
The Editors' WebWatch

The Editors' WebWatch is intended to be a membership-driven resource of web sites for editors and writers in the sciences.

Computer threats

There is no doubt that the widespread availability of reasonably priced personal computers has revolutionized the publication industry. In recent years this advance has also been greatly boosted by the opening up of the internet. Unfortunately, while these advances have created new opportunities for the general population they have also created opportunities for the vandals of society.

There are several threats that have been designed specifically to disrupt our work by harming the computers on which we are becoming increasingly reliant. In a short article like this it is possible to give only a brief overview. The manufacturers mentioned at the end of this contribution have more in-depth articles on their web sites and go into more detail on plugging security holes or undoing the damage caused.

Many of the threats specifically target computers running versions of Microsoft's Windows operating system. I believe that, at least in part, this is due to Windows being the most widely used system. As other operating systems such as Linux and Mac OS/X become more popular, so threats are beginning to appear against these. Indeed, as I was working on this article news came through of the first viruses to attack the Symbian operating system, which is popular in mobile phones. The common feature of most threats is that they try to exploit vulnerabilities in the operating system. (The operating system is a collection of programs that starts when you switch on the computer. One way to think of these programs is as a collection of servants. For example, there might be one servant that understands how your printer works; another would understand how the keyboard works. Other parts of the operating system allow other programs, such as a word processor, to run. However, none of the servants can do the job of any other servant. So the keyboard servant takes in characters typed on the keyboard. To do anything with these characters it has to pass them to another servant, perhaps one running the word processor program. If you want to print a document, the word processor servant has to pass the characters to the servant that controls

the printer. As in most well-run households, the servants work quietly in the background making sure that things run smoothly; they are rarely seen.)

As these security holes are discovered, the manufacturers work hard to produce fixes, which they release as update patches. Many manufacturers, for example Apple and Microsoft, have mechanisms for informing users as soon as patches become available. These often take the form of e-mail notifications or newsletters. Usually the manufacturers produce a set of notes to go with each patch, which include details of what the patch fixes and in some cases specific guidance about when to use and when not to use the patch. I strongly advise you to apply patches as soon as possible, to reduce the possibility of your system being successfully attacked. If you use Microsoft Windows then Microsoft have a very useful program called Baseline Security Advisor on their web site which can check your system for potential security holes and offer some advice on how to fix them.

Many people who construct viruses and similar programs try to justify their actions as either a blow against large computer corporations or against poor standards of software writing, but these are not valid excuses for such malicious behaviour that affects us, the end users.

Viruses

Viruses are basically small programs that are downloaded onto your computer without your knowledge. Often they are distributed as attachments to e-mails. They then make copies of themselves and distribute these to other computers on your network or send infected e-mails to people in your address book. Some deliberately cause damage to your system by, for example, deleting or corrupting files. Others display rude or obscene messages or bombard another user or users with messages. A few viruses have no obvious malicious intent, as above, but they can cause your computer to crash, or slow its operation. Viruses commonly replace other programs or insert themselves into the boot files of the computer, so

that every time you restart your computer they run, producing more copies of themselves. (The boot files are the very first programs that run when a computer is switched on; they help to start the operating system.)

Worms

Worms are similar to viruses but are able to duplicate and distribute themselves to other computers. They have their own in-built distribution mechanisms and do not need to rely on programs such as your machine's e-mail program.

Trojans

Trojans are like the burglar who steals the key to your back door: he can come back in at any time, watch your TV and, more importantly, use your phone to make numerous obscene and threatening calls. Translate this into having someone be able to view your personal files, bank details, and e-mails as and when they wish, and it starts to feel quite uncomfortable for most of us.

Trojans are often distributed as programs by e-mail or as downloads from web sites. These programs may have a legitimate use on the surface, or they may appear to be games, but in addition they have hidden functions.

The hidden functions may do a variety of things. Commonly, they open up security holes, which, for example, could allow an external program to gain access to your machine. Such an external program may be used to download viruses to your machine or turn it into an e-mail relay such that it sends hundreds of unwanted e-mails.

The people who write Trojans run programs on their machines that probe other machines connected to the internet to see if their Trojans have opened a backdoor onto the machine. If you run a firewall program (see "Protect yourself" below) this can block such probes. Indeed, many firewalls keep a log of all the things they block and if you examine the log file it is not uncommon to see that different probes have tried to access your machine every five or ten minutes. A firewall is a program which decides which other computers and programs are allowed to access your computer.

It does this by checking against a list of computers that you allow to access your machine. A firewall works a bit like a nightclub bouncer — if an external computer is not on its list then it doesn't get in [1].

Spyware

In a way, spyware is a special form of Trojan and is a more recent problem. Once downloaded to your machine it can sit there recording which web sites you visit or recording which keystrokes you make; for example, it can steal credit card numbers or passwords. The spyware program then relays this information to a remote machine where it can be picked up and used for whatever purpose.

Just as there are programs to remove viruses and Trojans, there is now a range of programs available to check for and remove spyware. I have recently tried Spy Sweeper (from Webroot Inc.). This works in a very similar way to antivirus programs in that it runs in the background on the computer and can be set to check all the files on your hard disk at intervals. Once it identifies a spyware program it can be used to remove the spyware.

Spam

With the growth of internet-based e-mail services a whole industry has grown up sending what is politely called unsolicited commercial mailing but is more commonly known as spam [2]. Spam e-mails may range from annoying adverts for products in which you have no interest and on through a whole range of scams. Some companies use spyware to find what web sites a particular person visits, then use this information to target spam to that person.

A recent survey showed that around 60% of all e-mails received are spam, although on the basis of my own experience I would put it in the 90–95% bracket. In this contribution it is not possible to fully discuss spam and all the ways of reducing it, but many of the antivirus software companies mentioned below do offer facilities to block or filter it out. Increasingly, internet mail companies, for example BT Yahoo Internet, are trying to block some of the spam messages coming through.

On the surface, all these junk e-mail messages you receive appear to be just an annoyance. However, more recently some of the spammers seem to have gone into league with virus, worm and Trojan writers and spam

has become a popular way to either distribute malicious programs or lure the unwary to web sites that download such programs.

In passing, it should also be mentioned that a number of e-mail programs now offer e-mail filtering facilities that can block spam e-mail. I have used the facility within Microsoft Outlook 2003, which can be set to different levels of filtering. When set to the lowest level it still lets some spam through, but I found that when I set it to a higher level it filtered out messages from a couple of mail lists to which I belong.

