IEEE AESS Publications Strategic Plan Response

Officers Meeting

Ottawa, Canada

May 2nd, 2013

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.
    - Most-recent Transactions' delay is around 15-18 months.
    - 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.
    - Add copyediting, typesetting, quarterly publication plus the *need* for some backlog, 15-18 months is reasonable.
    - However, we will soon be pre-posting articles on IEEEXplore, requires limited "XML tagging" that we are asking EJPress for a quote on.

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.
    - See pre-posting.
    - IEEE PSPB had lengthy discussion of alternative measures at last Panel-of-Editors meeting.
  - While the Transactions produce ample revenue via IEEE Xplore, ways must continually be found to control costs and to increase revenue.
    - This will require a separate discussion.
    - I have been working mandatory page charges with IEEE.

Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

- *Transactions (cont.)*

  - Quality must be continuously improved. Impact factor counts citations in 2 years after publication.

    - Discussed already.

  - 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.

    - My impression is that the second sentence is not an issue but part of the response.

    - The other part of the response is that those editors who are not performing are marginalized: They get no work and will eventually be thanked for their service.

- **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.
      - My recommendation is for an Associate VP Pubs (and for some other officer positions on the AESS BoG). The position of "Business Editor" would be ideal for this.
      - 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.
    - Require creative response to changing technical areas. Core areas are: Radar, Tracking & Fusion, Guidance & Control, and Navigation. Introduce new areas as they are identified.
      - No comment. New areas?

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.

  - Mostly this is invented as needed.

  - However, there is an IEEE plagiarism checker that EIC Lance Kaplan is investigating.

  - A concern is that it will identify overlap between journal submissions and conferences papers. There was a special break-out at the PoE about this issue, and the EICs mostly felt that the journal version was the "archival" (peer-reviewed) one.

  - If IEEE were stricter our Conference income might be negatively affected.

Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

- ## *Magazine*
  - Improve quality of papers and magazine content.
    - Monthly conference calls.
    - Special issues.
    - We have recently had *all* submitted material, and a growing backlog.
  - Improve presentation and graphics (makeover for magazine).
    - Since October 2012 the magazine is very much different.
  - Avoid a single point solution for running the magazine and getting it out in a timely fashion.
    - I am not sure what is meant by this.

Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

Magazine (cont.)

- 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.
  - But since we have just had a "makeover" I would prefer not to make changes in the near future.
  - Dave Dobson's argument that the Magazine is the one physical thing that we give *all* our members does resonate with me.

Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

- ## *Tutorials*
  - Lack of submitted articles.
    - Most recent report from Braham suggests newfound energy, see BoG report tomorrow.
  - Uncertainty in the publication date of tutorials due to the need to acquire a critical mass of articles.
    - Agreed that this is a concern.
    - One article that had been hanging around for a while will appear as a lone Tutorial later this year.

Strategic Issues & Challenges (cont.)

- ## *Quarterly Email Blast*
  - Lack of submitted articles.
    - Problem persists.
    - Need help from BoG.
    - Possible step is for Cosimo to have access to all Magazine data and articles for content?
  - Need an official editor.
    - I am not sure why this is still there. We have a very good editor: Cosimo Stallo, assisted by Judy.

- **New Stuff: Strategic Issues Not in Strategic Plan**

  - **Open Access (OA)**
  - **Partial XML tagging for rapid posting**
  - **Full XML tagging beginning January 2014**
  - **Change in vendor structure for Transactions**
  - **Financial impact**

- **Open Access (OA)**
  - **OA means that an article is posted on IEEEXplore such that anyone (in the world) can download it freely and for free.**
    - the author will pay the charges
    - many or most Hindawi and Elsevier titles are OA now
  - **About two years ago IEEE began to explore OA**
    - $3000 per article
    - no takers
  - **In September IEEE moved rapidly in the OA direction:**
    - an OA cross-content "mega journal" to appear soon
    - some journals will be OA-only
    - others will be "hybrid": OA for $1750 or "traditional" publication
    - IEEE commanded that
      - all IEEE societies modify their webs submission pages to offer OA
      - all IEEE societies advertise and promote OA in magazines
      - all IEEE societies ask at submission and again at acceptance for publication whether OA is desired

Open Access (cont.)

- **IEEE trying to formulate its response to OA with financial studies, input from authors and volunteers …**
  - no plans for magazines to be OA
  - letters and correspondence items are presently treated the same as full papers
  - mandatory (over-length) and voluntary page charges are still collected and/or requested
- **Why the sudden move to OA?**
  - **Research Council of the UK:**
    - "Free and open access to publicly-funded research offers significant social and economic benefits. The Government, in line with its overarching commitment to transparency and open data, is committed to ensuring that such research should be freely accessible."
    - "In order to help the implementation of the policy, the Research Councils are introducing from April 2013 a new funding mechanism - a block grant to universities and eligible research organisations to cover the cost of article processing charges (APCs). "

- **Open Access (cont.)**
  - **Why the sudden move to OA? (cont.)**
    - **February announcement from White House:**
      - "In a long-awaited leap forward for open access, the US government said today that publications from taxpayer-funded research should be made free to read after a year's delay."
  - **What will the future at IEEE be?**
    - based on conversations with IEEE staffers and others I think that IEEE will adopt the "delayed open access" model, as above, in about 2 years
    - financial structure is unknown
    - AES Transactions impact may be disproportionate
      - industrial authorship may drop to zero, unless …
      - AESS grants waivers (bears costs) for industrial authors
      - IEEE recommends that we think about this
  - **For what it is worth: IEEE presently allows authors to post their own articles on their own websites**
    - posting of the IEEEXplore version is prohibited

- **Partial XML tagging for rapid posting**
  - involves relatively straightforward metadata being entered for each article
  - the pre-posted article will be the author's submission, not the final version
  - the reason for rapid posting is to decrease sub-to-appearance time, and increase impact factor
  - we explored the issue with MTT (our typesetter) and they were reluctant: such XML data would be difficult for them to produce until the article was ready to appear
  - we are exploring the issue with EJPress (the web submission interface)
  - this may be a good opportunity to re-examine our Transactions publication chain

- **Full XML tagging beginning January 2014**
- **Change in vendor structure for Transactions**
  - **basically the whole article is entered in parallel as XML**
  - **useful for searching**
  - **IEEE requirement**
    - none of us had noticed it, very strange …
  - **Bill Walsh is investigating the process**
    - our intention is to have an entirely new publications process
    - single vendor (copy editing and typesetting in one shop)
    - interested especially in IEEE and in Allen Press
    - will be bidding the procedure
    - when we did this for the magazine our costs dropped, perhaps this will happen here too

- **Financial impact**
  - **there is no doubt that OA will eventually have very large effect on the "revenue" side of the budget**
    - costs will not change
  - **IEEE has already taken steps to help its societies by absorbing much of the future impact itself**
  - **presently (for order of magnitude) IEL nets about $180M per year, voluntary subscriptions about $15M**
    - clearly, this will decrease when OA starts
    - presumably, "grandfathered" (non-OA) content will continue to be paid for under sun-setting IEL subscriptions
  - **subscription income will be a thing of the past ... but it seems so to be now, anyway**