and rejected manuscripts
There is immense value in examining the detail of both accepted and rejected manuscripts. As with submissions data, this can be at the level of geographical origin, subject area, or article type. The data may reveal subtle biases in the acceptance or rejection rates for particular regions, or they may illustrate a deficiency in the quality of work submitted under a particular topic.

Likewise, analysis of the acceptance rates across the pool of handling editors is critical to ensure fairness and consistency in the review process. This is truer as the number of handling editors increases and as the chief editor needs to exercise a closer degree of scrutiny across the pool. Editors often appreciate knowing not only how their workload compares with that of others, but also how their decision-making compares with that of their fellow editors. It may be prudent for the EO administrator to discuss with the editorial team whether the statistics should be shared anonymously or whether full details can be supplied to all editors.

User data
The final major element in EO reporting relates to the activity and performance of all those involved in EO operations: authors, reviewers, editors, and the EO staff.

Authors
With a number of contributors named per submission, a journal’s user database will grow enormously through submissions alone. Electronic EO systems that require an email-based account to be created for each user are likely to lead to a high risk of multiple accounts per user, so removing duplications is an important housekeeping activity. Initiatives such as ORCID\textsuperscript{5} should over time minimise the likelihood of confusion over possible account duplication.

How a journal defines authorship\textsuperscript{6} will affect who is included in its author database. A journal should require correct information about all authors named on a paper, not just the submitting author (who may be a junior author) to ensure the integrity and value of its database.

A journal should report on the geographical location of its authors, which can influence marketing strategy; it is also valuable to report on the frequency of contribution of each author to the journal. Those who demonstrate the greatest loyalty to a journal by submitting papers are often the best people to recruit as reviewers and to the Editorial Board, one of whose roles is to promote the journal to peers.

**Reviewers**
A journal should have a clear picture of the geographical and subject coverage of its reviewers, as well as more detailed activity for each reviewer over a period of time: mean time to complete a review, number of reviews completed in a certain period, and the number of times a reviewer has been invited compared to the number of times they have agreed. A journal’s electronic EO system may allow editors to rate the quality of reviews submitted.

Ideally, a reviewer database should be dynamic rather than static, to avoid overloading reviewers, to ensure that peer review standards remain high, and to guarantee an efficient review process. Reviewers are a precious resource and it is vital that the journal monitors their workload on a regular basis. If reviewer activity reports reveal that a group of reviewers in a particular subject area is overloaded, attention should be devoted to expanding that group, preferably with the assistance and advice of a Board or Society member with an interest in that area. If reviewers are consistently declining

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\textsuperscript{5} Open Researcher & Contributor ID, http://about.orcid.org

\textsuperscript{6} The following recommended definition comes from the Position Statement on ‘International Standards for Authors’, published by the Committee for Publication Ethics in November 2011: ‘Researchers should ensure that only those individuals who meet authorship criteria (i.e. made a substantial contribution to the work) are rewarded with authorship and that deserving authors are not omitted’ (http://publicationethics.org/files/International\%20standards\_authors\_for\%20website\_11_Nov_2011.pdf, accessed 14th September 2012).
Peer review reports as a tool for improving the journal

Editors
Submission data may shed light on the relative workload of each editor, and may also lead to the recruitment of new editors in certain geographical regions or specialty areas. As noted previously, with a large panel of editors it is more crucial to report regularly on the number of papers handled by each editor and the acceptance rate of each editor, to ensure a fair spread of work and a judicious review process. Editors may also have contractual obligations to undertake a certain amount of peer review activity, in which case the EO has an essential part to play in monitoring their work.

Conclusion
To conclude, we recommend adherence to the following principles when reporting on EO activity:

- **Be mindful** of your audience
- **Be transparent**: define the source of the data and ensure it is reproducible
- **Be clear**: both in presentation and in making data digestible
- **Be consistent**: whether within a single report, or from one report to the next
- **Be timely**: ensure that all appropriate parties have the opportunity to review and analyse the data

These principles of reporting can lead to better EO operations, making your journal more attractive to prospective authors.

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**Submit a Poster for the 2013 ISMTE Conferences**

The 2012 ISMTE poster sessions were a great success. Don’t miss out next year!! Consider sharing your unique experiences and perspectives with your peers at the 2013 ISMTE Conferences.

**Ideas**
What are you doing with social media for your journal? How are you using podcasts to draw readers to certain articles? Does your journal operate with an open access model? How did you make the transition? What is your journal doing to optimize citations? Have you dealt with plagiarism, author issues, conflicts of interest, or other ethical issues that you have learned from and could share with others? Are you working to enhance your journal’s online presence? What are you doing? Have you conducted a readership survey? How? What metrics do you provide for your editorial board meetings? Have you ever conducted a virtual editorial board meeting? How does your journal use iThenticate? How does your journal use reporting guidelines? Are you using social media? Blogs? QR codes? How are you reporting on your journal’s impact through social media? How do you write a budget for an editorial office? How do you train editorial office staff? How do you transition new editors? How do you use statistical reviewers? Have you had to transition an editor to the online world? How did you do it?

**Information**
Prepare your proposal: a title, the objectives (What 3 things will someone learn from your poster?), and an abstract of no more than 200 words presenting your topic. Submit your proposal online at www.ismte.org by **March 1, 2013**.
Working with Peer Reviewers

Nikki Lazenby, Managing Editor, Technica Editorial Services
Ashlie Carlson, Managing Editor, Technica Editorial Services

Introduction

Ensuring that the peer-review process runs as smoothly as possible is critical to the overall workflow of a successful journal. Managing editors act as liaison among editors, authors, and reviewers, so it is their responsibility to work efficiently with the peer reviewers. With a myriad of methods available for working with reviewers, however, identifying the most efficient practices becomes difficult. We reached out to ISMTE (International Society of Managing and Technical Editors)¹ members (who work on a varied selection of journals) through email and LinkedIn postings for information on how the journal offices they manage interact with reviewers. We received a surprisingly strong response via emails, phone conferences, and personal interviews. In organizing this feedback, we noticed three common problems journals seem to have with regard to working with peer reviewers: (1) the limited availability of reviewers, (2) the inconsistent quality of reviews, and (3) reviewer fatigue. Although most of the responses we received were from individuals involved in scientific publishing, these issues seemed to be just as relevant in other scholarly and humanities peer-reviewed journals and were also consistent among single-blind and double-blind publications. What was not the same across the board was how managing editors chose to approach these ever-present challenges. Some interesting and effective ideas emerged throughout the interview process, and it is our hope that others in the field can incorporate some of these ideas and solutions into their own systems and begin reaping the benefits.

