Editorial

Welcome to the second issue of the first volume of EP-odd. The formal launch of the journal occurred at a gala reception during EP88, the International Conference on Electronic Publishing, Document Manipulation and Typography, held in Nice, France in April 1988. Copies of the first issue of the journal were provided to conference attendees and initial reaction to the journal and its content was favourable indeed. The quality of the papers published in the first issue undoubtedly spoke for the high standards to which EP-odd will continue to aspire.

Several prospective authors have questioned us about the rôle of EP-odd with respect to conference publications. While we will strive for timely publication, the journal cannot usurp the less formal and interactive nature of conference presentations. Journal publication requires more effort by our authors to satisfy the vigorous scrutiny by our referees. In exchange, we offer more space to state more clearly and deeply the ideas and insights of our authors. The active community of electronic publishing researchers and developers is relatively small at this time and therefore we enjoy considerable overlap between the EP-odd editorial board and program committees of technical conferences in the field. We can take advantage of this overlap to stimulate increased activity by means of conference participation and by encouraging conference authors to expand their work and to submit these more signicant and substantial contributions to the journal. Of course, regular contributions to the journal continue to arrive and are welcome, especially as the EP-odd frequency increases to quarterly in 1989!

Even these early issues of the journal have used electronic manuscripts. We are endeavouring to archive all of the accepted papers and corresponding macro and output files. The editors solicit and welcome suggestions of ways that we might exploit this archive in the future.

Despite the use of electronic production techniques for EP-odd, we have already experienced our share of traditional production problems. During the revision cycle for issue 1, a miscommunication occurred concerning the ordering of captions for the figures accompanying the TEX manuscript of the Furuta *et al.* paper. While there was tremendous time pressure to complete the first issue for the launch at EP88, the lack of integrated illustration support still caught us off guard. Ironically, it was this very problem that brought Beach to Xerox PARC, to research graphical style, after similar difficulties with books he had typeset. We know several solutions and shall endeavour to work with our authors to improve this situation in future issues of EP-odd.

The consideration of publishing colour pages in the journal has also arisen, prompted by two submitted papers that would require colour printing if accepted. Our present policy is to request the author to fund the additional expense. We are continuing to evaluate the situation and to determine the cost and opportunities for colour printing. Adventuresome authors with an interest in colour publishing should contact the editors.

Following the lead of Bentley and Kernighan, the macros for submitting EP-odd manuscripts in *troff*, TEX or Ventura Publisher are available through electronic mail. To determine the current contents of the typesetting library that contains the EP-odd macros,

send the mail message `send index from typesetting` to either `<netlib@anl-mcs.arpa>` or `<research!netlib>` so that you can request the particular macro set of interest to you. In particular, serious consideration of adding EP-odd macros for LaTeX is being handled by Richard Furuta.

This issue contains four papers on a broad range of topics. The paper by Arrabito and Jürgensen on computerized Braille typesetting applies electronic publishing techniques to alter the economics and feasibility of access by the visually impaired to published information. Their study of translating TeX manuscripts into Braille reveals important challenges in separating semantics from syntax in computer typesetting systems that are faced by other applications and standards activities. The page description language survey paper by Oakley and Norris describes the current state of page description languages and proposes issues that must be addressed by standards activities in this area. The Lucarella paper explores efficiency improvements in searching large document bases, an increasingly important problem as corpora of documents grow larger and less formally organized. The short paper by Heather Brown reports preliminary examination of opportunities in applying new computational paradigms in parallel processing to the layout problem in electronic publishing. The paradigm shift associated with parallel processing requires us to think in new and different ways if we are to exploit the computational resources available to us in the future.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the timely efforts of our referees and editorial board members who have reacted well to our conflicting goals of the highest scholarly consideration and the shortest time possible. At the editorial board meeting that coincided with EP88, we left unresolved whether to thank them publicly by listing their names in a future issue. Whatever the final decision, these referees will certainly remain anonymous until we have sufficient numbers to thank them without the risk of identifying individual reviews.

<div align="right">DAVID F. BRAILSFORD AND RICHARD J. BEACH</div>