

Editorial

Teething problems with electronic publishing

As authors and readers are no doubt becoming aware, the vast majority of international journals, including *Pediatric Allergy & Immunology*, are introducing electronic publishing. As of 1st January 2003, our Journal has committed itself to being total electronic. This means that all submissions from authors must now be submitted through the Journal's website <http://pai.manuscriptcentral.com>. I would again urge all authors to read the Editorial by our Managing Editor, Dr. Jill Warner, published in August 2002 (*Pediatr. Allergy Immunol.* 2002;13:229–231). This gives full details of how to submit a paper. Sadly, however, many have not registered that we have undergone a change and the Editorial Office is still receiving a significant number of hard copy manuscripts. These are all being returned to the authors with a request that they submit electronically which sadly, of course, is delaying the process. I am sorry that this is the case but it is almost impossible to run an Editorial Office on two systems.

Indeed in relation to the two systems, the transition period from hard copy submission to electronic versions has created a number of teething problems. Some of the hard copy submissions from the latter half of 2002 have had inordinate delays in processing at all stages because of the need for both the Editorial Office, the publishers and the printers to come to terms with and accommodate the new system. However once it is in place, I can assure you that the processing procedure will be speeded up by a very considerable amount. Indeed, it is already very apparent that the reviewing process has been shortened appreciably and communication between author/Editorial Office and Editorial Office/printers, is virtually instantaneous. I hope, therefore, that within the next few months you will all appreciate a significant improvement.

ScholarOne is the system on which Manuscripts Central is based. While the programmes which have been tried and tested now by a number of journals are excellent, as time goes by we identify the occasional glitch and shortcoming in the system. There are, therefore, periods where

Manuscript Central is required to close down for very short periods in order to add some new software and adjust the system. Again, these teething problems should be relatively short and will eventually lead to a very sophisticated and efficient processing of papers. I would, therefore, request your forbearance if you cannot immediately access the site. Please try again an hour or two later.

Clearly in having total electronic publishing, the reviewers now also are requested by e-mail to take on a commission to review, and then receive the paper electronically with the reviews transmitted back to the Editorial Office electronically. While this again should speed up the process, I do understand the frustrations of the reviewers. If they are anything like me, they find it impossible to read long texts off a computer screen and, therefore, print out a hard copy to review in the age old way. It is at this point that many people wish that we could return to the quill pen. However, I suppose we must all accommodate the new information technology era. If there is any confusion about the process for reviewing, the instructions are all included in the Editorial from the Managing Editor.

Finally, I would again like to draw the attention of all authors to two exceedingly important review articles on presentation of statistics and presenting graphical information. This outlines the requirements of the Journal in relation to presentation of data. All too often, we receive submissions that do not follow some very simple and basic rules (1, 2). These articles can be accessed through the PAI website <http://journals.munksgaard.dk/pai>.

*J. O. Warner
Editor-in-Chief*

References

1. BRYANT TN. The presentation of statistics. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol* 1998; 9: 108–115.
2. BRYANT TN. Presenting graphical information. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol* 1999; 10: 4–13.