Protect yourself

There are several commercial companies that manufacture excellent software to protect against viruses and other threats. The choice of software can be a very personal thing: what suits one person may not suit another. I recommend reading a number of reviews, especially those where several packages are compared, before making a purchase. I mention below a couple of packages that I have used, but would stress that there is a much wider range of good products available.

Packages I have used include Norton Antivirus (from Symantec), McAfee and Sophos Antivirus, which I have found to be very good. More recently, many manufacturers have expanded their ranges to offer more complete internet security offerings. For example, Sophos offers spam filtering software. On my home machine I have used Norton Internet Security which offers, as well as antivirus functions, a firewall, spam blocking and a parental control facility (which allows you to control which web sites can be accessed, for example to stop children accessing material intended for adults).

As new viruses, worms and Trojans are created, antivirus programs need to be updated regularly to keep pace with the newly discovered threats. Most packages include a mechanism that will automatically download information about the new viruses from the parent web site, either when you log on or at set intervals, so it is important to sign up (and pay for) the update service of whichever package you choose.

The antivirus program might either be running on your computer all the time, where it checks each file or e-mail as you try to open it, or may be set to scan through all your files at set intervals. The facilities offered by programs differ, but generally if the

program finds a file containing a virus it can try to remove the virus from the file and if that is not successful it can be set to either mark the file as contaminated or delete it.

Be very careful not to instal two different antivirus programs on the same machine as the performance of the machine can be severely impaired. I have seen several cases where machines have become so slow as to be totally unusable. Most recently, a colleague had installed a scientific data analysis program. Unfortunately, as part of the default installation it installed a second antivirus program on her machine, with predictable results.

One thing that computer managers go on about at great length is backups. That is, copying everything on your hard disk to tape, CD, or ZIP disk, etc. This is always good practice as it allows you to recover a copy of something that you accidentally delete. The backup copy will also mean that if a virus or other malicious program corrupts your hard disk, not all your work has been lost. Backing up is good practice in any case, as you never know when your hard disk will fail, or worse, your computer might be stolen.

In conclusion, I recommend that everyone should use a combined internet security package and should instal the security updates offered by their operating system manufacturer. Listed below are some of the companies that offer security packages or advice.

Useful companies

This list is of companies mentioned in the text and is by no means exhaustive; there are many similar companies offering similar products.

- Sophos: www.sophos.com
- Norton Antivirus: www.symantec.com
- Microsoft Corporation: www.microsoft.com
- McAfee: www.mcafee.com
- Webroot: www.webroot.com
- BT Yahoo Internet: www.btopenworld.com

References

1. Vekony M. 2003. The Editors' WebWatch. *European Science Editing* 2003; 29(3):85–87.
2. Vekony M. 2003. The Editors' WebWatch: Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam . . . *European Science Editing* 2003; 29(2):50.

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More security resources

Tourbus

www.tourbus.com

Featured in WebWatch previously was the TOURBUS, a real goldmine of internet know-how and useful links. Tourbus has just sent subscribers a series of three features on computer security. The topics include patches and updates, firewalls, various odds and ends, and an article (and links) on how to test your firewall for free. To access these and all the other archives (dating back to 1995) go to the Tourbus home page and click on Archives. Step-by-step instructions on testing your firewall (and explaining what the messages you will see actually mean) are in the newsletter issue dated 3 September 2004.

SpyBot Search & Destroy

http://beam.to/spybotsd

A new version (1.3) of SpyBot Search & Destroy, a free spyware eradicator, has just been released. There is an interesting review (by PCWorld.com) at **www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,22262,00.asp**, from where you can also download the software. There are some improvements over the previous version, the main one being background scanning (which is only available in the paid-for versions of some other spyware detection programs, e.g. Ad-aware, at **www.noadware.net**).

BugMeNot

www.bugmenot.com

BugMeNot is a source of fake logins for those annoying free (not paid) registration sites. These are the sites that, although allowing free access to the content, still insist that you register (and hence open yourself up to a whole new world of spam and advertisements). BugMeNot is the work of NearlyFreeSpeech.NET (**www.nearlyfreespeech.net**).

graphics.com

www.graphics.com

This is a web site devoted to the promotion and discussion of all things illustrative, from digital photography to video streaming. With the wide availability and increasing affordability of digital cameras you are sure to find something of interest here, even if you don't actually download anything or try anything out. For

those of us who publish photographs in the course of our work, some of the tutorials might be of interest.

Word Answers

www.word-answers.com

This site from Discovery Computing Inc. (based in Mesa, Arizona, USA) is one of many that deal with questions about Microsoft Word. Discovery Computing Inc. also publishes WordTips, a free weekly productivity newsletter that you can subscribe to if you so wish. The home page claims "This is the place to find easy-to-use, succinct answers to your questions about Microsoft Word. There are 919 articles and tips available on this site, categorized across 112 topic areas . . . Information in this site covers many different versions of Microsoft Word for the PC: Word 6, Word 95, Word 97, Word 2000, Word 2002, and Word 2003. Tips are clearly marked as to the versions to which they apply." It sounds good, but so far I haven't found anything that I didn't already know (maybe I didn't look hard enough) or that couldn't be found in Word's help files. The site seems to be heavily dependent on advertising — almost every link has some form of advert on it, which is presumably what allows the site to exist at all, but can become rather annoying after a while.

Transportation resources

Below are some links that might be of use to those of us planning on going to the next EASE conference, or any other European conference, or even on holiday, without taking to the skies.

German Rail's site at **http://reiseauskunft.bahn.de/bin/query.exe/en** is by far the best for train information and online booking throughout Europe, including the UK.

Bus, coach, tram, trolley and transit-related links all over the world can be found at **www.busstation.net/busstneus.htm**.

The Man in Seat 61, at **www.seat61.com**, is a great source of advice and links for travel by train and boat throughout Europe and beyond. This site is unofficial but extremely helpful (and a small commission is generated if you order tickets using the links).

www.pti.org.uk provides information on bus, rail, coach, air and ferry timetables and fares throughout the UK.

Words: Woe & Wonder

www.cbc.ca/news/indepth/words/

Words: Woe & Wonder, the work of CBC News, is a forum where the public can comment on writing at CBC or on the use of the English language in general, grouse about it (woe), and ask questions about it (wonder). Here you can find explanations of all manner of interesting words, and other more general grammatical queries, and a few essays too.

Just for fun

Very Strange Things on the Web

www.tourbus.com/bizarre.htm

Another offering from the Tourbus people is Very Strange Things on the Web: "Proof positive there are too many people with WAY too much time on their hands." Look at this collection of sites and I'm sure you'll agree. This is for those who like cats, love squirrels, and hate traffic cones.