Availability of Reviewers

Without the assistance of competent referees, the peer-review process would cease to function. Therefore, an essential issue in working with peer reviewers is their availability. This is an especially important topic for associate editors (and their office support staff) since the reviewer selection process generally falls under the responsibilities of each associate editor (only a handful of journals reported having the Editor-in-Chief select reviewers for each manuscript).

Selecting reviewers

How exactly do associate editors go about selecting reviewers? If the associate editor knows of an expert who would be suitable for the manuscript, then he/she can search for that specific individual. The second most common selection method among journals is defaulting to (at least) one of the preferred reviewers listed by the authors. Editors may also notice one researcher’s name appearing frequently in the cited references of a manuscript and decide to request a review from this individual. Other than these three methods, all other selection tools we encountered involve blind searches. Editors can search a database for keywords of previous manuscripts and ask the authors of these papers to review. Some journals also require that reviewers list their areas of expertise, so the associate editors may search to match keywords of the paper with reviewer expertise. This method requires ensuring that all reviewers keep their database profiles updated. As an example, Deana Rodriguez, owner at Effective Perspectives in Long Beach, California,² sends all reviewers a holiday greeting email at the beginning of each year, encouraging them to update their accounts.

In order for the searches involved in all of the above methods of selecting reviewers to work, there must be a functional database of reviewers. But how are these databases maintained? Technica Editorial Services of Carrboro, North Carolina³ provides technical support for several American

Working with Peer Reviewers

Chemical Society journals. One such service includes sending an updated list every four months of all currently active reviewers (reviewers who have returned a review in a timely manner over those four months) to interested editors. This ensures that associate editors only encounter active accounts when using search methods to select reviewers within the journal’s database. To help the database grow, it is important to add editor-approved researchers who request to serve as reviewers so that editors can find them at a later date. In the same respect, all suggested alternatives by reviewers who decline can be added to the database, following editor approval.

Reminding reviewers

It is not uncommon that once the appropriate reviewers have been selected and assigned, they find that they are unable to meet journal deadlines. It is important that managing editors have established ways of communicating with busy reviewers to ensure that authors receive a timely decision on their submissions. Most journals utilize online manuscript submission systems such as ScholarOne, Editorial Manager, or eJPress, and these systems take most of the burden of contacting reviewers off the editors. All of the representatives we spoke with rely on such a system to distribute reminders to overdue reviewers. If these automatic email reminders are ineffective, however, as they often prove to be, most managing editors will send more personalized emails encouraging referees to submit their review. Jason Roberts of Origin Editorial, LLC in Plymouth, Massachusetts⁴ has found a new way to take advantage of the system he uses and its automatic reminders. When the automatic emails are generated, Jason redirects them to his own email account. This alerts him that it is time to reach out to the reviewer. Because overdue reviews can often be the result of technical difficulties, Jason also includes a PDF copy of the manuscript in his reminders and offers to input their comments himself if they are willing to send them in an email. At Technica Editorial Services, the policy is to call reviewers who live within the country when their review approaches 15 days overdue. While personalized emails and phone calls require considerably more time than automatic messages, they are also harder to ignore. Taking the extra step to let the reviewers know how important their feedback is to the associate editor may just be the final impetus they need to submit their comments.

Reviewer availability

One of the main contributing factors to the unavailability of reviewers is travel. Often invitations are declined and reviews are delayed because the reviewer is on the road without easy access to his or her reviewer account. At present, this is an obstacle that managing editors simply have to work around, although there are potential solutions. One such solution, proposed by Jason Roberts, is the introduction of an application on mobile devices that would allow reviewers to view the manuscripts assigned to them and fill out the review form from their devices without necessarily being logged into the system. This would be especially useful during air travel and would leave the reviewers with only the task of uploading the completed review when they have landed. With the massive influence that technology has on all facets of life, including publishing, this type of development seems not only plausible, but perhaps necessary.

Review Quality

The peer-review process can only function as intended if reviewers provide editors with feedback that is accurate, thorough, and judicious. Typically, because the ideal reviewer is considered a leading expert in his or her respective field, the most sought after reviewers are likely to have numerous other obligations, making it difficult for them to dedicate an appropriate amount of time to craft a high-quality review. Less experienced reviewers, in addition to being under time constraints, may not be entirely clear as to what the editor expects from them. For these reasons, it can be difficult to ensure that the reviews submitted to your office (and upon which your editor so heavily relies) are of the highest quality.

Reviewer guidelines

The absence of clear reviewer guidelines can adversely impact the quality of the submitted reviews. It can also cause frustration within the reviewer pool. Bart Wacek, Executive Publisher at Elsevier (Cambridge, ⁴ www.origineditorial.com
Massachusetts), had the following to say on this subject: “When we survey reviewers we find that the number one complaint is that they end up reviewing too many bad manuscripts; but the second most common complaint is that they are unsure what the editor is looking for.” Most journals offer at least basic guidelines for reviewers on their websites. However, when reviewers are already pressed for time, it is just as likely that they will complete the review to the best of their ability without seeking guidance as it is that they will locate and abide by the offered recommendations. The most frequently adopted strategy to combat the issue of confusion among reviewers, according to the editors with whom we spoke, is to make sure that guidelines are provided and that they are readily available—for example, by attaching a PDF of reviewer guidelines to the instructional email sent when the reviewer accepts his or her invitation to review. Glenn Collins, president of ISMTE, also mentioned that JACC Journals in San Diego, California has recently introduced “how to review” as a topic in its lecture series.

