

Editor's Report 2007

Introduction

On June 1, 2007, editorship of the *Journal* transitioned to Paul Bergstresser. Editorial operations have remained in Chapel Hill, NC, with two full-time employees located there. Although a new Editorial Board was established, several of the previous Section and Associate Editors have remained on board; their experience, along with the fresh eyes of the new board members, has continued to provide the balanced review *JID* has long provided its submitting authors. After a generally smooth transition, due in large part to the online submission and peer review system and the retention of Editorial Board members and editorial office staff, our efforts have been focused on several new endeavors, which are described below.

Projects

JID Strategic Plan. A 3-year Strategic Plan has been developed for the *JID* in conjunction with the Strategic Plan that was developed for the Society for Investigative Dermatology.

Milestones and Perspectives handoffs. We have decided that these worthy ventures, initiated by Russ Hall, should be continued and supported. To that end, we have recruited Mark Pittelkow (Rochester) to head Milestones and John McGrath (London) to head the Perspectives Series, with support from the Editorial Office. They are now fully engaged.

Word limits. In an effort to maximize the *Journal's* page budget, we plan to establish word limits for articles. No timeline has been established for this initiative.

Hypothesis Letters. A new feature, Hypothesis Letters, was initiated.

Immortalized cell line policy. To address continuing questions about the appropriateness of publishing studies that use immortalized cell lines, guidelines are being considered for such submissions.

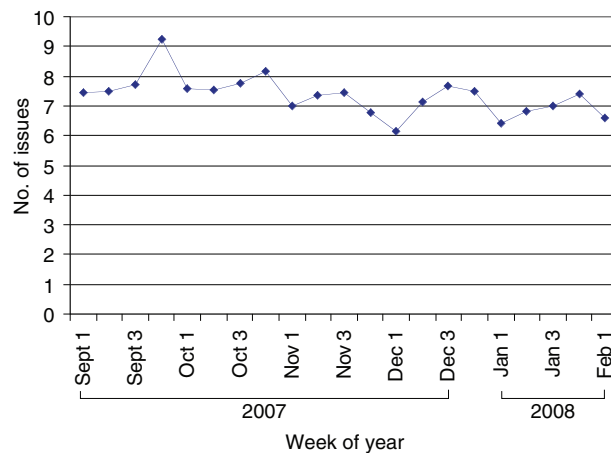


Figure 1. *JID* backlog by number of issues.

A *JID* edition for residents and clinicians. Working with the Education Committee of the Society for Investigative Dermatology and with representatives of Nature Publishing Group, we are preparing a proposal for a new education journal. In broad outline, this publication is intended for residents in the United States and Canada, as well as academically inclined clinicians. It would include some clinical papers from earlier *Journal* issues as well as new editorial content. It would have fewer pages than a regular *Journal* issue and would be published less frequently. Ponciano D. Cruz (Dallas) heads the group put-

ting together a formal proposal. This publication would, of necessity, be self-supporting and would not detract from the finances of the *JID* operation. The only effect on impact factor would likely be positive.

The Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and representatives of the SID would be quite willing to work with the ESDR and/or the JSID in establishing a similar (or related) publication for other parts of the world.

Reports (editors' workload and backlog). The Editor-in-Chief recognized early in his tenure that he required new information instruments to make the *JID* publishing process

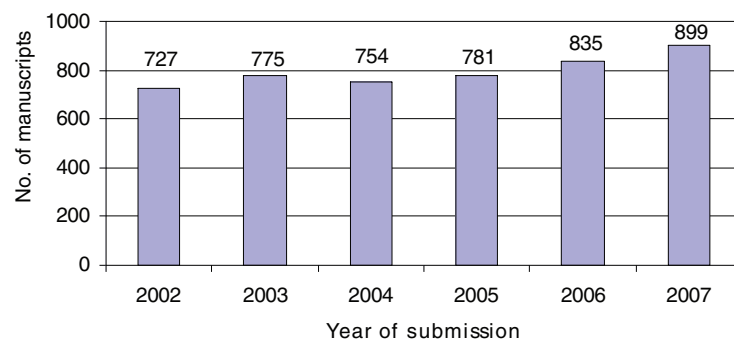


Figure 2. Unsolicited submissions, 2002-2007.

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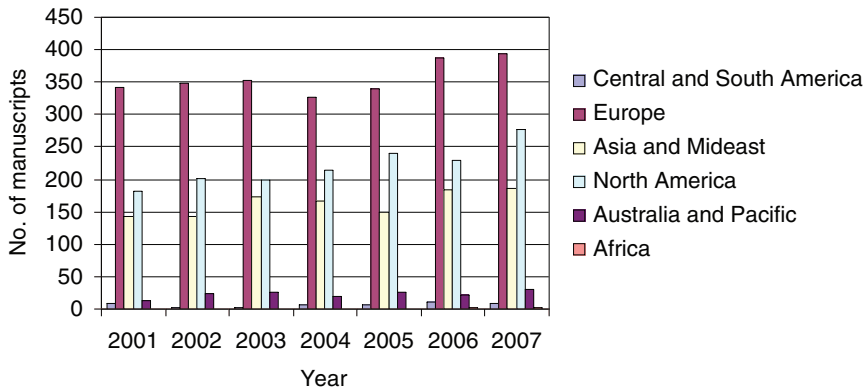


Figure 3. 2007 Submissions by region.

more effective. The following issues have been addressed.