Simplified Spelling Society

www.spellingsociety.org

This is an interesting presentation of all the reasons that English spelling should be reformed, and it is quite convincing too. Whether you agree or not that English is a difficult language to spell correctly, you will find this of interest. However, don't despair: I don't think we will all be out of jobs just yet.

Internet clocks

Still more proof (as if any were needed) that some folk do indeed have too much time on their hands (pun intended) are these two sites containing clever little clocks to provide you with hours of entertainment: **www.suite101.com/files/mysites/AskAlice/Clock.htm**, and **http://javascript.internet.com/clocks**. These clocks, in various styles, can be downloaded and pasted into your web site.

Something to contribute?

If you see a web site useful to editors, or just plain interesting, please send the link to Moira Vekony (DunaScripts@editors.ca). Sites in European languages other than English are also of interest (please provide a short review in English), and any that relate to areas of science other than biology and medicine will be particularly welcome.

News Notes

EU study into scientific publishing markets

The EU Commission has announced a study on the economic and technical evolution of the scientific publication markets in Europe. The study will look at printed scientific reviews, pricing issues, open access and author's rights — aspects that have been termed "dysfunctions in the journal publishing system". The study seeks to answer the following questions: What are the main changes in Europe? What and who is driving change and why — and if there is any resistance to positive change, what/who is blocking it? What are the consequences for users (authors, readers, libraries)? The results will be available in 2005. (Serials-eNews, 18 June 2004; www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=0902&PID=10&ZID=1301; see also <http://media.guardian.co.uk/site/story/0,14173,1241729,00.html>)

Effect of journals' self-citation

Thomson, publisher of *Science Citation Index*, has reported on the effects of self-citation — authors citing other articles from the same journal — on the overall impact factor of journals. The study examined all 5876 journals covered in the 2002 Science Edition of *Journal Citation Reports*, and found little effect on the overall ranking of journals and on the relative rank of high-impact journals. (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=3277&PID=10&ZID=1356)

Say it with numbers

The number of scientific periodicals published throughout the world exceeds 20 000. Every year, 1.5 million scientific articles are published worldwide. Europe is in the lead with 41.3% of all scientific publications, compared with 31.4% for the USA. One in five publications are accessible on line and 1000 titles are listed in the *Directory of Open Access Journals*. Over the last ten years, the average annual increase in the prices of scientific reviews has approached 10%, a figure in excess of increases in Gross Domestic Product and the average inflation rate. (Serials-eNews, 18 June 2004)

Subsidized journal distribution in Denmark approved by EU

About 2400 non-profit journals in Denmark could benefit from an aid scheme to subsidize postal distribution costs, authorized by the EU Commission. Eligible titles will probably be from associations and

focused on environmental issues, humanitarian aid, and education. The objective is to promote democratic debate, the dissemination of cultural and social information and the activities of associations. Information disseminated by a number of non-profit organizations can also contribute to the general interest of safeguarding the pluralism of the media, says the report in *Serials-eNews*, 18 June 2004 (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=0902&PID=10&ZID=1305).

Cell Press full text available on ScienceDirect

Elsevier has launched Cell Press journal collection on its electronic platform, ScienceDirect. The titles are in the fields of cellular and molecular biology, neuroscience and immunology. Backfiles of the nine titles are also available, containing 12 000 articles dating back to 1974. ScienceDirect's collection now covers 1900 journals from the core scientific literature. Researchers can search and link out to other publisher's content via CrossRef. (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=0902&PID=10&ZID=1292)

Developing ELIN@

The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) has linked with Lund University Libraries, Sweden, to adapt the Electronic Library Information Navigator (ELIN@) for use by organizations in developing countries. ELIN@ uses a single interface to search across multiple resources. The development of the current ELIN@ application will optimize it for (s)lower bandwidth environments. If a pilot in African and Asian situations is successful, an open-source version will be made available for free downloading and use by libraries in developing countries. ELIN@ offers library staff easy administration tools for managing electronic content and easy end-user access to scientific information. (<http://pluto.lub.lu.se/about/one.html>; and see article by Ingegerd Rabow, this issue)

Biomed Central releases XSLT stylesheet

An XSLT preview stylesheet which can be used to convert the XML (extended markup language) format of BioMed Central articles into HTML for display purposes has been released. The stylesheet is covered by a Creative Commons license, which

allows it to be freely reused, adapted, and redistributed. (Serials-eNews, 18 June 2004)

Buzz words: RSS

RSS stands for RDF Site Summary or Rich Site Summary (www.webopedia.com/TERM/R/RSS.html) and can also stand for Really Simple Syndication — an expansion that is growing in popularity and provides a non-technical slant. RSS is an XML format which enables the syndication, or sharing, of content. The content in question consists of snippets of information (typically a title, a brief description, and a link), rather than the full substance of the content itself, to which the link leads. For a detailed explanation of how RSS can benefit publishers and content providers, plus some common questions answered about the format, and advice on how to produce RSS, see www.eevl.ac.uk/rss_primer/, and for an enlightening explanation of the benefits of RSS, see www.sls.lib.il.us/infotech/presentations/2004/cil-rss.pdf.

Preserving web information

The UK Web Archiving Consortium (comprising six organizations, including the British Library) aims to store about 6000 web sites for posterity. This is in advance of any legislation obliging people to submit copies of websites and other electronic copy to legal deposit libraries. The initial project will take two years, after which the consortium will review its progress and objectives. It aims at identifying sites that have political, scientific, social or artistic interest for the nation and for future generations. Government web sites are currently archived — by taking "snapshots" of the site at intervals. (*Guardian*, 28 June 2004)

Digital archiving agreement in Netherlands

Blackwell Publishing and Koninklijke Bibliotheek, the Netherlands national library, have signed an agreement on long-term digital archiving for Blackwell's electronic publications. Koninklijke Bibliotheek will receive digital copies of all publications available on Blackwell's online platform (about 380 000 articles in 740 academic and medical journals). The library will provide on-site access to the journals to everyone who has access to the library's collections. The agreement covers new publications as well as digitized backfiles. (Serials e-News, 5 July 2004)

Open access journals compete well on quality

BioMed Central's open access journals have received ISI impact factors (for journals published 2001–2002) that compare well with equivalent subscription titles. To BioMed Central, the good performance of its titles answers accusations from some traditional subscriptions publishers of low quality of open access journals. ISI is expected to publish an update of their citation analysis shortly — comparing citation counts for open access journals and traditional subscription products. (Serials e-News, 5 July 2004)