**Quality reviews**

The strength of the review form referees are required to complete can play a major role in guiding them in their analysis and assessment of a manuscript. While it is always an option to provide a simple text box in which reviewers can input their comments, the majority of managing editors we consulted reported that their journals’ review forms were formatted to glean specific information from the reviewer. The review form of the *EMBO Journal* is in essence a blank text box, but they provide a suggested review outline within the space (i.e., general summary, essential points that have to be addressed, minor comments, and optional further reaching suggestions). Other journals provide even more structure: some by asking open-ended and yes/no questions; some by asking the reviewer to rate the manuscript on certain criteria using various scales; and some by requesting a combination of the two. One managing editor we spoke with related an experience at a former employer: “[We] used a...system whereby reviewers were only asked to give comments and suggested decisions rather than given specific questions to think about in the review. On the whole this led to much less in-depth reports being delivered.” Focused questions on a review form alert the reviewer to the most vital aspects being appraised and could result in more consistent and detailed feedback.

**Evaluating reviews**

Just as reviewers are asked to gauge the quality of a manuscript to determine whether or not publication is warranted, so too can editors be asked to evaluate the quality of the reviews they receive and to determine whether or not the peer-review process is as effective as it needs to be. Most journals have a system by which their editors can rate the reviews they receive—but not all require the editors do so. The International Reading Association of Newark, Delaware mandates that their editors rate reviews in order to make a recommendation on the manuscript in question, ensuring one hundred percent compliance and helping the associate editors determine who to contact for reviews in the future. The two main concerns raised by these rating systems seem to be lack of participation, where the act of rating is optional—only between 50 and 60 percent, one editor estimated—and the arbitrariness of the scores. The knowledge that reviews are graded may help to hold reviewers accountable for the quality of their comments, but there is little to be gained if only a fraction of reviews are being rated, and then not consistently.

**Improving quality**

Improving the quality of reviews is a problem that also lends itself to more creative solutions. Publishing reviews alongside the papers that they critique is one such solution, as there is likely to be a correlation between the quality of the review received and its visibility. In addition to

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5  http://www.elsevier.com
6  http://umbrella.onlinejacc.org/journals.aspx
7  http://www.embojournal.org; http://www.nature.com/emboj/about/process.html

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publishing reviews anonymously alongside the paper and to not allowing confidential referee comments, the *EMBO Journal* employs a system by which reviewers are given the opportunity to read and respond to one another’s comments before the editorial decision is sent to the author. This mechanism serves to balance referee opinion and, therefore, makes for a more informed and fair decision. Another option journals have considered is to host collaborative discussions on sample papers, so that reviewers have the opportunity to learn new reviewing techniques from one another. The *Journal of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care* encourages expert reviewers to serve as mentors by selecting assigned manuscripts that they feel would be valuable teaching tools and inviting co-reviewers to help them evaluate these manuscripts. Whether your solutions are as inventive as this, or as simple as making yourself available for reviewer questions, any measures taken to boost the quality of reviews should, in turn, have a similar impact on the quality of the manuscripts your journal publishes.

**Reviewer Fatigue**

With an ever-increasing amount of academic manuscripts being submitted each year, it is inevitable that the reviewer community will grow weary. Reviewer fatigue must be addressed in order to ensure quality—overworked reviewers will produce underwhelming reports. From our informal survey, we gathered that journals rarely set clear limitations on the number of times any given reviewer is asked to participate per year. It seems this choice is generally at the discretion of each associate editor—and common sense. However, it does appear to be common practice to encourage more reviews per year from members of a journal’s Editorial Board. In fact, a few journals reported relying heavily on Editorial Board members to provide quick reviews for manuscripts that are otherwise struggling to garner sufficient feedback. With regard to reviewers not associated with the Editorial Board, the reviewing rate is significantly lower. The standard at *Genetics in Medicine* is to only solicit a review every three months from any reviewer. These numbers, however, will depend on the traffic of each journal. Members of the Editorial Advisory Board for *ACS Catalysis*, for example, are encouraged to review, on average, every 45 days. Non-EAB members are encouraged to complete at least five reviews per year (around one every 70 days). Rubriq, an independent peer-review service launching in early 2013, and spearheaded by Keith Collier, hopes to, among other things, battle reviewer fatigue by providing journals with a set of standardized review scores to assist editors with initial decisions. As stated by Collier: “Our goal is to create one review that could be used multiple times.” Editors who utilize these scores could, in theory, reduce the number of times their reviewers are approached throughout the year—especially with regard to reviewing the same manuscript for different journals (another frequent reviewer complaint).

**Offering incentives**

To date, the most common remedy for battling reviewer fatigue is to offer reviewer incentives. It is standard practice, it seems, for reviewers to be acknowledged in some fashion. Many journals publish a list of all active reviewers either monthly or at the end of each year. In taking this acknowledgment a step further, the International Reading Association invites all reviewers to a publication reception at their annual conference; reviewers may attend the reception whether they are attending the conference or not. Beyond an acknowledgment, another common incentive reported for researchers in the medical community is to offer Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits, or some other continuing education credit, for completed reviews. Certain states require a minimum amount of CME credits to be obtained annually to maintain a medical license. Therefore, since professionals in the academic field must obtain these credits, it is a strong reason for them to actively participate in reviewing for journals in their field of study. With its launch next year,
Rubriq intends to pay reviewers an honorarium to prioritize their score sheet and complete it within a week. Offering monetary rewards to reviewers is another reported option, although it does not appear to be common practice.

The simplest incentives may be those specifically related to the journal. Take, for example, a few of the incentives offered by Elsevier journals, as described by Bart Wacek: “Some non-monetary things we do are to give good reviewers expedited reviews for their own papers and to offer them an upward path to the editorial board.” According to Wacek, flagging the manuscripts of top reviewers and only sending their submissions to other trusted reviewers ensures this timely review process. Incentives such as these cost the journals nothing extra but could make a world of difference to reviewers. Because most reviewers will soon be (if they are not currently) authors attempting to publish in the journal, they can appreciate the gesture of a speedy review process. They, in turn, will provide better reviews to ensure a prompt response when they are in the author’s position.

