

Letters

World Wide Web editorial inspires readers to write

If you are a participant in the Electronic Study Club (EDS), you already know that the editorial and table of contents of The Angle Orthodontist are published electronically nearly two months before they appear in print. When my last editorial, "Creating a Home Page on the World Wide Web," was published in this medium, the response was immediate, enthusiastic, and very informative.

Within 24 hours, I received more than a dozen e-mail letters encouraging The Angle Orthodontist to establish a home page. The primary purpose, as stated, would be to speed the flow of information by publishing a list of research papers (with or without abstracts) that have been reviewed and accepted for publication in our journal. Those individuals actively involved in research would be the first to benefit. But in the long run, all clinicians would learn to value the presence of our very own home page for a number of reasons: research topics would become more creative with greater interaction, there would be fewer duplicate studies, and some of the frustration caused by publication delays would be reduced.

Discover other reasons for establishing a presence on the Internet by reading the following e-mails to the editor.

DLT

Your Letter to the Editor is welcome

Write: Dr. David L. Turpin
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Lessen frustration over publication delays

I enthusiastically welcome your plan to establish a home page for The Angle Orthodontist on the WWW. The delay in publishing the results of a study has been quite a frustrating experience, especially because of the rapid strides in research and development. After a wait of a year or two (sometimes even more!), not only is the material often outdated, but the authors, having moved on to newer and better things, may have a difficult time remembering the details of their own results.

Not only will the home page encourage the exchange of ideas, it may also nip potential problems of originality of ideas in the bud. Part of this problem was resolved in The Angle Orthodontist by publishing the dates of submission and acceptance along with the article. I wish all journals would follow suit. The home page, already proven to work effectively by our colleagues in engineering, will certainly alleviate some of these concerns.

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Reduce duplicate research efforts

Your concept of establishing a home page on the WWW is terrific. In addition to the dissemination of contemporary research data, it could prevent the predicament of postdoctoral students finishing their research projects only to find out that it has to be rejected because a near duplicate piece of research, of which they were unaware, has been scheduled for publication. It happens!

In summary: a great idea that is long overdue.
Jack Sheridan
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Speed search for information

I think your idea about The Angle Orthodontist being on the Web is a great idea! I am a second year orthodontic resident at the University of Manitoba, in Winnipeg. I experienced the problem you described exactly when searching for information for my master's thesis.

Delays between submission and publication can be a source of great frustration for students and researchers.

Many thanks and great idea!

Mark Ziedenberg D.D.S.
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Time for our specialty in cyberspace

Your editorial thoughts were great!!! I have graduate students at the University of Louisville with the same dilemma. A fair number of dental schools have Web pages, but none have pertinent orthodontic pages. With technology advancing at this frantic pace, it's time for our specialty to have a presence in cyberspace.

How to implement? You need a server with an existing presence. With the expertise needed to create and maintain such a server, we're probably talking about an educational institution. If you've got a solution already, then we just need to "market" the concept to ortho chairmen and the Electronic Study Club. It's a great start. I'm glad we've got leaders like you who have the vision!

Fred Regennitter
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One step closer to an electronic journal

What a great idea. Why didn't I think of that? As a former graduate student (weren't we all?),

The Electronic Study Club

The Electronic Study Club is a free service operated on the Internet by Dr. Joseph Zernik from the University of Southern California. It is intended for the free exchange of information and opinions by members of the orthodontic profession. The ESC is a way of providing some of the functions of a traditional study club for orthodontists. The *Angle Orthodontist*, the *American Journal of Orthodontics*, and the *Journal of Clinical Orthodontics* will post their tables of contents on the bulletin board, with some accompanying information.

To subscribe by e-mail: Send a message through your e-mail system to the following address: LISTSERV@VM.USC.EDU

The content of the message should be only the following: SUBSCRIBE ORTHOD-L <first name> <last name>

For example, SUBSCRIBE ORTHOD-L John Smith, would subscribe John Smith to the Electronic Study Club.

To send an e-mail message to the Electronic Study Club: Send a message to: ORTHOD-L@VM.USC.EDU

For additional information by mail send request to:

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I know that I would have welcomed lateral sources of input as well as looking at a review of the literature.

I think the vision might go beyond just posting titles of theses accepted for publication, but could include an intensely subdivided hypertext forum that could involve postings made from

around the world about many topics. I know researchers try to guard their ideas to prevent someone else from beating them to the punch, but a forum based on this premise would allow individuals to communicate easily about their research, their testing methods, their statistical testing, etc.

It is readily conceivable that the journals we now read, with their long publishing lead times, could be published electronically with little lead time at all. I guess you will just need more referees.

Good luck.

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Clinical trials on the Internet

This is an excellent idea. I have long struggled with the time delay in the publication process. I must compliment you and your staff for the efficient way that you handle the publication process. The Angle Orthodontist is about as timely as they come.

An idea in the building for you: We have been toying with the idea of attempting clinical trials utilizing the Internet. We haven't worked out all the logistics, but the Internet would be a way to recruit practitioners to participate, to transmit data to the home site, and to eventually distribute results. Many of these trials could be going on at the same time with practitioners in several locations. Your journal WWW page could have

a listing of such trials with links to the site.

Just a thought. Again, I applaud your efforts to disseminate data in a more timely manner to the practitioners.

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Coordinate software with the British Society of Computer Assisted Learning

The idea of making available the list of accepted papers on a web page is great. What about also making available a copy of the abstract of the paper on the WWW? Here in the UK we have formed the British Society of Computer Assisted Learning in Dentistry (BSCD), which has arisen from the development of CAL software and its distribution to dentists in the UK. The BSCD has a role to coordinate all software and development and obviously the use of WWW publishing is part of this.

As part of its dissemination, there is a BSCD list (similar to the Electronic Study Club) for discussion and dissemination of CAL in the UK and worldwide—anyone can join the list and the discussions at present.

To join the list, send the message: join dental-cal (your name) to: Mailbase@mailbase.ac.uk
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