

available at www.sciencedirect.com
journal homepage: www.europeanurology.com



Editorial

European Urology, “Your” Platinum Journal, Has been Flying Higher and Higher: Thanks for Your Outstanding Support

Francesco Montorsi*

Department of Urology, Università Vita Salute San Raffaele, Via Olgettina 60, 20132 Milan, Italy

As Urologists, we are used to reading articles or listening to presentations announcing excellent results produced by a new surgical technique or a new medical therapy. The excitement which follows these announcements of innovative ways to improve the care of our patients is clearly very high attesting to the vitality of our specialty. Having said this, we all know that any preliminary result must pass the test of time to be recognized as a real medical and scientific advance. In other words, only a long-term and methodologically sound follow-up can officially confirm the winning role of that specific novelty.

European Urology, “Your” Platinum Journal, has been with you for one whole year now, following its initial 30 years of life under the leadership of Editor Emeritus Prof. Claude Schulman [1]. You are all familiar with the innovations which have been implemented since the January 2006 issue [2] and I am glad to say that at the European Urology Editorial Office we have had the opportunity to touch with our hands the enthusiastic support from all of you. These feelings have been the fuel for our desire to invest all our time in making our readers and authors happy with European Urology. In April 2006 we reported on the preliminary results which followed the take over of the new editorial team [3]. The targets that we were able to reach in a short time were the following: 1) a 20 day peer review period, making European Urology the fastest general urology journal in terms of providing the authors with the first editorial decision following the first round

of reviews; 2) a two-week time period to inclusion of accepted articles in Medline, thus allowing our readers to identify all our articles in the fastest possible way; and 3) a completely renewed layout of the Journal, making it more easily readable and more attractive to readers, with the historical orange colour being the perfect match to the new Platinum style.

The launch of the revamped European Urology has been clearly supported by the outstanding 2005 impact factor of 3.542 which was released in June. We all know that this impact factor is based on the articles published in European Urology during the years 2003 and 2004 but cited in indexed journals during the year 2005. This means that we as readers and authors of European Urology must be greatly indebted to Prof. Schulman and his editorial team who were able to progressively carry the Journal to a leading position worldwide. I had the opportunity to join the previous editorial staff of European Urology as Section Editor for many years and I consider this to be the most rewarding experience in my scientific life. The new impact factor has contributed significantly to attracting the attention of urologists worldwide and at the new editorial office we are doing all we can to build on this exciting result as the basis for the definitive take off of the Platinum Journal.

Now an entire year has passed since the January 2006 issue and it is time to run the first long-term analysis of the results achieved by the new editorial staff for you and with your support.

* Tel. +39 02 2643 7286; Fax: +39 02 2643 7298.

E-mail address: montorsi.francesco@hsr.it.

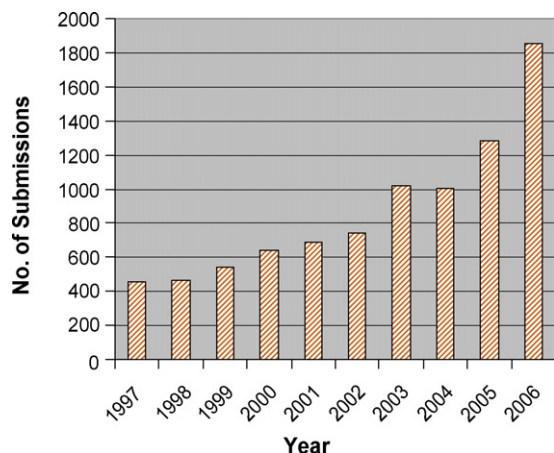


Fig. 1 – Number of submissions per year.

1. An impressive increase in the total number of submissions

The number of submissions to European Urology has experienced a 44% increase, from 1279 in 2005 to 1850 in 2006 (Fig. 1)! Of note, we have seen a significant monthly increase in the number of submissions as compared to last year! We were particularly impressed by the increase seen during the vacation months: a 70% increase in submissions in July and a 50% increase in August! I am glad to inform all of you that in addition to European authors who remain the most loyal supporters of European Urology, we have seen a significant increase in the number of manuscripts coming from the United States and Japan, two key countries in our specialty. We have also been receiving an increasing number of manuscripts from China, certainly among the most scientifically active of developing countries! The Editorial Office in Milan has certainly always been open all year round and I can assure you that the process of peer review of articles and communications with authors has been very busy also on the week-ends! I also want to recognize the total devotion of all the Associate Editors who rely on a large number of loyal and active reviewers who were able to send back their reviews within the usual two week time!

2. An extremely efficient peer review system

This flood of submissions might have had an impact on the acceptance/rejection rate of the manuscripts. However, we were lucky to see that not only the number of submissions has been progressively increasing but also their overall scientific quality.