Whether incentives are currently being offered or not, it is a seriously considered subject. However, one major hurdle to overcome is determining which reviewers deserve to be awarded incentives and which ones do not. This is where implementing a mandatory policy of associate editors rating reviews, as described earlier, could be beneficial. For example, the criteria for determining who receives CME credit at JACC Journals is two-fold: The review must be timely (returned within 14 days) and must receive a rating of A (fantastic) or B (good) from the associate editor.

If the obstacles of determining how to dole out rewards can be surpassed, providing both traditional and nontraditional incentives for reviewers, along with trying to keep them generally happy, could be a major draw to keep reviewers active for your journal. According to Deana Rodriguez, “A quick and personal response from the [managing editor] to reviewer requests is imperative...and always ending a message with, ‘Please let me know if you have any other questions or requests’ are all very important ways to make sure reviewers don’t feel like a random statistic.” The more helpful you are to reviewers, the more willing they will be to participate.

Conclusions
Although the successful management of a journal’s peer-review process can only be judged on a case-by-case basis, hopefully this will provide some insight on improving your own process. Since reviewer availability promises to remain an obstacle, be sure to keep updating and expanding your reviewer database. In order to garner higher quality reviews, make sure that reviewers have a clear understanding of what you need and expect from them, and follow up to make sure that they understand and are complying with your reviewer guidelines. Finally, get creative with incentives for your reviewers to prevent reviewer fatigue. Sharing ideas on how to work with reviewers is a pivotal part of guaranteeing the continued success and evolution of the peer-review process.

Acknowledgments
We would like to thank all of the ISMTE members that were kind enough to take the time to share their knowledge with us. We would also like to thank Jack Nestor and Arlene Furman of Technica Editorial Services for their input and careful editing.

Author Bios
Nikki Lazenby, originally from Lexington, NC, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in May 2011, where she received her bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Mass Communication. She is currently employed as a managing editor at Technica Editorial Services in Carrboro, NC and is an active member in the International Society of Managing and Technical Editors. She can be reached at nikki.lazenby@technicaeditorial.com.

Ashlie Carlson graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in May 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Mass Communication. She began working for Technica Editorial Services as a freelance editor during her senior year, and upon graduation, took on the role of managing editor. Ashlie became a member of the International Society of Managing and Technical Editors in 2012. She can be contacted via email at accarlson@technicaeditorial.com.
European Conference Committee:
Sherryl Sundell, Managing Editor, International Journal of Cancer
Lou Whelan, The Journal Office
Michael Willis, Editorial Services Manager, Wiley-Blackwell

Close to 70 delegates from the UK, mainland Europe, North America, and Africa attended the 5th European conference, held once again in Oxford. The conference theme was intended to address challenges and opportunities arising from global journal growth, but a packed agenda allowed for topics reaching well beyond this.

The day began with Caitlin Meadows from Charlesworth challenging delegates to consider how to adapt journal policies and strategies in view of the growth of research from outside the Western world, specifically from China. It was surprising to discover that over 30% of global internet users use the Chinese social networking site Weibo, given that the social media prevalent in the West (YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter – but not LinkedIn) are not available within China. Authors whose first language is not English are typically very appreciative of any support they receive enabling them to publish in English-language journals, from publishing author guidelines in other languages to providing technical language assistance or author workshops (the subject of a later breakout session – on which, see the separate report below).

Given the proliferation of research from around the globe and the limited resource available to journals (manpower, time, and money), it might be tempting to regard issues of publication ethics as of secondary importance. Margaret Rees, a COPE Council member with significant experience of journal editing, medical research, and involvement in research ethics committees, dissuaded delegates from even daring to think along such lines as she talked through the implications, particularly in clinical practice, of several notable cases of ethical infringement. The point was made that publication ethics must be integrated into all stages of the educational curriculum and that all alleged cases of ethical malpractice must be taken seriously.

At our 2010 European conference the immediate post-lunch slot was filled by Geoff Bilder from CrossRef, who gave a very engaging “thinking outside the box” presentation on Web 2.0. Perhaps a pattern is beginning to emerge in the thinking of our conference planning team, as this year’s slot was taken by Daniel Mietchen of EvoMRI Communications, with a similarly untypical and technologically focused talk on how scientific research can be published more immediately than through the traditional journal issue article. Most intriguingly, his presentation was made available online through a Wiki site, enabling the audience to submit questions and comment on the presentation in real time via the site. It seems certain that the opportunities available through the latest web technology will have a huge impact on how research is published in future.

In the scientific process, research results and conclusions are of course constantly modified as new data become available, but in the traditional article publication model, a single article itself may be modified as it undergoes peer review and technical editing. Articles may also be retracted for various reasons such as concerns over authorship or ethical uncertainty. These issues were addressed by Edward Wates of Wiley-Blackwell, who spoke about the CrossMark initiative and ways of identifying different article versions. Interestingly, of all retraction requests received by Wiley-Blackwell, 16% were due to authorship issues, 16% to serious errors, 23% to self-plagiarism and around 25% to concerns about plagiarism of publications by others.

In the third and final plenary session of the day, Andy Collings, Managing Editor of the newly-launched Open Access journal eLife, described the journal’s editorial office and production processes. Thinking through very practical day-to-day journal procedures tends to generate the most discussion.
among delegates at our conferences, and judging by the audience response this was no exception.

Andy was followed by Katy Ladbrook from *Age & Ageing* (also the ISMTE discussion board moderator), whose presentation outlined various means of promoting journal content through social media including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Weibo was not mentioned but no doubt will now be investigated avidly by some, given the statistics supplied earlier in the day by Caitlin Meadows.

Aside from the plenary meetings, a diverse range of issues was addressed by various speakers in breakout sessions. The speakers have kindly supplied separate reports, appended to this. Additionally we were glad to welcome Ian Potter from ThomsonReuters and Brian Lewis and Sean MacRae from Aries Systems, who ran “Tips and Tricks” sessions for ScholarOne Manuscripts and Editorial Manager users, respectively.

As ever, the conference gave tremendous opportunities for delegates to interact and network. Lunchtime and the refreshment breaks were (pleasantly) noisy with the buzz of conversation.

