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## Editorial

# The Start-Up of the Platinum Journal: A Fascinating Challenge

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The new Editorial Board of European Urology took over the guidance of the peer-review process of the Platinum Journal on September 1st 2005, following the 30 extraordinary years from Prof. Claude Schulman's office.

Although European Urology has been continuously evolving to remain updated with the times [1], we felt that the change of Editor-in-Chief should be accompanied by a significant renewal of the Journal, both in terms of content and layout [2].

This is the fourth issue of the Platinum Journal and all the editors hope that you like the innovations that have been implemented to-date.

I believe that continuing communication between the Editorial Office and the readers is important to make everybody aware of what has been happening "behind the scenes." In particular, as it is well known that the success of a Journal is first of all based on the support of the authors and the readers, I would like to share with you a summary of the most interesting data regarding the submissions received at European Urology since September 1st 2005 and the timing of the various phases of the peer review process.

The number of submissions received at the Editorial Office of European Urology during the last 4 months of 2005 showed a 40.7% increase as compared to the same period of time in 2004 (Fig. 1). This, of course, is in part due to the launch of particular articles such as full-length editorials, surgery in motion, case study of the month, interviews, open-to-debate and words of wisdom. However, even when considering only original articles,

review articles and case reports, the number of submissions received during the last quarter of 2005 showed a 25.8% increase as compared to the same quarter in 2004 (Fig. 2). Of note we have noticed a similar trend in the month of January 2006, although historically this has always been a "sleepy" month for authors, possibly due to the effect of the holiday season.

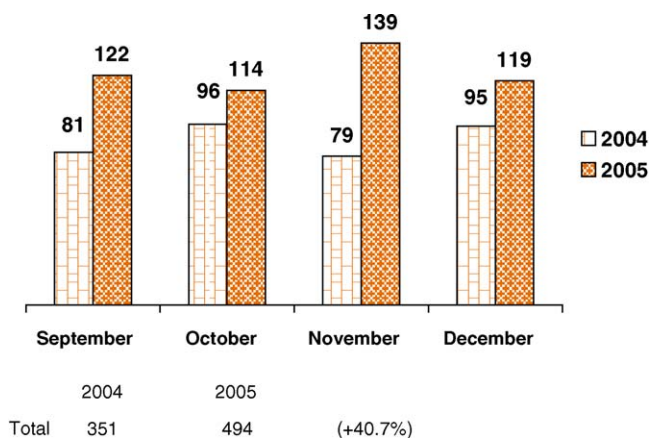
These figures do show the increasing interest from authors and I would like to express my most sincere feelings of gratitude to all of them.

At the editorial office, our first duty and challenge when facing this increasing number of submissions is to provide the authors with the fastest and highest quality peer review system. Every single submission received at the editorial office of European Urology is carefully scrutinized by the Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors to identify the articles which are noteworthy and are thus sent to peer review.

During the last quarter of 2005, 29% of the submissions were straight rejected due to a variety of editorial reasons. At the editorial office we are always extremely sorry when we cannot send a submission on to complete the entire peer review process, but I know it is clear to all of you that the competition for eventual publication is extremely fierce, and therefore it is mandatory to be very rigorous in the initial assessment of the submissions. In the same time period, 65% of the submissions were sent to peer review and 6% were accepted "as is," with the latter mainly being represented by invited full-length editorials.

