An Improved Editorial System for the IEEE Transactions on Information Theory

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System amplifies AE load

Delay adds to AE load

System promotes culture of delay

AE Load

System

Culture
Background

- Ad-hoc committee formed at request of EiC
- Wish list of requirements for web-based paper handling
- Associate Editor perspective
- Reduce sub-pub time
Guiding Principles

• Consult with Associate Editors
• Identify requirements
• Some features are “controversial”
  • This was set aside
  • Simply listed all identified requirements
• Technology neutrality
AE Global View

• Highlight *actions* required by AE

• Compact status summary
  reviews requested/returned/days overdue/
  days decision overdue/days revision
  overdue/days final MS overdue

• “Action required” page

• “Send reminder” page
  *(for semi-automatic reminders)*
Email Handling

- System should handle emails
- Independent of email client
- Maintain email archive
- Easily customized templates

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<tr>
<th>MC ✓</th>
<th>Pareja X</th>
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<td>MC ✓</td>
<td>Pareja broken</td>
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Reminders

- Focus on actions required by
  - Reviewers
  - Associate Editors
  - Authors
- Customizable templates
- Customizable timing & repetition
- Turn off/opt-out/semi-automatic reminders
Paper History

- Keep every revision of manuscript
- Keep all correspondence
- Papers should not “disappear”
Author Status Check

- Authors can check progress
- Awaiting reviewer selection
- In review
- Awaiting decision
- Decision made
- Authors can access all their papers easily from one place
Confidentiality

- Manuscript watermark
- Strip user specific metadata from PDF files
Reviewer/Author Database

- Additional fields
- Technical areas, keywords, reviewer load, average review time...
- Expanded search capability
- Search by any field, compact results
- Flag conflict of interest/unavailability
- Easy Maintenance & “Cleaning”
System Aspects

- User-based access (instead of paper-based)
- Client neutrality
- Robust, high capacity server
- Direct interface to IEEE

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Paraphrasing the Discussions...

culture vs function
Manuscript Central

• “I don’t like it”
• “Someone I know does not like it”
• “I have never used Manuscript Central but...”
• “I don’t like automatic reminders”
• “I am happy with Pareja”
Pareja

• Specific broken features
• Specific shortcomings & missing features
• Archaic Implementation
• Upgrading is re-inventing the wheel
# Cost

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Pareja Upgrade</th>
<th>Manuscript Central</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upgrade/Setup</strong></td>
<td>$40,000 ??</td>
<td>$26,350*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ongoing Annual Cost</strong></td>
<td>High-Capacity Server Cost</td>
<td>$17,666</td>
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* includes first year of operation
Looking Forward

reinvent the wheel?
Manuscript Central

- Large company (Thompson Reuters), significant resources
- Training, Support, Implementation
- Ongoing development (currently v4.1.2)
- 280 societies & publishers, over 2,800 books & journals, 100,000 monthly submissions and 12 million users
Pareja

- Single developer
- Limited capacity for support
- Incremental development (v1.x.x)
- One society, one journal, 80 submissions per month, O(1000) users
- Adhoc committee has concerns over ability to deliver and actual cost (guesstimate)
Recommendation: Migrate to Manuscript Central

- Due diligence required
- Details of migration to be worked out
- Future features?
- IEEE plans?