Finally, the Conference Committee extends its sincere thanks to St Anne’s College for looking after us so well on the day, and to all speakers at the plenary sessions and those who ran breakout sessions, upon whom the conference depended so much for its success.

**Tips on holding an author workshop**

Liliana Costa, DPhil
Managing Editor, *Plant and Cell Physiology*
Oxford University Press
Email: liliana.costa@oup.com

The workshop covered all aspects of holding an author workshop, from planning to execution. When preparing an author workshop, it is important to anticipate your target audience (i.e., new/existing authors at different stages in their career), and to ensure good attendance (through local or wider advertising and by offering incentives). It is also important to anticipate what the audience might expect to find out in the seminar (the use of sign-up sheets/surveys may come in handy). However, the most frequently asked question is: *how do I get my paper published?* Therefore offer the audience some general good practice (writing and stylistic) tips, explain what editors and reviewers look for, and the importance of cover letters, while subtly encouraging them to submit high quality manuscripts to your journal by familiarising the audience with the journal set-up, editorial office/handling editors and author benefits.

Do not overload your audience with too much information or “do’s and don’ts” but try to be positive and helpful by mentioning possible causes for delays in peer-review process and/or providing handouts with author checklists, reviewer guidelines, and/or journal contact information and useful URL links, for example to your journal author guidelines. Depending on your audience, you may also wish to touch briefly upon publication ethics, especially those regarding authorship and plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), which can equally affect non-native English speakers). Finally, end with a Q&A session (with EIC/editor/publisher also present to take any questions if possible) and/or make yourself accessible to the audience to allow opportunity for an informal chat where you can hand out cards, freebies, feedback forms, etc.

For more information, see Jason Roberts’ article on “Author Outreach” published in the May 2012 issue of EON.

**Cascading manuscripts**

Franca Bianchini
*International Journal of Cancer*
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The term “cascading” describes a system of cross referral between journals, mainly within larger publishers, to ensure that potentially excellent manuscripts rejected by one journal do not have to start a new submission or reviewing process. This term reflects the natural flow of most rejected manuscripts, from higher to lower prestigious titles.

A rejection is not always a strong criticism of the data presented in a paper, but rather an overall judgment of the manuscript within the scope of one journal. In the discussion of this topic at the ISMTE meeting in Oxford it became clear that referral of a manuscript which has not been reviewed mainly concerns papers with low priority or low novelty or which are not in the scope of the journal, preliminary research papers, or papers lacking mechanistic data. Papers referred after the review process are generally borderline rejections: reviewers have not scored them as high priority but their criticisms are not fundamental and authors can respond relatively easily to the queries. The reviews that have already been performed are also transferred.

For the authors this system of referral has the advantage of saving time and resources, reducing the redundancy of a second or third peer review and often allowing more rapid publication. In the meantime, the process also represents a business decision for the publishers, as it improves efficiency, and manuscripts (and processing fees) that would have been lost can be recaptured.

The International Journal of Cancer has referred more than 300 papers to the new open access journal Cancer Medicine, launched by our publisher Wiley-Blackwell in 2012. Only about 11% of them have been transferred to Cancer Medicine by the authors. Experience at other journals also highlights the fact that authors still hesitate to send rejected papers to new journals without an Impact Factor.

The interface between Editorial and Production offices
Michaela Barton
Editorial Manager, BMJ Journals
Email: michaela.barton@bmjgroup.com

Do authors read the information we publish for them?
Perhaps they don’t? We highlighted the fact that it was important that information pages for authors:

1. Are clear, concise and written in layman terms (not in publishing jargon). If possible, translate into other languages.
2. Explain the various stages of the peer review process.
3. If possible, include links from the specific questions to the information page.

Making it easy for authors to find information would allow the Editorial office to refer to pre-written instructions.

Do editorial offices get the short straw every time?
Our process doesn’t just consist of dealing with accepted papers – in fact that’s sometimes less than 20% of our role!
Lou Whelan worked for Wiley–Blackwell for 10 years before deciding she wanted to change her work/home life balance. It is not easy to start out as a freelancer. It requires you to be a great administrator, project manager, salesman, bookkeeper, networker, and time manager. Here are ten things anyone considering freelancing should know:

**Going it alone**
Working from home and not having an employer to support you can be lonely and difficult. No colleagues to turn to for advice, blow off steam, or share the good times with—no social contact, no post-work drinks, no Christmas party. For freelancers, social media connects them to their clients, potentials clients, and to other freelancers.

**Competition**
Off-shoring will mean that there will always be someone one who will do the project cheaper. There are so many variables (such as skill level, location, experience, and so on) that it can be difficult for freelancers (and their clients) to pitch a fair rate. Not only that, clients (and freelancers) sometimes use almost the same words to describe very different projects. Add value. Go the extra mile and think outside the box. Clients will remember you and seek you out in future.

**The importance of selling**
Most freelancers probably don’t think of themselves as a sales person. Yet, sales is a vital part of running a freelancing business—you must be able to sell yourself to clients. No matter how uncomfortable, all freelancers need to know a little about selling. Build as many contacts as possible before you leave your job. Make contact with other freelancers and network as much as possible.

**The rate at which what you need to know changes**
Freelancers need to be on top of their field. This means keeping up with new technologies, industry changes specific to your area of expertise, and being knowledgeable about the latest trends. A training budget is a must—you’ve got to be an expert to

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**What’s important to a production editor?**
For production the consensus was that it was important to get everything right before it was sent to production (if possible), and also that the earlier on in the process queries were fixed the better.

It’s important for the editorial office to have at least a basic understanding of the requirements for publication.

If the process is disrupted by late changes costs might be incurred, if, for example, the article needs to be retypeset.

**Conclusion**
There are different priorities at play in the two departments. Some of our participants had experience of both ends of the process and the key seems to be to keep communication flowing.

Some publishers have developed joint “editorial production” departments which have helped to ensure that production and editorial teams know and understand the priorities of each end of the process.
be better than your competitors. Join the ISMTE for networking, training, and the latest industry trends.

Self-discipline
When you freelance, it’s up to you to make sure that the work gets done. You absolutely must have the self-discipline to work without someone to manage you. There is a danger of working too hard or not putting in enough hours and therefore losing potential work.

