Editorial

Notes from the Editors

In this editorial, we offer an overview of the review process unique to the Journal of Operations Management. We discuss our expectations from authors, reviewers, and associate editors, as well as what you can expect from us and how we coordinate our editorial work.

Review process

Once a manuscript is submitted, it is assigned to one of the two co-editors-in-chief (EICs), Dan Guide or Tom Choi, through our Managing Editor, Jamie Sanchagrin, who acts as the “clearing house.” Once assigned, the assigned EIC reads the manuscript to determine whether to place it under review or return it back to the authors.

Historically, the rate of “desk rejection” has been about 50%, and they typically happen for one of two reasons: (1) the study is outside the mission and scope of the Journal or (2) there is a general lack of quality and contribution to the body of knowledge. If the manuscript is forwarded for review, we solicit feedback from three reviewers. If there is consensus (i.e., all three say reject), then the process most likely ends there. However, the EIC can choose to extend the review process if deemed appropriate.

If the reviews are mixed, which is generally the case for manuscripts which are reviewed, we solicit feedback from an associate editor (AE). When the AE returns his/her report back to the EIC, the manuscript, all three reviews, and the AE report are evaluated in combination. The EIC, then, makes the decision whether to offer revision or rejection. Occasionally, the EIC may encourage the authors to resubmit a rejected manuscript as a brand new submission when he sees potential in the manuscript.

If invited to revise, the authors are expected to make a good faith effort to address all stated concerns from the reviewers, AE and EIC. When resubmitting the revised manuscript, the authors are required to submit a detailed point-by-point response to all comments offered during the review process as well as the revised manuscript. All information goes back to the AE for consideration. Please note that the revised manuscript does not go back to the reviewers, except in rare cases where the AE requests additional feedback from a particular reviewer with specific expertise.

Once the AE signs off on a revised manuscript, which often requires a few rounds of revision, the EICs will issue an acceptance letter to the corresponding author on the manuscript. When there is disagreement between the AE and EIC, the EIC may seek a second opinion from another AE. Once a final decision is made on a manuscript, all reviewers receive all review reports in order to benchmark the quality of their review.

Authors

We recommend to all authors that they read our editorial philosophy and author guidelines—available at: http://wpcarey.asu.edu/JOM/. In particular, we emphasize the importance of full-disclosure when the dataset or any portion of the dataset has been used in any previous manuscript, regardless of whether the previous manuscript was published in the Journal or elsewhere.

The disclosure should clearly be stated on the cover letter when the submission is made. Later, if and when the manuscript is accepted for publication, the full disclosure about the reuse of the dataset is required in the methods section. Failure to disclose previously used data will result in automatic termination of the review or publication process.

If authors have any questions during the review process, they are encouraged to contact either EIC directly.

Reviewers

Please visit our editor’s web page for information on expectations from reviewers—available at: http://wpcarey.asu.edu/JOM/reviewer-guidelines.cfm. To ensure a high quality experience for all authors submitting manuscripts to our Journal, we ask all reviewers to adopt the following perspectives.

First, when you receive a manuscript from either EIC, please trust that we have read the manuscript and deemed it a fit with our editorial philosophy— in other words, we saw something in that manuscript that was worthwhile enough to warrant consideration. If you require clarification about a manuscript, please make the inquiry directly to the EIC.

Second, after reading the manuscript, please consider the manuscript’s contribution by contemplating on what new knowledge you have gained in comparison to expectations for the Journal. We do not expect all manuscripts to move the field by quantum leaps, so please try to err on the side of giving the authors the benefit of the doubt. If the contribution is deemed acceptable, then address any methodological issues you may have—keeping in mind that no paper is methodologically perfect.

Lastly, we would like the reviewer to take the developmental approach when giving feedback, whether the manuscript is offered revision or rejected. Be balanced in your review by discussing the good points as well as the challenges. As a rule of thumb, try to offer a suggestion for each criticism you make.
**Associate editors**

It is more important for the AE to synthesize the three reviewer reports than to act as the fourth reviewer.

Once the AE has read the manuscript and all three reviewer reports, the AE is expected to evaluate the quality of each review by assigning scores as requested in the Elsevier Editorial System. If the decision is to reject, then clearly articulate to the authors why the decision is to reject the manuscript and offer suggestions for improvement. If the decision is to offer a revise-and-resubmit, then offer clear direction for revision and view your report as a good-faith contract with the authors.

Upon receipt of a revised manuscript, if the AE feels it has not been done in good faith, or if the revisions reveal new flaws and concerns, then AE may reject the revised manuscript ending the review process—we hope this does not happen frequently. In most cases, once the authors have addressed all comments made by the AE and three reviewers, the manuscript most likely will be accepted, often with minor revisions. With the exception of unique extenuating circumstances, our intent is to bring closure to the review process after two (or at most three) rounds of revision.

**Co-EIC’s**

Our objective is to provide the timely, accurate, and fair review process. However, we acknowledge that we are fallible. If you, as an author, feel that the process is somehow lacking, we encourage you to contact the assigned EIC for further discussion. If you, as a reviewer or AE, are concerned with anything during the review process, please bring it to our attention as soon as possible.

The co-EICs are in near-daily communication via e-mail, phone calls, Skype meetings, etc. We also meet regularly throughout the year for multi-day face-to-face discussions. The intent is to synchronize our decision criteria, thus making the process as fair as possible for everyone. As evidence, each EIC has approximately the same rate of desk rejects and acceptances.

**Closing remarks**

We are encouraged that the submission rate of manuscripts to the Journal continues to steadily increase. In 2008, the total number of submissions was 364. Since then, the Journal received 409 in 2009, 460 in 2010, 514 in 2011, and 523 in 2012. In most cases, these numbers do not reflect submissions for special issues (SI), since SI’s are handled “off-line.” For the two special issues sponsored in 2011, we received about 100 submissions, and this year (2012), we received 38 SI proposals from which we selected three. Please visit our editorial web page for more information on the three SI’s currently in progress at [http://wpcarey.asu.edu/jom/](http://wpcarey.asu.edu/jom/).

From 2008 to 2012, the average number of accepted manuscripts has been 26 annually, which has not deviated much from year to year. Since 2008, the Journal’s average rate of acceptance has been about 6%.

Please keep in mind that the publisher (Elsevier) is using the article-based-publishing (ABP) approach, which means that the Journal has no buffer and the number of papers in each issue will fluctuate. Therefore, do not be alarmed if you see an issue with only one or two papers. Given that we are moving toward on-line publishing, we should reframe how we view “issues” within the purview of the Journal.

We are proud to report that the Journal has been growing in stature, not only in the OM/SCM field but also in the general management area. The impact factor of 4.36 in 2011 is significantly higher than any other OM/SCM/OR journal. According to SJR ([http://www.scimagojr.com/index.php](http://www.scimagojr.com/index.php)), as of 2011, almost 95% of all articles published in JOM have been “cited,” and SJR lists the number of “cites per document” over the previous 3 years at 7.4.

All these accomplishments would not have been possible without the contribution of the authors, reviewers, and associate editors. We are also mindful of many professors and students at various universities around the world that study the articles published in our Journal. We express our gratitude to all our colleagues that make up our scholarly community.

Best Regards,

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