

## Letters

### Interactivity just the beginning for internet publications

As chair of the recently created ACPA Internet Task Force I wholeheartedly encompass your beliefs that the electronic information age we are entering will change the way we do and think about things at least as much as the telephone and television did. Several Japanese companies are already marketing televisions with internet capability. People are flooding onto the net and e-mail lists.

We recently had a hurricane here—Fran by name—that knocked out our power and water. Boiling water on a gas stove by candlelight gave me an opportunity to reflect on what life was like only 100 years ago.

I agree that the interactive nature of an internet publication will be one of its most unique features, but other possibilities should not be overlooked: the potential for publications to contain video, real time surveys of readers (with instantaneous feedback to editors and authors), selective subscriptions (i.e., paying for only the articles you download), interactive advertising, instantaneous storage and categorization indi-

vidualized by the user, and much more. Those who are “hooked up” will have incredible potential to advance their, as well as the collective, knowledge.

From my own experience on e-mail lists, however, I know there is also an unlimited potential for abuse—the spreading of disinformation, viruses, falsehoods, unsubstantiated claims, “flames,” etc. Let us hope we use this new technology in a way that will better our profession, our patient care, and ourselves.

See you on the net!

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Via Internet

#### **Your Letter to the Editor is welcome**

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