Holidays/sickness
As an employee, you’ll have a number of paid sick/holiday days. As a freelancer, it’s up to you to save enough money so that you can take a day off. Even with savings, you may find yourself working sick to meet your agreed hours. The true cost of a two week holiday in summer: cost of holiday + two weeks lost earnings + loss of potential future contracts by not being available.

Difficult clients
Clients may try and take advantage of your good nature and eagerness to please! Get everything in writing whenever you’re quoting for projects because this is often the most likely problem you’ll encounter—clients trying to get more for their money without paying for the extra time you put in.

Clients won’t pay on time/at all
Sad fact but you have to expect that some clients won’t pay on time—even the large publishers. In fact large publishers can be worse as there are often many departments involved in signing off your invoice. Get it in writing. Without a contract, you don’t have a leg to stand on when things go wrong. Have a plan in place for when clients don’t pay.

Peaks and troughs
There will be quiet months and there will be months when you’re working like a dog. Just remember that any money you earn one month, might not be the same the next. Use your spare time wisely. Work hard on your own marketing to try and attract new clients and keep on top of your admin.

Irregular income
Freelance work doesn’t bring a regular salary like you’re used to. Whatever you’re doing now, start saving your spare cash and live frugally if need be. If you can, save enough money to get by for three months without an income. Invoice regularly and on time.

Add Your Journal’s Cover!
Have you seen the journal covers scrolling across the top of the ISMTE web site home page and wondered how to get your cover added? Simply email a link to the journal’s homepage where the cover image can be found to website@ismte.org.

SAVE THE DATE!
ISMTE North American Conference
August 6-7, 2013
L’Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, DC, USA

ISMTE European Conference
September 23-25 –ISMTE/EASE Joint Meeting
Hotel Aazaert
Blankenberge, Belgium
Posters from Heidelberg: One Takes the Prize

By Sherryl Sundell, Managing Editor, International Journal of Cancer

“In our opinion, the poster idea was an excellent one. The process of developing our ideas and creating these posters greatly enhanced our work in the office, deepening our understanding of our own profession and that of our authors, reviewers, and editors. All agree that it was a very fulfilling and indeed enjoyable activity” … is what I wrote to the poster committee when I submitted our two posters for the ISMTE poster session last summer and it was so true. But let me backtrack a bit. After the North American meeting in 2011, where the ISMTE poster competition for the next year was announced, the wheels started turning in my mind, wondering if anything we do at our office would be interesting enough for a poster. I wasn’t sure and had never created a poster myself, only viewed other people’s work at professional meetings and that was always more “scientific.”

After letting things settle for a while, some ideas did come to mind that I thought might be possible to present in a poster. Early in 2012, then, the call for posters on the ISMTE site and the approaching deadline (proposals due March 1—yipes) gave me the final push to put the ideas to paper and to explore this further with the office staff at what we call a “topic meeting.” Of course, I needed to find out what the others thought and whether they would like to work on such a project. Also, it was hard to know what kind of time such a project would involve and whether we could fit that extra work into our already very busy routine. (Obviously, the response in the office was “YES” and several of the staff already knew what topic they would like to work on before we ever had our meeting.)

At our brainstorming session, we whittled the ideas down to two (with two groups) and then dug in. Each group first met to define (tweak and retweak “several” times…) the objectives of the project according to the requirements set out by the committee and to delegate the various tasks involved. After that we met once a week to confer until we were happy with the proposal and could submit it. Of course we were delighted that the committee accepted both of our proposals and we could start adding meat to the project’s bones.

Our next step involved collecting and collating data. For our “special cases” poster, we needed to scrutinize our procedures and read through and categorize the cases that we had handled. For the “cell line” poster, we needed to revisit the story as it had developed, manage our Excel sheets, and analyze the results. (This is a short paragraph summarizing lots of work and time.)
Posters from Heidelberg: One Takes the Prize

Then came the (hardest, but most enjoyable) task of deciding how to present our results, and get them into shape for the poster. For this, we needed to actually create text, tables, and figures and address questions like: Is the information correct and complete? Does it fulfill and illustrate our objectives well? Is this information pertinent and of interest? Is the presentation pleasing to the eye? And last but not least, how in the world will we ever fit that onto the poster template?

Once we had a pre-semi-maybe-final draft, we involved our editors and asked for their comments and suggestions, which was a great help, and ultimately got the final blessing from our Editor-in-Chief.

So, to produce a poster you need an idea and support for your idea, you need to define your objectives, delegate the tasks, and write a proposal. After that the data need to be collected and analyzed and presented in a meaningful and appealing way. Once that’s done, it’s helpful to have others review the finished product. (That all sounds familiar somehow…).

Acknowledgments:
Thanks again to the ISMTE Poster Committee for the good idea and for accepting our poster proposals and, of course, for the prize. We are also grateful for the advice and help we received from befriended scientists and IT people at our institute. I, personally, thank the IJC office staff for the energy they invested and initiative they showed in producing our beautiful posters. It was well worth it.

P.S. Our posters (which had been on display at the UK meeting) just arrived in the mail—while I was writing this. How fitting!

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Defend Your Journal Against Image Manipulation and Fraud

The ISMTE’s first webinar, “Defend Your Journal Against Image Manipulation and Fraud,” was held on November 7, 2012. Introduced by Erin Dubnansky and conducted by Lindsey Brounstein, the webinar set out to give editorial offices the tools they need to recognize when a submitted image has been manipulated. Erin and Lindsey’s Society, The American Gastroenterological Association, actively works to recognize images that might have been selectively altered by the authors to shape their results.

Lindsey discussed the different types of software that can be used, noting that PhotoShop is probably the best. She then showed us, with several examples, how to use various features of the software, such as Brightness/Contrast and Gradient Map, to spot alterations to figures and showed us the tell-tale signs that should alert us to manipulation. She noted that journals should develop a policy regarding their screening process, whether they screen every figure that is submitted, random figures (perhaps one per issue), or only when they are alerted to possible problems. This policy should be vetted by everyone connected with the journal and should be publicized to authors and reviewers. Lindsey encouraged us to use the same process every time a manipulation is discovered in terms of the steps taken, the language of the letters sent to the authors in question, and the consequences applied, and to keep everything documented. She finished by citing some valuable resources, including guidelines from journals with policies already in place. A question and answer period followed.

