
Editorial

This current issue of EP-odd marks a turning point in the way the journal is to be produced and disseminated. Indeed, some of you may have received notification that EP-odd is ceasing publication with this issue, but it would be more correct to say that this is the last issue of the journal to be produced *under the existing subscription arrangements*. By the time you read this we hope to have our new arrangements, detailed below, in place.

EP-odd first appeared in 1988 and for its first six years editors and publishers alike wanted to make it live up to its name and to be truly self-referential i.e. to be a journal about electronic publishing whose principal dissemination method was itself electronic. It might seem odd, therefore, that we have appeared as traditional print-on-paper for so long but this compromise was, in turn, dictated by the very breadth of interest of our readership, as reflected in our editorial policy. As many readers will recall we moved into electronic dissemination by producing a complete CD-ROM archive of volumes 1–6 of EP-odd papers, in PDF form, in 1994 (probably the world's first CD-ROM learned-journal archive in this format).

It has been gratifying to see that our 1994 decision was correct, in the sense that PDF is now a firmly established *de facto* standard in the learned journals world. Indeed, for the past three years we have made available seven sample papers from this PDF archive, on our EP-odd web site. We now feel that the time is right to take a further radical step: we want to publish our accepted papers electronically in the first instance with a print-on-paper version following *after* the electronic publication and carried out once per volume at the end of every calendar year. This experiment will start with our next volume (i.e. volume 9) and we intend to make the electronic pre-prints for this volume freely available on our Web site, to all comers, while hoping that the convenience of having a printed 'yearbook' will be so useful to our readership that all of the previous EP-odd subscribers, and a fair proportion of visitors to our Web site, will want to sign up for a copy. The yearbook will be laid out as a 'book' rather than a 'journal' so that it can be made available in bookstores too; in addition to having hard copies of all the accepted papers we hope to give added value in terms of linking commentaries, conference reports and so on.

The best way of keeping in touch with progress is to visit our Web site at <http://cajun.cs.nott.ac.uk/compsci/epo/>. We'll keep you posted about developments not only on volume 9 but also on our plans to make the entire existing archive (vols. 1–8) freely available once some legal issues have been sorted out.

To coincide with these new arrangements we shall be adding to the Editorial team and re-assigning duties. David Brailsford will now be in overall charge of the electronic dissemination of EP-odd, and the maintenance of the archive at Nottingham. Rick Furuta continues as US editor but is joined by Heather Brown who will be UK/Europe editor. Rick and Heather are always happy to receive your papers for EP-odd so keep them coming in; Rick's e-mail address is on the front cover of this issue; Heather's is H.Brown@ukc.ac.uk and mail sent to epodd@cs.nott.ac.uk will be

automatically forwarded to all three editors. As always, feel free to send submitted papers to either Rick or Heather (you will find their snail-mail addresses inside the front cover).

Turning to the specific papers in this last issue of volume 8, we were determined to end the conventional subscription series with a bumper issue. Here you will find four papers that we think illustrate the wide range of topics and approaches in the study of electronic publishing. Papers printed in this issue include one on font design and three on different aspects of working with structured documents. The papers' approaches vary from the general to the theoretical; from the almost whimsical to the highly serious. We will leave it to you to determine which is which!

In closing this editorial, we hope you have enjoyed our run as a traditional journal and invite you to check in at our Web page to learn about our progress towards the new format. If you prefer to contact the editors directly, for more information, then we would be very pleased to hear from you.

DAVID BRAILSFORD AND RICHARD FURUTA