Pre-proposal on a new ITSoc Journal

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Chicago
The Transactions is over-subscribed, slow
- Over 7,000 pages published a year (thud!)
- Median first review time about 6 months
- Editors are over-worked and can be unresponsive

Anecdotally:
- People avoid Trans IT if there is a suitable alternate venue due to the high average and variance in sub-to-pub
- Viewed as “narrow” and “particular” by tangential research areas we’d like to reach and bring into the fold

Many important current and future topics lie at the intersection of IT with other fields (genomics, statistics, neuroscience, data analytics, computer science, …)

Other IEEE societies (ComSoc, SigProc) have made successful experiments in “special topics” journals
- ITSoc is unusual in having a single monolithic journal
- Increasingly we are competing with ACM as well
Strawman Proposal: Launch a new journal named something like “IEEE Journal on Special Topics in Information Theory”

- Target 4-6 special issues a year
- Aim for under 1 year sub-to-pub (with near zero variance)
- Can feature both intersections with other fields and hot topics firmly within information theory
- Establish a prestigious meta-Editorial board with EIC, senior “advisory” editors, steering committee
- Quality over quantity: set very high bar for quality of topic and guest editor team (requiring experts outside of IT if a cross-cutting topic)
- Seed the first several special topics to establish excellence, then accept proposals for special issue topics
Benefits to IT Soc

• Technical
  • Increase exposure of information theory to other fields
  • Expose our community to new ideas and topics to work on
  • Useful tutorial/survey papers can headline the special issue to give the big picture (many of these in JSAC have been very highly cited and widely read)
  • Increase our impact and visibility

• Logistical
  • Relieve some of the pressure on Trans IT
  • Give more IT Soc members an opportunity to serve (as guest editors, vs. just 40 for the Transactions), shorter term commitment easier for many, especially senior people

• Financial
  • Will be a potentially significant revenue stream to the society (more study on this is needed)
Proposed Next Steps

1. Determine if there is consensus within the BOG to proceed

2. Form an ad hoc committee to:
   i. Develop a vision and plan for creating a first-rate technical journal, 5-10 first special issue topics
   ii. Determine governance structure of journal, possibly identifying actual people for the roles
   iii. Conduct a detailed financial impact analysis
   iv. Determine next steps and possible roadblocks

3. Report Back to the BOG

4. Develop a detailed proposal for approval by IEEE Publications council