Great news: if you missed the webinar (or even if you attended but missed some of the many details), it is posted on the ISMTE web site at http://www.ismte.org/Ethics, free for members to learn from and to enjoy. Just use your ISMTE log-in information to access this important information.
Whistling in the Dark

iPeerReview: AIP Creates a New App for Authors and Reviewers
by Lisa McLaughlin
Director, Publishing Operations, American Institute of Physics

What is iPeerReview and how did it get started?
Whether an author is in the office, at the airport, or sipping coffee at a local café, he or she can check the status of any manuscript that has been submitted to an AIP journal using the iPeerReview iOS app that was released in the summer of 2011. This app allows authors and reviewers to use their iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch device to access a broad range of information on papers that have been submitted using AIP’s manuscript submission and review system called Peer X-Press (PXP). (PXP is based on the eJournalPress platform.)

To monitor the process, iPeerReview enables users to access:

- Lists of their active papers (still under review)
- List of their completed papers (finished with the review process)
- All past status history of papers
- Papers in PDF format

The process is made dynamic with additional functionality; users can also:

- Save papers to a device so they can be accessed offline
- Email papers anywhere from the device
- Link to papers that are published on AIP’s Scitation hosting platform
- Link to papers that are still under review in PXP

The concept for iPeerReview originated at an AIP Publishing meeting in the fall of 2009. One of our journal editors and AIP’s director of technology business development were exploring ideas about new products that AIP could offer to editors, authors, and reviewers that would enhance the peer review process and the idea for an app came to life. The concept germinated and took root; in-house development began late in 2010.

A few screen shots of the app are below:

Figure 1: The iPeerReview login screen

Figure 2: When a user logs in, iPeerReview displays a list of manuscripts submitted to all PXP journals by the author, along with a brief title, tracking number, submitted date, and final status. The user may also click on the Reviewers tab to view a list of manuscripts that he/she is currently reviewing or has reviewed in the past.
Whistling in the Dark

How does iPeerReview work and what has usage looked like so far?

Upon submission, authors are sent an ID number for their manuscript and informed that they can track its status using iPeerReview.

Since the app’s official launch in July 2011, user sessions have steadily increased from roughly 200 in the first month to more than 5,000 in June 2012, with an average of 150 new or first time users each month. To date, about 900 people have actively used the app, with an average of 10 sessions each. Just under 70,000 manuscripts were displayed through the first six months of 2012, with approximately 55,000 of those views from authors and 15,000 from reviewers. Most sessions last between 10 seconds and 3 minutes, with a few going as long as 30 minutes. These usage statistics track closely to the benchmark median session length for apps in the reference category. Users are tracking consistently with AIP’s regional author base, with the heaviest usage coming from Asia followed by North America and Europe.

An important goal for AIP is to make the overall publication experience as positive as possible for our authors, reviewers, and editors. The launch of iPeerReview is just one thing that we have done to enhance that experience. Feedback from authors and editors has been very positive, and we are now considering what we can do to further enhance the product.
Changing a Lightbulb

How many Editors does it take to change a lightbulb?
   Only one, but first they have to rewire the whole building.

How many art directors does it take to change a light bulb?
   Does it have to be a light bulb?

How many copyeditors does it take to change a lightbulb?
   When you asked Editors, it was lightbulb, but when you asked art directors, it was two words: light bulb. Is the difference intentional? Should one or the other instance be changed? It is inconsistent.

How many proofreaders does it take to change a lightbulb?
   Proofreaders aren’t supposed to change lightbulbs. They should just query them.

How many writers does it take to change a lightbulb?
   Why do we have to change it?

How many publishers does it take to change a lightbulb?
   Only one, and they’ll be glad to do it, except no one shipped them any.
What to do if you suspect a reviewer has appropriated an author's ideas or data

Author alleges reviewer misconduct

Thank author and say you will investigate

Retrieve files (submitted MS and reviews)

Author accuses actual reviewer of misconduct

Get as much documentary evidence as possible from author and other sources, e.g. publication*, abstract, report of meeting, copy of slides, grant application: do not contact reviewer until you have assessed this

Review evidence (or get suitably qualified person to do this) and decide whether author's allegations are well-founded

Appear well-founded

Write to reviewer explaining concerns and requesting an explanation

Satisfactory explanation

Discuss with author

No reply/un satisfactory explanation

Contact reviewer’s institution requesting an investigation

If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

Reviewer exonerated

Discuss with author

*Note: if author produces published paper this may be handled as plagiarism (see plagiarism flow chart)

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Author accuses somebody who was not asked to review the article for your journal

Check for links between accused person and named reviewer, e.g. same department, personal relationships

Consider contacting actual reviewer(s) to comment on allegation and check they performed the review themselves/did not discuss the paper with others

Explain situation to author (decide whether you wish to reveal actual reviewer(s) name(s): this is up to you, however if your journal uses anonymous review you must get the reviewer’s permission before disclosing their identity to the author)

Consider removing reviewer from review database during investigation and inform reviewer of you action

Reviewer found guilty

Keep author informed of progress

Remove reviewer permanently from database and consider reporting case in journal

Author accuses somebody who was not asked to review the article for your journal

Check for links between accused person and named reviewer, e.g. same department, personal relationships

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Keep author informed of progress

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Author accuses someone who was not asked to review

Check for links between accused person and named reviewer, e.g. same department, personal relationships

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Reviewer exonerated

Discuss with author

If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

Reviewer found guilty

Keep author informed of progress

Remove reviewer permanently from database and consider reporting case in journal

*Note: if author produces published paper this may be handled as plagiarism (see plagiarism flow chart)

Note: The instruction to reviewers should state that submitted material must be treated in confidence and may not be used in any way until it has been published

NB Do not forget people who refused to review

Note: options depend on type of review system used

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Author allege reviewer misconduct