Google and Yahoo index scholarly literature

Mainstream (non-academic), for-profit search engines index scholarly literature because it has useful content, attracts a new class of users, and thereby increases traffic and advertising profits. Google and Yahoo lead the field in seizing this opportunity. They are striking deals to index scholarly content, whether it is open access or priced, and whether it is in the deep internet or on the surface. When they index priced literature, they offer, or try to offer, free full-text searching. When a priced article appears among the search returns, non-subscribers cannot click through to full text, though they can often click through to a pay-per-view form. (SPARC Open Access Newsletter, 2 July 2004)

Last dictionary link

Robert Burchfield, workaholic chief editor of the Oxford English Dictionaries, has died. He was the last link with the last of the four editors of *The Oxford English Dictionary*, CT Onions. In 1957 Burchfield was appointed by the Oxford University Press to produce a supplement to *The Oxford English Dictionary*; the first of the four huge volumes of his *Supplement* appeared in 1972, the last in 1984. In *Who's Who?* Burchfield gives as the first of his recreations “investigating English grammar”. His last book, for the OUP (like almost all his work), is *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage* (1996) — “it shows”, says the obituary in *The Independent*, “his total grasp of the subject . . . he had prejudices, yet, unlike HW Fowler (the title of whose book he took over, though little else), he was permissive rather than prescriptive, and his entry *prescriptivism* in *The New Fowler* is not merely a model of clarity and of historical accuracy: it shows how he exercised his scholarly judgement.”

(<http://news.independent.co.uk/people/obituaries/story.jsp?story=539405>)

A legend for our times

The Hawthorne effect is often referred to but no one can source or define it. The Hawthorne studies — at the Western Electric Company in Chicago from 1924 onwards — have attained a mythical quality; they showed beyond doubt that productivity related to what the study participants believed, and not to objective changes in their circumstances. A fascinating article in an unlikely place — *QJM*, the journal of the Association of Physicians (2004;97:439–449) — sets out, in a social history of industrial efficiency, how these studies have become a fable for our times. Hawthorne, by the way, is the Chicago suburb where the factory was located.

Greengrocer's apostrophe's are under control, but . . .

Only 8% of writers now use extraneous apostrophes, reports the *Guardian* (8 July 2004, <http://books.guardian.co.uk/news/articles/0,6109,1256469,00.html>) — instead, they are mixing up, and misspelling, homophones. Research for the new *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* found that “diffuse” and “defuse” were confused in some 50% of examples on the database. Second commonest is uncertainty over when to use “rein” or “reign”, found in 26% of examples, as in “A taxi driver had free reign to charge whatever he likes”. Third most frequent (21%) is “tow” instead of “toe”, as in “Some pointed to his refusal to tow the line under Tony Blair”. Fourth (12%) is “pouring” instead of “poring”, as in “He spent his evenings pouring over western art magazines”. These errors are occurring in texts that are otherwise quite well spelt — possibly because of the increasing use of spellcheckers.

IEEE journals are low priced

Magazines, transactions, journals and letters published by IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) are priced significantly lower than those of similar publishers for the tenth consecutive year, its annual survey found. The price of an average 500-page electrical engineering or computer science publication was US\$644, on average, and IEEE journals were priced at 39% less (\$391 on average). The average price of scientific journals from other non-profit publishers was \$457, with IEEE journals priced 14% below that amount. Commercially published

scientific journals had an average price of \$802. (Serials e-News, 5 July 2004)

Reed pushing to raise prices

The Guardian (UK) reports that STM publisher Reed Elsevier is “pushing to raise the price of its academic journals by more than three times the rate of inflation despite a committee of MPs yesterday raising concerns that prices are already too high” (bookseller.com). The company has told libraries that take journals from its Elsevier Science division that it intends to raise print subscriptions by an annual average of 5.5%.

Publishing changes are necessary

The UK House of Commons Science & Technology Committee in their report on scientific publishing, published on 20 July 2004, said that changes in scientific publishing are “necessary as a matter of urgency” and everyone should have free, open access to UK research findings. (www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmsctech/399/39909.htm).

New publishing models

Starting in 2005, the new open-access (or free-access) edition of the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS) will include an institutional membership automatically with every institutional site license. The memberships will give authors from member institutions a 25% discount on the \$1000 processing fee that PNAS charges to publish an accepted article. (www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/2004_08_01_fosblogarchive.html#a109167553812334236)

Ethics and errors

An exchange on SfEPLine concerned collegial tact and etiquette. Does a freelance proofreader who notices what they consider to be a grave error have a duty to the publisher client to alert them to it when, by drawing the client's attention to this, they could be severing a professional tie between the client and the copy-editor? Consensus was that the proofreader should point it out to the client. It might just be that the house style had changed and no-one had bothered to inform the copy-editor, or that the item has a different house style for some reason. Or the wrong file might have been sent for typesetting. In any case, the proofreader is working for the client, not for the copy-editor, so the proofreader's duty is clear. It would be ethical for the client to give feedback to the copy-editor, rather than just dropping them.

Scambaiters

The BBC news web site has a rather wonderful story about how the tables were turned on one of the e-mail scammers (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3887493.stm>). The "Nigerian scam" causes the world's largest financial losses, says www.419Legal.org — US\$200 000 000 a year. Even when cases are investigated, suspects cannot be traced.

Consider your web site readers

Branching out into online publishing? Different criteria apply for writing and editing for this format. Writing for the web is very different from writing for print: 79% of users scan the page instead of reading word-for-word; reading from computer screens is 25% slower than from paper; web content should have 50% of the word count of its paper equivalent. www.sun.com/980713/webwriting/ has guidelines that can be used to ensure that users can read content on a site with ease. And among the ten guidelines for ensuring a web site's credibility (www.webcredibility.org/guidelines/) is this one: "Avoid errors of all types, no matter how small they seem."

"Open Choice" model

In July the newly merged Springer/Kluwer group announced its hybrid open access/subscription model, "Open Choice". Rather than launch separate open access journals, Springer's system mixes open access material and non-open access in the same printed journal. Subscriptions for the print title will reflect the proportion of each type of article within it, and Open Choice articles will be available free of charge electronically. (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=3277&PID=10&ZID=1349)

Nature launches science news service

The Nature Publishing Group has launched news@nature.com, a science news service drawing on all the

resources of *Nature*. Site content — including opinion, hard news and jobs — will be a mixture of free and paid-for content. (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=3277&PID=10&ZID=1341)

Medical journal databases

Iranian: ParsMedline (www.parsmedline.com) has indexed more than 73 Iranian journals, none of which are indexed in PubMed. Full text of about one third of these journals is available, and the project should be completed by 2005; it is looking for funding from WHO to make it freely available. To help, or to access the database, contact Omid Beiki (manager@parsmedline.com). *Indian*: Indmed (<http://indmed.nic.in>) indexes 75 Indian journals that are not indexed in PubMed, and at the same site medIND is a full-text database of peer-reviewed Indian biomedical journals from 2000 onwards, which currently has 26 journals; access is free.

