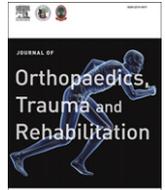




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Editorial

Electronic Publications: Where Should We Go?

Internet has become an essential part of life in many countries, especially in the younger generations. Internet has also changed the environment of health care. Both patients and health care providers can access health-related information in the Internet easily. Many patients now even have studied their conditions on the web before consulting a doctor.

This trend also revolutionizes the field of medical journal publications. The number of electronic journals in one library rose from 3 to 4500 in 10 years.¹ Many traditional printed journals have developed their Web sites and published the online versions. In some journals, there are additional online-only articles. In the other end of the spectrum, more and more online-only journals appeared. A newer development is the growth of online-only open access journals, which are without both printed version and subscription requirement. Everyone can access full-text articles in these journals in the Internet. For our *Journal of Orthopaedics, Trauma and Rehabilitation (JOTR)*, where should we go?

When our journal was published under the title of *Hong Kong Journal of Orthopaedic Surgery* 15 years ago, we had already published full-text versions on the Web site. Our belief was that the Internet is an effective platform to promote our journal and to disseminate the medical knowledge. This belief is even truer today in the era of electronic publications.

To further use the power of Internet, we have developed a new Web site with our new journal title. Published full-text articles can be searched and downloaded. Preemptive articles are uploaded, and authors can submit their articles through the online article submission system. The communications between authors, reviewers, and editors are made through paperless approach—through e-mails and online interface. These allow fast track

reviewing and publishing processes to meet the current rapid development of medical knowledge and research. In future, we will continue to add multimedia and interactive components to the journal Web site.

Going online does not alter the mission and quality of our journal. In a world of information overloaded from Internet, high-quality professional peer-reviewed articles are still the cornerstones of medical research and development. We have established a computer-based system of peer-review process with reviewers from both local and international orthopaedic communities. Through this, we are committed to maintain the high quality of the articles and the wide coverage of the latest trends and advances.

Why then is *JOTR* keeping the printed version? Familiarity to printed journals and the varied computer expertise among our readers are important considering factors. The need to have computer and Internet access impose additional costs for readers of online-only journals. The different in amount of advertisement in printed and online versions will have impact in the economics of our journal. However, these factors may change in future with the lower cost of Internet access and increasing popularity of electronic publications.

Where should *JOTR* go? We need the valuable opinions and support from all of you for the future development of our journal.

Wong Nang-Man Raymond
e-Editor

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