I am sure that we all agree that the first secret for the success of a scientific Journal is to aim for quality first of all. We have been doing all we can to serve our authors with a loyal and fast peer review system. Every single manuscript which is submitted to the Editorial Office in Milan is preliminarily assessed by our Editorial Office Manager, Ms. Cathy Pierce who has the important responsibility to check that the format of the submissions meets our requirements. The Editor-in-Chief and the Associate Editors then verify whether the submitted manuscript meets the minimum requirement in terms of scientific interest, methodology and priority to undergo a formal peer review process. In this initial year, the straight reject rate for original articles has been of 36%. Most of the articles undergoing the peer review process have been assessed by more than three reviewers. I am proud to inform you that the reviewers of European Urology have been by and large very loyal to the Journal. We asked them to be rigorous when reviewing our articles and this led to a 24% acceptance rate for original articles. If one matches the increased number of submissions with the their improved quality, it becomes clear that articles eventually accepted for publication in the Platinum Journal are really destined to become important sources of information for urologists worldwide.

3. Recognizing the value of reviewers

As stated in my opening editorial [2] we built up the European Urology Editorial Board at Large by including only the very best reviewers. We believed this was the best way to recognize their excellent support to the Journal. As announced a year ago, after the first year of editorial activity at the Journal, we have carefully assessed the performance of the Editorial Board at Large members and have modified the membership by including in the new editorial team the best reviewers in place of those who had probably been too overloaded with work to be able to adequately support the Journal. We are aware that the European Urology Editorial Board at Large members are really challenged with a huge amount of work and we will never have enough words to express our feelings of gratitude.

4. Excellent science must go together with excellent copyediting

As you know, since January 2006 we introduced a copyediting service run by Boldface Editors, a professional company based in the United States,

in order to guarantee the best possible linguistic style for our articles. The combined effort of the Milan Editorial Office, the copyeditor and the European Urology office at Elsevier has produced excellent results which is clearly visible to all of you.

5. Improved scientific contents

The new sections of European Urology: “Surgery in Motion”, “Case Study of the Month”, “Interviews”, “Open to Debate”, “Words of Wisdom” and “Full length Editorials” have been a clear success! One year ago we wondered whether or not we would have been able to provide enough fuel for all these initiatives. I can reassure you that the only problem we have been facing is how to accommodate all the outstanding submissions in the limited space available in the Journal!

6. Improved visibility of articles published in the Platinum Journal

We have been using many different ways to improve the visibility of our articles. The monthly electronic table of contents has been distributed to the 20,000 members of the European Association of Urology email list thus alerting them on the availability of each Journal’s issue. In addition, the “Key Opinion Leaders” campaign has been working very efficiently. We now have 31 different subspecialty groups which include all the most important authorities worldwide: they are sent, for free, the full text version of the most interesting articles published in the Platinum Journal. We have been receiving very positive comments following this initiative and we have of course been continuously updating the list of Key Opinion Leaders. We have done this by carefully scrutinizing the authors of the articles published in the most prestigious journals related to our specialty and by using an interesting Elsevier system called Scopus which allows one to identify the most frequently cited authors, that is, the real opinion leaders.

More than 500,000 European Urology articles were downloaded from the internet representing a 30% increase from last year!

7. European Urology flies to the United States and Japan

I would like to recognize the outstanding support that the Platinum Journal has been receiving by

Prof. Pierre Teillac, Secretary General and by all Executive Committee members of the European Association of Urology. Running a high quality scientific journal is not an easy task and we are always receiving excellent suggestions and innovative ideas from the Executive. More importantly, the European Association of Urology decided to fund an initiative aimed at increasing the diffusion of European Urology in the United States and Japan. In complete agreement with the American Urological Association and with the Japanese Urological Association, the printed version of European Urology will be mailed to all faculty members of urological academic departments, residents and fellows in the United States of America and to all the Japanese urological academic departments. We want our friends overseas to touch with their hands the real value of the Platinum Journal, including the splendid DVDs that characterize the “Surgery in Motion” initiative.

8. A word on the European Urology Supplements

Twenty supplements were published in the year 2006, more than double as compared to 2005. This was due to the increased interest from sponsors and I am proud to say that this matched perfectly with the outstanding scientific quality of the articles accepted for publication in the Supplements. Since January 2006, all submitted articles have been peer reviewed by at least two reviewers to guarantee the highest possible quality. The impact factor of European Urology Supplements has reached the outstanding value of 3.536, which places our publication in the first position worldwide among Supplements to scientific journals.

In conclusion, I think the evidence is sufficient to state that the first year of life of “The Platinum Journal” has been a significant success. This has been mainly due to you—our readers, reviewers and authors. Your enthusiasm and support and been an invaluable catalyst for all members of the Editorial Board. It has been, it is now and it will be in the future a real honor and privilege to serve you.

References

- [1] Schulman C. The first 30 years of European Urology (1975–2005), *Eur Urol* 2005;48:881–4.
- [2] Montorsi F. European Urology is “Your” Journal. *Eur Urol* 2006;49:1–4.
- [3] Montorsi F. The start-up of the Platinum Journal: a fascinating challenge. *Eur Urol* 2006;49:595–7.