Thank author and say you will investigate

Retrieve files (submitted MS and reviews)

Not well-founded

Discuss with author/request further evidence

Satisfactory explanation

Discuss with author

Appear well-founded

Write to reviewer explaining concerns and requesting an explanation

No reply/un satisfactory explanation

Contact reviewer’s institution requesting an investigation

If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

Reviewer exonerated

Discuss with author

If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

Reviewer found guilty

Keep author informed of progress

Remove reviewer permanently from database and consider reporting case in journal

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Anonymous review (reviewer’s identity is NOT disclosed to author)

Check for links between accused person and named reviewer, e.g. same department, personal relationships

Consider contacting actual reviewer(s) to comment on allegation and check they performed the review themselves/did not discuss the paper with others

Explain situation to author (decide whether you wish to reveal actual reviewer(s) name(s): this is up to you, however if your journal uses anonymous review you must get the reviewer’s permission before disclosing their identity to the author)

Consider removing reviewer from review database during investigation and inform reviewer of your action

Reviewer exonerated

Discuss with author

If no response, keep contacting institution every 3–6 months

Reviewer found guilty

Keep author informed of progress

Remove reviewer permanently from database and consider reporting case in journal

Author accuses reviewer misconduct

Thank author and say you will investigate

Retrieve files (submitted MS and reviews)

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Note: options depend on type of review system used

NB Do not forget people who refused to review

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Make decisions based on the type of review system used

Author alleges reviewer misconduct

Thank author and say you will investigate

Retrieve files (submitted MS and reviews)

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Note: options depend on type of review system used

NB Do not forget people who refused to review

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Make decisions based on the type of review system used

Author alleges reviewer misconduct

Thank author and say you will investigate

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If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Note: options depend on type of review system used

NB Do not forget people who refused to review

If files are no longer available at journal, request copy from author

Make decisions based on the type of review system used
How COPE handles complaints against member journals

Complaint sent to COPE Operations Manager (after journal’s/ publisher’s own complaints procedure has been exhausted)

Operations Manager checks that complaint:
- is against a COPE member
- is within the remit of the COPE Code of Conduct
- has been through journal’s/publisher’s own complaints procedure
- relates to actions taken after 1/1/05 (when COPE Code was published)

Is so:

Evidence sent to Chair of COPE including correspondence about journal’s handling of complaints

Chair of COPE informs editor of complaint

Chair consults with at least one member of COPE Council

Agree that journal has dealt satisfactorily with complaint

Agree that case requires further investigation

Refer to COPE sub-committee*

Sub-committee considers case and drafts reports

Report approved by all officers (excluding any withlinks) to publisher of the journal being complained about)**

Report is sent to editor and complainant who may correct factual errors

COPE Council are informed

If not, COPE cannot consider complaint

Complainant may try other organisations, e.g. Press Complaints Commission, World Association of Medical Editors (WAME)

If the Chair of COPE belongs to the same publishing group as the subject of the complaint, the case will be handled by another COPE Officer

*Sub-committee will compromise:
- COPE Officer
- Three other Council members (aiming to include at least one who is not an editor)

Members may not work for the same publishing group as the subject of the complaint

**Actions might include:
- editor apologises to complainant
- editor publishes statement from COPE in journal
- journal/editor agrees to improve procedures

Anonymised summary of complaint may be posted on COPE website if there are no legal concerns

Developed for COPE by Liz wager of Sideview (www.lizwager.com)
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This month’s sentence seems to have struck a nerve!

The grammar-challenged song that drives me the most crazy is…

“L.A. Woman” by The Doors
If they say I never loved you, you know they are a liar (Anonymous)

“Live and Let Die” by Paul McCartney
But if this ever-changing world in which we live in makes you give in and cry
(Elizabeth Blalock)

“I’m Proud to be an American” by Lee Greenwood
The lyric that drives me NUTS is, “I’m proud to be an American, where at least I know I’m free..” (Alethea Gerding)

“Lay Down Sally” by Eric Clapton (Dan VanTassel)

Morrissey is one of my favorite writers, but I cringe every time there’s something grammatically incorrect in his lyrics:
“America is Not the World” – “And I love you / I just wish you’d stay where you is”
“I Have Forgiven Jesus” – “forgive me any pain I may have brung to you” (although “brung” is acceptable as a replacement for “brought” in British English, as is “learnt” instead of “learned”)
“On These Streets I Ran” – “where everybody’s friendly, but nobody’s friends” (Mary Chang)

“Play Me” by Neil Diamond
“Song she sang to me, Song she brang to me, Words that rang in me…."
“Lay Lady Lay” by Bob Dylan (title and lyric) – wrong word AND no punctuation.
“We don’t need no education” by Pink Floyd (title and lyric) Oh, really?
“Fernando” by ABBA. “Since many years I haven’t seen a rifle in your hand…” And hey... What the hell is “the pompatus of love,” anyway?
(Wendie Howland)

“Somebody that I used to know” by Gotye
(Meghan McDevitt)

“What Goes Around” by Justin Timberlake
“When you cheated girl, my heart bleeded girl.” (Katy Ladbrook)

“There’s a million reasons, there’s a single store.” (Jingle for Midwestern grocery/big-box retailer, Meijer. Not surprisingly, they’ve stopped using it, but they used it much too long for my taste!)
(Sarah L. McCormack)

It’s not a song, but the title of a TV show: I always think of “America’s Got Talent” as “America’s Got Grammar.” (Andraya Dolbee)
Calendar of Events

Editorial Manager User Group Meeting
December 10, 2012
London, UK
Preprint Manager User Group Meeting
December 11, 2012
London, UK
http://www.editorialmanager.com/

Project Management for Publishing
December 11, 2012
http://www.alpsp.org

2013 European Meeting of ISMPP
January 22–23, 2013
London, UK
http://www.ismpp.org/

Publication Ethics: Fraud and Misconduct
March 4, 2013
http://www.alpsp.org

Developing Open Access and Hybrid Journals
March 5, 2013
http://www.alpsp.org

COPE 3rd World Conference on Research Integrity
May 5, 2013
Montreal, Canada
http://publicationethics.org/events

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