

IEEE AESS Publications Strategic Plan Response

Officers Meeting
Orlando, Florida
October 3rd, 2013

(presented by Maria Sabrina Greco)



From the Strategic Plan April 2013

- **Strategic Vision:**

- *Transactions*: Assure that the Transactions are relevant, timely, and technically advanced.
- *Magazine*: Make attractive, desirable and cover timely topics that are relevant.
- *Tutorials*: Make sure they are useful, informative, and up-to-date technically.
- *QEB*: Assure new content and timely information is delivered to the membership.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges

• *Transactions*

- Delay from acceptance to appearance is too long. Ideally it should be 6-9 months, presently double that:
 - With a 3-month review time (usually initial plus revision) with a 3-month author-delay in between, there are usually 9 months even before the paper comes to the administrative editor.
 - EIC efforts (website trolling, editor replacement) have been reducing this delay what seems to be a minimal level.
 - The AES Transaction is one of the most industry-oriented IEEE journals: you can't hurry industrial authors and reviewers like you can hurry an academic.
 - As to the acceptance-to-appearance delay:
 - We are re-vendoring the Transactions post-acceptance publication stream.
 - Starting January we will have pre-posting articles on IEEEXplore, requires limited "XML tagging".

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Transactions (cont.)*

- While the AES Transactions has an excellent “half-life” it is less able to respond to the needs of authors seeking publication of time-sensitive results.
 - Growth of “Letter” type of submission that gets front-of-the-queue service for appearance.
 - Pre-posting.
- While the Transactions produce ample revenue via IEEE Xplore, ways must continually be found to control costs and to increase revenue.
 - Re-vendoring (separate discussion).
 - Mandatory page charges (separate discussion).
 - Discussion of Open Access last Officers’ Meeting.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Transactions (cont.)*

- Quality must be continuously improved. Impact factor counts citations in 2 years after publication.
 - Discussed in previous Officers' Meeting.
- Editorial turnover and quality issues. Lenient and/or slow Associate Editors are easily identified using EJ Press reporting tools, and EIC reports to Board of Governors show these.
 - Discussed in previous Officers' Meeting.
 - Underperforming editors get vanishing workload, then are eventually removed from the roll.
 - We are doing well recently.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Transactions (cont.)*

- The Leadership positions in Publications are too temporary and unclear. The EIC deals with content issues while the AESS Vice President for Publications is in charge of financial matters and vision. Financial and editorial chain of command need to be clarified.
 - The financial chain of command is presently (and recently) running extremely well: All invoices are submitted to Bill/Susanne Walsh, who investigate and submit to the VP Pubs for approval and transmission to Alyson Karsch at IEEE, who arranges for payment.
 - For example, in BoG meeting tomorrow we will present a case of an outgoing vendor attempting to over-charge.
- Require creative response to changing technical areas. Core areas are: Radar, Tracking & Fusion, Guidance & Control, and Navigation. Introduce new areas as they are identified.
 - New areas are always welcome. Presently we are seeing growth in Signal Processing Systems
 - Added new AE, and turning away papers that do not align with AESS scope.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Transactions (cont.)*

- Author malfeasance: Parallel submissions to multiple journals simultaneously; serial submissions of previously rejected material; plagiarism; inappropriate submissions: co-authors unaware, or scurrilous contents.
 - However, there is an IEEE plagiarism checker that EIC Lance Kaplan is investigating. (I see it as editor for Signal Processing Letters):
 - The checker makes a score of common phrases with other published works and offers a “percentage similarity”.
 - It adds these together, a high total means that the editor needs to check more deeply.
 - One recent complaint handled was that an Aerospace Conference paper was (allegedly) plagiarized in a MS thesis.
 - Since AESS publication was (allegedly) plagiarized – not plagiarizing – this is not really something we can address
 - The author was directed to bring matter to the university.
 - There is one particularly ugly fight between two authors and acolytes, both in the tracking/fusion area.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Magazine*

- Improve quality of papers and magazine content.
 - Monthly all-hands conference calls (typical attendance 12-15).
 - Special issues.
 - August 2013 – Special Issue on Standards
 - Spring 2014 – Special Issue on Wide Area and Staring SAR Radars
 - Summer 2014 – Special Issue on Signal Processing for Remote Sensing
 - Late 2014/Early 2015 – Special Issue on Avionics Systems
 - We have recently had *all* submitted material, and a growing backlog.
 - All senior editorial staff now have accounts at TAES
 - Transactions EIC sometimes rejects submissions without review not original enough