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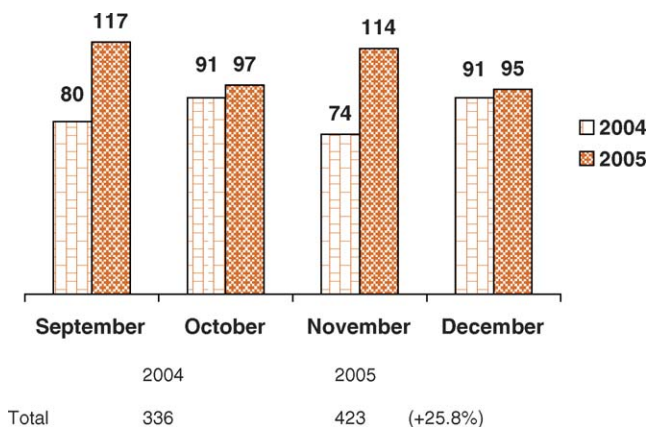
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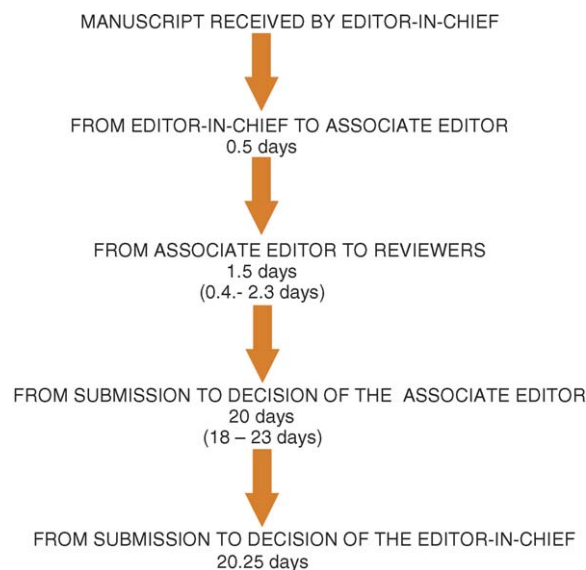
**Fig. 1 – All article type submissions to European Urology (Third quarter 2004 vs. 3rd quarter 2005).**

Figure 3 summarizes the average values of the various time intervals within the peer review system of all submissions. I hope that you will appreciate the effort which is being done by the Editors and reviewers to maintain the peer review process as fast as possible. The gratitude to the reviewers of the Platinum Journal is never expressed enough and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them one more time. As already stated in my introductory Editorial published in January issue [2] the most loyal reviewers have been included in the Editorial Board at Large of European Urology as a sign of recognition of their role.

It is important to note that the vast majority of the submissions being peer reviewed are sent to at least 3 reviewers (sometimes up to 6 reviewers have received the same submission). We aim at receiving at least 3 reviews within the 14 days which are



**Fig. 2 – Original articles + review articles + case reports (Third quarter 2004 vs. 3rd quarter 2005).**



**Fig. 3 – Average time intervals among subsequent steps of the peer review system.**

routinely allotted for this (including Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays!) and we have been successful in most cases. Once the peer review is completed, the Associate Editors make their editorial decision which is then discussed with the Editor-in-Chief in order to formulate the final editorial decision which is immediately transmitted to authors. To-date, the interaction and collaboration between the Editors has been excellent and I would like to reassure all authors and readers of European Urology that every single submission has been diligently scrutinized!

In addition to the optimization of the peer review system, we have been working hard to improve the visibility of European Urology and of the articles which are published in it. The electronic Table of Contents of both European Urology and European Urology Supplements are distributed monthly to a huge number of physicians worldwide. As you have noticed, the Table of Contents now not only include the complete reference of the articles but also the take-home-message for each of them. This is aimed at attracting the interest of the readers already at first sight!

The table of contents and the full text of selected articles of European Urology are currently available in a number of very visible websites devoted to our specialty. By implementing this exposure on the internet we aim at reaching additional readers worldwide.

Finally, in a time of major competition among scientific journals, we have launched an electronic

campaign aimed at capturing the attention of the top key opinion leaders in 31 different areas related to our speciality. We have been selecting articles of major interest published in all issues of European Urology and European Urology Supplements and we have been sending the full text to these authorities worldwide. In other words, the articles published in the Platinum Journal are on the desk of the most important thinkers in urology on the same day of the online publication of the Journal in order to expand the awareness of the scientific production of our authors!

Here at European Urology, we are at the service of our readers and authors.

We look forward to receiving your comments, suggestions and criticisms in order to continue improving "your" Platinum Journal!



Francesco Montorsi  
Editor-in-Chief  
European Urology

#### 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.