WHO: The World Health Organization has four regional databases to cover the gaps in Medline, Embase, and other such bibliographic databases. They cover Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, Latin America and Caribbean, and South-East Asia. Searching them is free. (www.who.int/library/country/regional/index.en.shtml)

Don't abandon paper

Are we being too hasty in the move towards electronic formats? Many people in the developing world think so, according to a discussion on HIF-net at WHO (health@inasp.info). Internet access (in some places, access to electricity) is limited, and paper remains the medium of choice, though CD-ROMs have advantages where there is access to computers. Even in the developed world researchers look up information on the internet and may store it on a CD-ROM, but the electronic copy has not eliminated the desire and need for a paper copy. The costs of printing out information from the internet call

for good quality information, dense on the page.

Censorship, publishing-style

John Wiley & Sons, the New York publishing giant, recently drove an editor at its Jossey-Bass imprint to resign in protest over the firm's reversal of a decision to publish a book critical of Wal-Mart, one of America's most important booksellers. The book was ultimately picked up by another publisher, but the imbroglio left Jossey-Bass without an esteemed editor and with an angry and demoralized staff. It created a buzz that John Wiley & Sons had undermined its editorial staff and censored itself out of fear of America's largest retailer. An article in *sfweekly* (21 July 2004; www.sfweekly.com/issues/2004-07-21/smith.html) giving details of the affair calls the withdrawal of the book censorship — but is it? If the book was taken off the shelves, that would be censorship; but when a publisher chooses to cancel a book, is that censorship, or business?

Watch your language

What happens when organizations "ban" words? A few years ago the *BMJ* called for a rethink on the use of "accident" (2001;322:1320-1321), shaking up the writing habits of authors and editors. Journals are not the worst offenders, though — *New Scientist* (10 July 2004, p. 92) reports that to write a "failure mode effect analysis" report in the aerospace industry you have to avoid certain words. So a "fire" becomes an uncontrolled thermal event; "explosion" a spontaneous rapid disassembly event; "bursting", unplanned loss of containment; and "crash", deconstructive deceleration.

Contributions to News Notes

Please send items for this section to Margaret Cooter, *BMJ*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JR, UK; mcooter@bmj.com.

Thanks to: Richard Hurley, Karl Sharrock, Reme Melero, Tanya Feddern.

Forthcoming meetings and courses

Future trends in science editing and publishing: bringing science to society

IFSE-12

10-12 October 2004 Merida, Mexico
The 12th meeting of the International Federation of Science Editors will take place in Merida, Yucatan. (Full information on web site, <http://bvs.insp.mx/ifse/index.htm>)

[insp.mx/ifse/index.htm](http://bvs.insp.mx/ifse/index.htm))

Moving to online submission and peer review

ALPSP Seminar
14 October 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, programmes@alpsp.org, web www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Indexing of periodicals

Society of Indexers workshop
21 October 2004 London, UK
This half-day workshop will be practical and interactive and may be of interest to journal editors. Numbers are strictly limited, so book early. Further details: www.indexers.org.uk or admin@indexers.org.uk.

Conflicts of interest and scientific publication

Council of Science Editors Retreat
29–31 October 2004 Oak Brook, IL
Keynote speaker: Sheldon Krinsky.
Other participants will include Lisa Bero, Catherine DeAngelis, Annette Flanagan, CK Gunsalus, Faith McLellan and Drummond Rennie.
Cost: \$750 to include conference registration, two nights in hotel, and all meals Friday evening to Sunday noon. Register online at CSE web site: www.councilscienceeditors.org.

Automated workflow in production: management and processes

ALPSP seminar
6 December 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, programmes@alpsp.org, www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Early online publication: making it work

ALPSP seminar
9 December 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, programmes@alpsp.org, www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

2005**21st International Learned Journals Seminar**

ALPSP Seminar
8 April 2005 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, e-mail programmes@alpsp.org, web www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

EASE seminar

29 April 2005 Barcelona, Spain
EASE's second annual seminar will take place in Barcelona again, in conjunction with the business meeting (the Annual General Meeting). Put this one in your diary now, please.

CSE 48th annual meeting

20–24 May 2005 Atlanta, GA
(Contact: Council of Science Editors, Inc., 12100 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 130, Reston VA 20190, USA; tel. +1 703 437 4377, fax +1 703 435 4390, e-mail cse@councilscienceeditors.org, web www.CouncilScienceEditors.org)

5th international congress on peer review and biomedical publication

15–17 September 2005 Chicago, IL
(Contact: jama-peer@jama-archives.org or web site: www.jama-peer.org.)

Editing in context

National Editors Conference
13–15 October 2005 Melbourne, Australia
The Society of Editors (Vic.) Inc. will host the second national CASE (Council of Australian Editors) conference, which will focus on editing as a profession and explore

issues such as the public perception of editors, how editors promote themselves, keeping up to date, financial and legal issues, and health and wellbeing. The Melbourne International Arts Festival and Spring Racing Carnival will be on at around these dates. Calls for papers and registration information will be announced early in 2005. (Contact: Convenor, Lan Wang, lanwant@wovenwords.com.au or see www.socedvic.org for regular updates.)

2006**The culture of science editing**

9th EASE Conference
15–18 June 2006 Kraków, Poland
See News from the Programme Committee in this and the two previous issues of *ESE*.

COURSES**ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates**

ALPSP offers half-day and one-day courses and updates on the role of the managing editor, electronic publishing and marketing, journal marketing, production, fulfilment and finance, copyright, and related topics. (Contact: events@alpsp.org, web www.alpsp.org/events.htm. Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers Ltd, 47 Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9BS, UK; tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, fax +44 (0)1245 260 935.)

Style for reports and papers in medical and life-science journals

John Kirkman Communication Consultancy courses
London, UK
One-day seminars on style — tactics for producing accurate and readable texts, not structure or format. Cost: £148 + 17.5% VAT. (Contact: Gill Ward, JKCC, PO Box 106, Marlborough, Wilts, SN8 2RU, UK; tel. +44 (0)1672 520429, fax +44 (0)1672 521008, e-mail kirkman.ramsbury@btinternet.com)

Publishing Training Centre at Book House

(Contact: The Publishing Training Centre at Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London, SW18 2QZ, UK; tel. +44 (0)20 8874 2718, fax +44 (0)20 8870 8985, e-mail publishing.training@bookhouse.co.uk, web site www.train4publishing.co.uk)

Society for Editors and Proofreaders workshops

SfEP runs one-day workshops in London and occasionally elsewhere in the UK on copy-editing,

proofreading, grammar and much else. (See web site, www.sfep.org.uk, or contact SfEP, Riverbank House, 1 Putney Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD, UK; tel. +44 (0)20 7736 3278, or e-mail admin@sfep.org.uk.)