1. Given that there are approximately 80 Associate Editors and approximately 1,100 submissions, the capacity to overburden is ever-present.

Instrument 1: We now generate a monthly listing of all papers supervised over the previous year by each Associate Editor. This is employed by the Editor to distribute papers as evenly as possible.

2. The Editor inherited a 4-month delay between online publication of a paper and print publication. The goal has been to reduce this delay to approximately 1 month over several years. (Note that this means a higher percentage of rejections.) Unfortunately, at any one time, the Editor did not know the effect of recent acceptances on this backlog.

Instrument 2: We now generate a monthly backlog report, including graphics, for the Editor. The backlog has decreased by about 1 month in the past 9 months. We will continue to monitor the backlog (Figure 1).

3. Section Editors must understand the acceptance rate for their area of interest, as well as for the *Journal* in general.

Instrument 3: We generate a report of rejected and accepted manuscripts (including percentage rates) for each Section Editor (running list for the previous 12 months).

Web Focus: Montagna Symposium on the Biology of Skin. Since the MSBS no longer publishes an MSBS proceedings issue, we now invite presenters to submit their papers from this meeting for publication in the *Journal*

at no cost. All articles are subject to full peer review. When published, these papers bear the MSBS logo in the header. In February 2008, a web focus was launched in which the MSBS articles appear online as a collection.

Legacy Project. UT Southwestern Medical Center's library donated 34 years of back issues required to complete the *JID* Legacy Project, allowing us to digitize all *Journal* content back to 1938. When completed, articles will be searchable by title and author names, but not by content within the article (articles will be in a PDF format and not in XML). Expenses will be covered by *JID* development funds allotted in our contract with NPG. The anticipated completion date is July 2009.

Journal Club. The monthly Journal Club feature launched with the September 2007 issue and is led by Robert Kirsner, MD, PhD, of the Department of Dermatology and Cutaneous Surgery at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Each Journal Club article consists of a series of "thought questions," drawing on contributions from University of Miami trainees. An introduction and the thought questions are published in print, and brief answers are published online only. Our plan is to emphasize clinical science.

We began this project with several goals in mind: (i) to introduce trainees to excellent studies, (ii) to provide a mechanism for the (re)introduction of the *Journal* into the educational activities of many training programs, (iii) to enliven journal club discussions, and (iv) to introduce trainees to the *JID*. It is hoped that this feature is useful to European training programs as well.

Peer review and publication statistics

2007 Submissions. Submissions continue to be strong, with 899 total unsolicited submissions received in 2007, 8% higher than the 835 submissions received in 2006.

An additional 28 invited papers (Perspectives, *JID* Symposium Proceedings, and Montagna Symposium on the

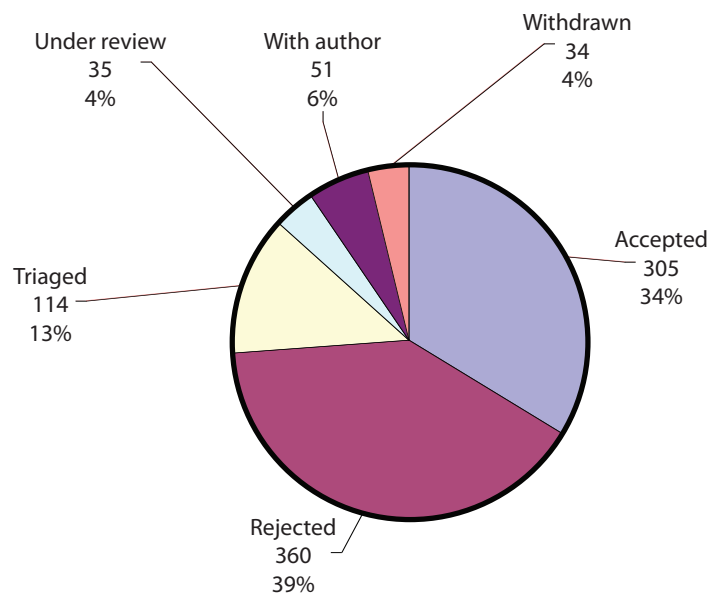


Figure 4. Status of 2007 submissions as of April 2008.

Biology of Skin) were fully peer reviewed (Figure 2).

Submissions by region. The largest proportion of submissions continues to come from North America and Europe. Specifically, 257 submissions were from the United States, 104 from Germany, 91 from Japan, and 69 from the United Kingdom. Figure 3 summarizes submissions by region.