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Magazine*

- Improve quality of papers and magazine content (cont.)
 - All senior editorial staff now have accounts at TAES
 - Transactions EIC sometimes rejects submissions without review as not original enough – but should these be resubmitted to Systems?
 - With “consultation” can decide if it is appropriate for Magazine, no longer just Peter & Dale.
 - We have seen an increase in “system integration” papers.
 - E.g., these might describe the way an avionics system might be upgraded.
 - My suspicion is that these are a cheap way to get an archival publication out of a student project.
 - Policy: they might be of interest to our readers only if they describe something that exists, or at least will. Many are just imagined designs, like senior projects: probably fine design, but no real hope of ever being built.
 - It is important to remember that each acceptance represents a glimpse of our policy that is visible to other potential authors.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Magazine (cont.)*

- Improve presentation and graphics (makeover for magazine).
 - Since October 2012 the magazine is very much different.
- Lack of motivated and active reviewers.
 - I often manage papers, and have not had a problem with this.
- Authors do not like their papers being edited without permission (even though IEEE allows it).
 - Authors are asked to proof their work; but since the magazine runs on a tight schedule delayed responses will be ignored
- Determine future format of magazine (electronic or paper; bi-monthly?)
 - This is up to the BoG to decide. However:
 - The Magazine is the one physical thing that we give *all* our members. The Magazine is for reading ... while it is archival and we are proud of its content its primary message is *contact*.
 - The Magazine is distributed to AESS conferences, chapters & sections, and there are frequent requests for copies.
 - The Allen Press contract runs to 2015, so any change in publication format would have to wait until then, anyway.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Tutorials*

- Lack of submitted articles.
 - Most recent Tutorial (August 2013) had only one article: “Review of Range Based Positioning Algorithms”
 - Tutorials are our most-cited works, previous one (2010) had 2 Tutorials already cited more than 20 times.
 - Braham has three papers under review and four more awaiting submission.
- Uncertainty in the publication date of tutorials due to the need to acquire a critical mass of articles.
 - Agreed that this is a concern.
 - Sabrina and Peter have been helping with the review management.

• Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

• *Quarterly Email Blast*

- Lack of submitted articles.
 - Problem persists, but is improving.
 - Need help from BoG.
 - Possible step is for Cosimo to have access to all Magazine data and articles for content?
 - This was suggested in April, but I do not think we acted on it, unfortunately.

- **Strategic Issues Not in Strategic Plan**
 - **Thoughts from Dave Dobson**
 - **XML tagging**
 - **Page Charges for Transactions**
 - **Change in vendor structure for Transactions**

• Dave's strategic thoughts

- From a recent letter to Teresa and me, I think it's worth sharing and discussing.
- Distribute Magazine to all student branches.
 - 2350 student branches.
 - Students are the future, why not interest them now?
- Suggested articles (of interest to students)
 - Recap of AESS student activities (Junior Aerospace Conf., student papers in Systems, etc.)
 - Discussion of types of systems our society is interested in.
- "Why does AESS, not a device society, engage in Systems and SoS?"
 - I thought we did, so I'm not sure what Dave means by this.

- **Full XML tagging beginning January 2014**
 - basically the whole article is entered in parallel as XML
 - useful for searching
 - necessary for pre-posting
 - IEEE requirement
 - Allen Press will do this for both Transactions and Magazine

● Page Charges for Transactions

- Old policy was that Business Editor (Jose Bolanos) sent letters to authors (and authors' employers?) to collect voluntary charges of \$150 per page.
- New policy is \$200 a page beyond 10 for Regular and beyond 6 for Correspondence
- A Letter is \$250 per page up to four. For this extra charge it gets put in the front of the publication queue.
- Issue: Dilation of articles.
 - Articles are submitted as single-column double-spaced for review, and also as double-column single-spaced as good-faith estimate.
 - Somewhere in the post-acceptance process 12 page papers would end up as 19 (largely through gross enlargement of figures).
 - Authors were ... piqued.
 - Solution was for EIC to go through each issue and estimate page charges owed based on submitted version.
- Issue: Collection of page charges.
 - IEEE bills.
 - But I need to see the collections on an article-by-article basis so I can encourage non-paying authors to find the funds, and to blacklist those who don't.
 - IEEE is unfamiliar with this need. They are trying to be helpful in that they have told us that they will send us a spreadsheet of payments.
 - But none has come as of yet.