Society of Indexers workshops

The Society of Indexers runs workshops for beginners and more experienced indexers in various cities in the UK. Details and downloadable booking forms can be found on their web site at www.indexers.org.uk; e-mail admin@indexers.org.uk.

Tim Albert Training

Courses on writing, science writing and setting up publications. (Contact: Tim Albert Training, Paper Mews Court, 284 High Street, Dorking, RH4 1QT, UK; tel. +44 (0)1306–877993, fax +44 (0)1306 877929, e-mail tatrain@compuserve.com, www.timalbert.co.uk)

University of Chicago Publishing Program

(Contact: Publishing Program, Graham School of General Studies, 5835 S. Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637 1608, USA; fax +1 773 702 6814, web: www.grahamschool.uchicago.edu/contact.shtml)

University of Oxford, Dept for Continuing Education

Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science and technology. (Contact: Gaye Walker, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Suite 5 Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbs Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK; tel. +44 (0)1865 286953, fax +44 (0)1865 286934, gaye.walker@continuing-education.ox.ac.uk, www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev.)

BELS**Board of Editors in the Life Sciences examination schedule**

20 October 2004, St Louis, Missouri (AMWA meeting)
March 2005, University of California San Francisco (Asilomar)
March 2005, Boston, Massachusetts
19 May 2005, Atlanta, Georgia (CSE)
28 September 2005, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (AMWA)
Register three weeks before the examination date. For more information visit www.bels.org, or contact Leslie Neistadt (Hughston Sports Medicine Foundation, Inc, 6262 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, GA 31909, USA; fax: +1 706 576 3348, neistadt@hughston.com).

The Editor's Bookshelf

The bookshelf is compiled by Jane Moody, 12A Salisbury Road, Bromley, BR2 9PU, UK. Please send Jane details of articles or books of interest to editors: e-mail jane.moody1@ntlworld.com or jmoody@rcog.org.uk, with EASE in the subject line (e-mails that are not easily identifiable are likely to be deleted unread).

Contributions in European languages other than English are welcome. Entries are arranged by topic under each heading. Suggestions for additional coverage would be welcome.

We regret that photocopies of the material referred to in these entries cannot be supplied.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue. We particularly appreciate any non-medical references.

SCIENCE

Doncarli C, Ljubisavljevich M, Merletti R, Passatore M, Windhorst U, Zazula D. 2004. **Entering the Italian academic community: publish – and perish – rules.** *The Scientist* 21 June; 18(12):www.the-scientist.com/yr2004/jun/opinion_040621.html.

In Italy, committees of three members grant tenured positions at the lowest level, research assistant professor.

The institution that makes the position available nominates one person to each committee, and the others are elected, at the national level, by professors in the subject field. National regulations require that the applicants submit a limited number of published papers. The universities specify the number; the applicants choose which papers are submitted. While this may sound reasonable, the outcome is often anything but reasonable.

Ogbu O. 2004. **Can Africa develop without science and technology?** *African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development* 4(1):www.ajfand.net/Issue-VI-files/Index.html.

African governments must back science and technology to help move Africa forward.

PUBLISHING

Lu J. 2004. **Scientific publication in China: an overview and some thoughts on improvement.** *Science Editor* July–August; 27(4):120–121. The status of scientific journal publishing in China is briefly

surveyed and some efforts to improve scientific writing in China are described.

Ng L, Hersey K, Fleshner N. 2004. **Publication rate of abstracts presented at the annual meeting of the American Urological Association.** *BJU International* July; 94(1):79–81.

To assess any significant predictors of ultimate peer-reviewed publication, abstract number, meeting year, presentation type (podium vs poster), type of research (basic vs clinical), date of publication and session name (prostate cancer: advanced) were entered into a database. The overall rate of publication was 37.8%. Survival analysis indicated that most abstracts were published within two years of their respective meetings. Univariate and multivariate techniques showed that none of the tested covariates were significant predictors of publication. Information presented at the AUA annual meetings should be carefully considered by physicians before implementation into their clinical practice. Researchers are encouraged to publish their data.

Roitman EV. 2004. **Development of the biomedical press in modern Russia.** *The Write Stuff* 13(2):46–47. Russia is one of the world's leaders in per capita number of doctors and scientific officers engaged in biomedicine. Publishing is now mainly in private ownership. Barriers to publication in foreign journals still exist. English is becoming more widely used in journals.

Rowlands I, Nicholas D, Huntingdon P. 2004. **Scholarly communication in the digital environment: what do authors want? Findings of an international survey of author opinion: project report.** London: Centre for Information Behaviour and the Evaluation of Research, City University. p. 1–36.

This report summarizes the key findings of a large-scale survey of journal authors' opinions. Authors' needs have not changed over many years. They want the ability to target a specific group of key readers, and they want the imprimatur of quality and integrity that a good peer-reviewed, high-impact title can offer, together with reasonable levels of publisher service.

POLITICS OF PUBLISHING

Anya I. 2004. **Partnerships may well be unequal.** [Letter] *BMJ* 10 July;

329:110.

Can you have a partnership of unequals?

Jabbour S. 2004. **Reviews: where can we publish?** *BMJ* 31 July; 329:doi 10.1136/bmj.329.7460.299.

Authors need a strong local platform for review and commentary but find it hard to get published in local journals. The example of Lebanese journals is cited. Local governments encourage publication in international journals but grounding in local work is important.

Royal Society. 2004. **Royal Society response to the House of Commons Inquiry into Scientific Publications.** Policy document 04/04. London: Royal Society; February. p. 1–9.

The Royal Society is in favour of the widest practicable dissemination of science but believes that the current proposals for open access journals (where papers are free online to all) lack a sustainable business model.

Ting JYS. **Quality medical research from poor countries could be privileged in high impact journals.** [Letter] *BMJ* 10 July; 329:110–111.

Poor dissemination may be ameliorated by allowing duplicate publication in local journals or forums of difficult-to-access articles from prestigious journals with high local relevance, for a lesser cost or for free.

Varma R. 2004. **Observed publication bias may reflect who is funding research.** [Letter] *BMJ* 10 July; 329:110.

Researchers from countries with a low human development index can break this cycle only if they can obtain international funding themselves or are allowed authorship by the principal investigators.

ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Schlimgen JB, Kronenfeld MR. 2004. **Update on inflation of journal prices: Brandon/Hill list journals and the scientific, technical and medical publishing market.** *Journal of the Medical Libraries Association* July; 92(3):307–314.

The average journal price continues to rise significantly and is independent of the Consumer Price Index. Prices have jumped 52% from 1996 to 1999 and 32% from 1999 to 2002. These findings are consistent with nearly every recent journal price study. The paper examines alternative models for disseminating scientific research.

Tretkoff E. 2004. **APS journals to cost less in 2005.** APS News 13(7):1, 5. Cost reductions because of technology changes, such as software that automatically copy-edits, allow reduced library subscriptions despite increased journal size and falling numbers of subscriptions. For more details see <http://librarians.aps.org/institutional.html>.

Marketing

Black B. 2004. **Small journals can get press coverage too.** Science Editor July–August; 27(4):111–116. How to increase the press coverage for your journal's contents.

PRACTICE OF PUBLISHING

Models of publishing

Lock C. 2004. **Open access and the future of scientific publishing.** Science Editor July–August; 27(4):122–123.

In the next decade of two, utilitarian search engines and high-speed connections may replace the traditional scientific journal.

Metadata

Sollaci LB, Pereira MG. 2004. **The introduction, methods, results, and discussion (IMRAD) structure: a fifty-year survey.** Journal of the Medical Library Association July; 92(3):364–367.

Although recommended since the beginning of the 20th century, the IMRAD structure was widely adopted only in the 1970s. The influence of other disciplines and the recommendations of editors are among the reasons that contribute to authors adhering to this structure.

Swygart-Hobaugh AJ. 2004. **A citation analysis of the quantitative/qualitative methods debate's reflection in sociology research: implications for library collection development.** Library Collections, Acquisitions & Technical Service 28:180–195.

Quantitative articles cite articles from quantitative journals but virtually exclude citations to articles from qualitative ones, while qualitative articles cite articles from both quantitative and qualitative journals.

Peer review

Brown T. **Peer review and the acceptance of new scientific ideas: discussion paper from a working party on equipping the public with an understanding of peer review, November 2002–May 2004.** London: Sense About Science. xii, 1–49.

Provides an outline of the complex way that science enters the public arena and why the peer review process is crucial, although it could be improved and better understood.

[Correspondence] **Should reviewers of papers have their names published?** BMJ 10 July; 329:113. Letters related to the issue of publication of the names of reviewers in association with the papers they review.

Walker K. 2004. **"Double b(l)ind": peer-review and the politics of scholarship.** Nursing Philosophy July; 5(2):135–146. Nursing has adopted the double-blind tradition to secure a place of legitimacy and authority for its scholarship amongst other disciplines. This paper attempts to uncover specific concerns about the essentially conservative and sometimes restrictive effects the double-blind peer review produces.

ETHICAL ISSUES

American Physical Society. 2004. **APS Council approves statements on subordinates and on referencing.** APS News 13(4):1, 7.

Reports two statements relating to ethics. The one on subordinates includes the obligation on authors to acknowledge contributions of subordinates in publications and to afford the opportunity of authorship of publications to which they have made significant contributions. That on referencing states the obligation to include references that communicate the precedents, sources and context of the reported work.

[Anonymous] 2004. **Ask the ethicist.** APS News 13(6):5.

Fifth in series; a former postdoc researcher reports finding a paper submitted by his senior collaborator which reproduces (apart from five sentences in seven pages) an earlier paper published by him and his collaborators but with two added co-authors. He asks if he should inform the journal to which it is being submitted. The reply is yes and he could do so anonymously.

De Angelis C, Drazen JM, Frizelle FA, Haug C, Hoey R, Horton R, et al. 2004. **Clinical trial registration: a statement from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.** Lancet 11 September; 364(9438):911–912.

Full transparency with respect to performance and reporting of clinical trials will enhance public confidence and this will compensate for the costs of full disclosure. To avoid selective

reporting, the ICMJE proposes comprehensive trials registration and the 11 ICMJE member journals will adopt a policy requiring registration as a condition of consideration for publication, starting from 1 July 2005.

Gibson L. 2004. **GlaxoSmithKline to publish clinical trials after US lawsuit.** BMJ 26 June; 328:1513. See also below.

Herxheimer A. **Open access to industry's clinically relevant data.** BMJ 10 July; 329:64–65. GlaxoSmithKline has announced that it will publish summaries of all its clinical trials of a new product once it has been launched.

Satyanarayana K. 2004. **Reflections of a pioneering ombudsman at an Indian journal.** Science Editor July–August; 27(4):117–119. The editor of the *Indian Journal of Pharmacology* has established an ombudsman service for authors who disagree with the decisions of the editors or peer reviewers. Argues that all journals should have such a service in the interest of scientific communication and good publication ethics.

Parker MJ. 2004. **Getting ethics into practice.** BMJ 17 July; 329:126. Decision-making in medicine has an ethical component; the *BMJ* has started a series of articles on ethics in practice.

Smith R. **Editorial independence at the BMJ.** BMJ 10 July; 329: doi:10.1136/bmj.329.7457.0-g.

Turner AK. 2004. **Animal experimentation regulations.** The Write Stuff 13(2):43–45. Looks at the regulations governing the use of animals in experiments in different countries. Researchers submitting papers to a journal are expected to have complied with their own national and local laws and to have had their work reviewed by the local ethics committee, where relevant. Journals may also have their own codes of practice. Problems may arise when authors feel that the journal is imposing unrealistic rules on them.

Wager E. 2004. **Experiences of the BMJ ethics committee.** BMJ 28 August; 329:510–512. The BMJ established its ethics committee in November 2000. Three broad themes have emerged from the committee's discussions: patient confidentiality; the journal's responsibilities to people outside the publishing process; research misconduct.

Misconduct and fraud

[Anonymous] 2004. **Fraudster is stripped of PhD.** *Physics World* 17(7):7.

The University of Konstanz has stripped Jan Hendrick Schön of his PhD, despite an enquiry showing no firm evidence of misconduct during his time at Konstanz, because of his subsequent use of manipulated and faked data.

Atlas MC. 2004. **Retraction policies of high-impact biomedical journals.**

Journal of the Medical Libraries Association April; 92(2):242–250. The Instructions to Authors of 122 major biomedical journals were reviewed for evidence of a policy on the retraction of articles. Editors of those journals with no mention of retraction in their Instructions were contacted by e-mail and/or postal mail. Sixty-two per cent of the journals investigated did not post or report having a policy on issuing retractions; only 21 (18%) reported having such a policy. The remainder did not post any policy and did not respond to enquiries. Including policies relating to the principled conduct of research and publication in Instructions to Authors will improve the ethical environment in which the scientific community works.