Accept rate. Of the unsolicited submissions received in 2007, 34% were accepted and 52% were rejected (Figure 4). Of the manuscripts that were rejected, one quarter were triaged, i.e., rejected at the Editorial level, without external review. We estimate an acceptance rate of about 40% for the year's submissions. The Editors are aware of the need to decrease *JID's* acceptance rate to maintain our page budget and positively affect the *Journal's* impact factor.

Turnaround time. The time to first decision for fully peer-reviewed submissions is 38 days (Figure 5). We will monitor the turnaround time regularly and report changes to the Board.

Publication statistics for 2007. The *Journal's* page budget for 2007 was 2,700, which included all published material. We used the entire page budget for the year, as well as the allowable 7% overage (no cost to the Society). We have maintained a page allotment of 2,700 for 2008, with the full expectation of reducing the percentage of manuscripts accepted for publication, while continuing to use our allowable 7% overage to work through our backlog.

The *JID* published four supplement issues in 2007: two meeting abstract

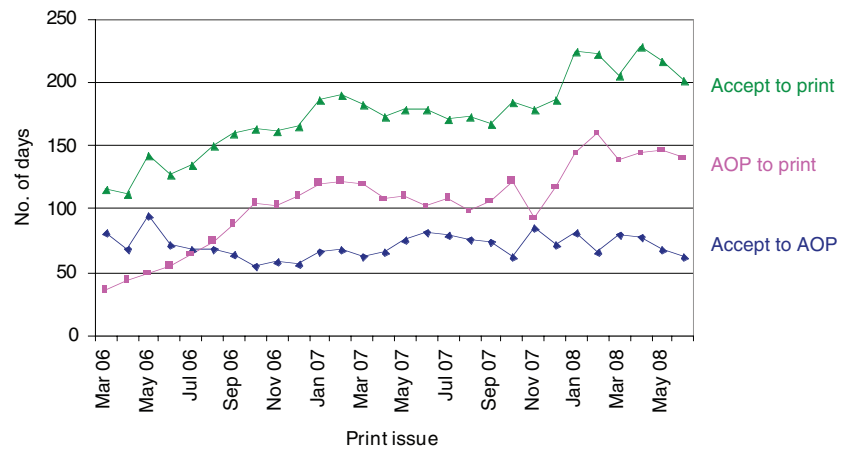


Figure 6. Lag time from acceptance to publication.

issues (SID, ESDR) and two peer-reviewed corporate supplements. The corporate supplements were "Structural-Functional Relationships of TNF- α Antagonists," sponsored by Amgen, Inc. (published May 2007), and "Hair and Scalp Science Breakthroughs," sponsored by Procter & Gamble (publication date October 2007). The supplement issue "Latest Advancements in Skin Health and Anti-Aging," sponsored by Procter & Gamble, will be published in 2008. The two P&G publications were tie-ins with the 21st World Congress of Dermatology in October 2007.

Publication schedule. *JID* has been mailing on time, on the 15th of the month prior to the cover date (e.g., the February 2008 issue mailed January 15, 2008).

Articles are published online and indexed before print, and online publication may precede print by

about 5 months. Despite the timeliness of our production schedule, the lag between acceptance and print publication of articles has been increasing. The average time from acceptance to print publication for articles published in 2007 was 179 days (versus 137 in 2006 and 217 in 2008), whereas the average time from acceptance to advance online publication was 71 days (vs. 70 in 2006 and 72 in 2008; Figure 6).

Advance online publication of articles will always allow the science to be available to readers in a timely fashion, and the previous Editor purposefully used our allowable page budget overage in the first half of 2007 to decrease our backlog. The current Editor is continuing that practice with the 2008 volume. However, it should be noted that only by decreasing our acceptance rate can we decrease the time from acceptance to print publication.

Conclusion

We are grateful to the Boards of Directors of the SID and ESDR for their continuous support of the Editor's goals and to the Editorial Board for its consistent good work. We look forward to further expanding the *Journal's* reach and value to the skin research community.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul A. Bergstresser, MD, Editor
Elizabeth Blalock, Managing Editor

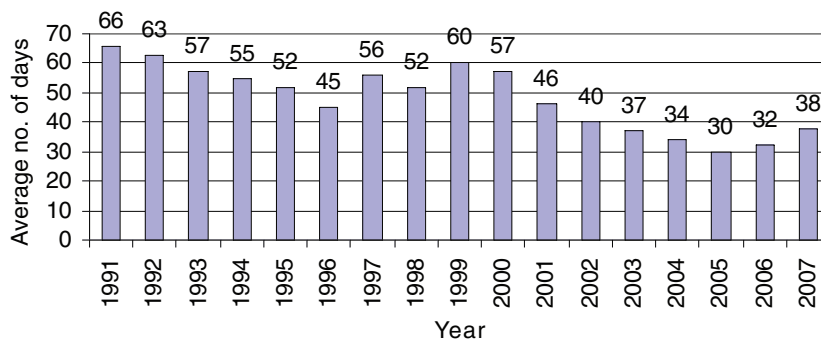


Figure 5. Average number of days to first decision.