McCook A. 2004. **Researchers boycott journal.** *The Scientist* 23 June; www.biomed.central.com/news/20040623/04.

Researchers whose papers had been accepted for publication in an occupational medicine journal have withdrawn their submissions in a boycott stemming from the publication's refusal to include a study in the same issue claiming that IBM employees at superconductor plants have higher-than-expected cancer death rates.

Savla U. 2004. **When did everyone become so naughty?** *Journal of Clinical Investigation* April; 113(8):1072.

With new calls for editors to police author misconduct and declare editorial conflicts, the JCI outlines its current policies and reflects on a few particularly salient examples of bad behaviour.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Brennan C. 2004. **Beyond doors and ramps.** Copyright July/August:3–4. Implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 for editors.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Burrough-Boenisch J. 2004. **A bit of culture.** *The Write Stuff* 13(2):41–42. Writing and editing reflect writers' and editors' cultural background in various ways. Some conventions transfer more easily than others from one culture to another. Some examples are given.

Marshall D. 2004. **The meming of life.** Copyright July/August:1–3. Musings on the use of nouns as verbs.

Skinningrud K. 2004. **Culture is the most crucial issue in mergers: should this concern medical writers?** *The Write Stuff* 13(2):38–40. Organizational cultures and how they affect mergers. Freelance editors will, at some time, work with someone from an unfamiliar culture and may have to adapt to new ways of working.

INFORMATION

Godlee F, Pakenham-Walsh N, Ncayiyana D, Cohen B, Packer A. 2004. **Can we achieve health information for all by 2015?** *Lancet* 17 July; 364:295–300. Also commentary by Bailey C, Pang T. 364:223–224.

Article calls on WHO and other organizations to commit to universal access to essential healthcare information by 2015. This goal is promoted as a prerequisite for the health-related Millennium Development Goals: to reduce child and maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major illnesses.

McKibbin KA, Gadd CS. 2004. **A quantitative analysis of qualitative studies in clinical journals for the 2000 publishing year.** *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making* July 22; 4(1):11.

Qualitative studies are published in a wide range of healthcare journals but not in the highest impact journals. More can be done to complete and publish qualitative studies and, where appropriate, integrate the best of both methodologies. Qualitative and quantitative researchers and

clinicians need to work together to make this happen. Journal editors can also encourage submission of qualitative and mixed methods studies and facilitate publication of those they receive.

Sevinc A. 2004. **Web of Science: a unique method of cited reference searching.** *Journal of the National Medical Association* July; 96(7):980–983.

The number of times an article is acknowledged as a reference in another article reflects its scientific impact. Citation analysis is one of the parameters for assessing the quality of research published in scientific, technology and social science journals. Web of Science enables users to search current and retrospective multidisciplinary information. Article summarizes parameters and practical applications evaluating journal and article citation characteristics available through the *Science Citation Index* are summarized.

Van der Sanden MCA, Meijman FJ. 2004. **Evidence-based science communication: an essay.** *Science Communication* 25(3):272–287.

Use of literature review in scientific publications is often poorly thought out and unsystematic. The reader, therefore, has no insight into the quality of the conclusions drawn. Conclusions are often based on a coincidental, not necessarily complete, set of articles. The authors plead for a systematic approach to literature research within the field of science communication and propose a system based on the principles of evidence-based medicine.

ABOUT EDITORS

Korndorffer M. 2004. **"How we do it": SfEP Code of Practice.** Copyright July/August:4–5.

Explanation of the SfEP Code of Practice for editors and proofreaders.

Middleditch J. **Incorporation: less attractive than it used to be?** Copyright July/August:8–9.

Many UK freelance editors will have incorporated their businesses and ceased to be self-employed, to obtain the tax advantages of incorporation. Under new rules, corporation tax may be payable, making this possibly a less attractive option. A senior tax manager explains the details and advises that there are still significant tax savings in this option.

News from the Programme Committee: 3rd report

Why a new approach?

The Programme Committee for the 9th EASE Conference, which – as you all know by now – will be held in Kraków, Poland, in 2006 (15–18 June), has decided to follow a new approach to structuring the conference. This was not an easy decision, as our past conferences have been very successful. One look at reports in past issues of *European Science Editing* leaves no doubt of their accomplishment. So what will change, and why the new approach?

In the past, the “technical” part of our conferences has consisted of some plenary lectures and many workshops in which topics are discussed after being introduced briefly by a limited number of speakers. We have decided, as an experiment, to eliminate the workshops and to have, instead, two parallel sessions daily, with presentations on similar topics, followed by discussions. Greater detail about the topics will be provided in the first circular, which will be distributed with the next issue of *European Science Editing*.

The first reason for trying this new approach is simply a matter of logistics. As our conference has grown in popularity and attendance has increased, it has become more and more of a problem to arrange in advance for the proper number and size of rooms for workshops. Those of you who attended our last conference in Bath will recognize the difficulty.

Also, although the workshops were popular, there have been complaints. For example, although the discussions were generally lively, younger participants often complained that they were too dominated by “the establishment”. Whether or not that comment is justified, younger participants apparently feel that such workshops do not provide enough possibilities for them to communicate their own insights, experiences, and doubts. Why not give them a chance too?

The third reason may seem trivial, but it concerns an aspect of fundamental importance for a successful conference. Easy funding to attend conferences is no longer the rule, and as a result

delivering a formal paper becomes more and more a prerequisite. The new approach offers the possibility for more participants to fulfil this demand. We can even hope that the change will help to increase the number of conference participants, and therefore also lead to more mutual communication.

Finally, the Kraków conference is aimed at bridging the gap between Eastern and Western editorial insights and practices. This can only be achieved if participants from Eastern Europe actively participate. Considering the language problem for many Eastern European scientists and editors (native English editors should try once to deliver a presentation in French!), it seems only appropriate to give them the chance to deliver short lectures rather than forcing them to jump into debates. Feel challenged by the new approach!

AJ (Tom) van Loon

On behalf of the 2006 Programme Committee

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Membership list additions and changes

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DEATH

We much regret to announce the death of Dr Alfred Yankauer.



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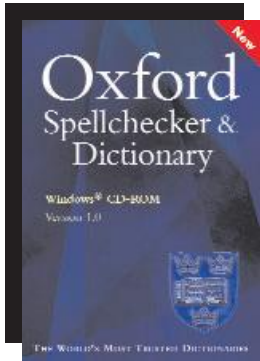
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