

Publisher's note

Dear Reader,

At the beginning of the year 2004, I look back at a good year for the *International Journal of Mass Spectrometry* (IJMS), and forward to opportunities that lie ahead. This is also the time that I am sharing the latest news on IJMS with you.

I would like to inform you of changes to the editorial side of the journal. From this year onwards, **Mike Bowers will act as Special Issue Consultant** to the journal. In this role, he will focus on co-ordinating many of the special issues (both topical and honour) that are published in the journal; something that Mike already has a good deal of involvement with. He will be the main editor for special issue projects and manuscripts. I am convinced that the journal will benefit from his new role. You are therefore, advised to send your regular articles to Scott McLuckey at Purdue University.

IJMS is a journal with a large number of special issues (with regular issues planned in between). As a result, any regular paper that is accepted is immediately processed to go into the first available regular issue; therefore the delay incurred is that of the first article waiting for the last article of a regular issue to be ready, which is small.

Although special issues tend to hold up regular ones, the publication times of some papers are impressive and improving. Already about 5–6 weeks after acceptance, articles are published online on ScienceDirect as *Articles in Press*; thus incorporating the final changes indicated by the author. As of early 2004, *Articles in Press* will be given their volume/issue/page (VIP) data and as a result **individual articles will be citable weeks before the issue appears**. I believe that this will be of tremendous benefit to both authors and readers of IJMS.

Online submission became available for IJMS in 2001 and has successfully enabled authors to submit their manuscript more easily and avoid mailing delays. From 2002 onwards, we have seen a sharp increase in online submissions, and this trend is continuing. Statistics show that papers submitted electronically are published 2–3 weeks faster than print submissions. This is significant. I would like to advise all authors to submit their paper online, safely and quickly, at <http://www.elsevier.com/submit/maspec>.

All you need to know about IJMS, including how to track your submission, Editors' details, how to access the journal online, has conveniently been combined in the **IJMS Author Gateway** at <http://authors.elsevier.com/journal/ijms>, where a link to the online electronic submission tool is also available.

As of 2004, IJMS will publish 10 volumes of material; one more than last year. Since more and more subscribers access the journal online only, printed issues are now mostly important for archiving purposes and not an indicator for publication speed. Therefore, as of 2004 the frequency of issues will go down slightly to 18 appearances a year, at regular intervals. In addition, the journal will be published in a larger format; as you may have noticed, some early issues of the 2004 subscription year already appeared in the new format. To maintain the amount of scientific information published, the average number of pages published per volume this year will drop slightly, as each page contains more information.

ScienceDirect, which has become the preferred online scientific database of full-text content, is continuously improving its service to subscribers, but also to readers who do not subscribe to a journal. The fully browsable and searchable database hosts more than 1800 peer-reviewed journals and over 5 million full-text research articles. Designed to serve the needs of the researcher, ScienceDirect offers immediate access to the journals, abstracts, references and full-text articles you need for your research. Over 10 million researchers have access to ScienceDirect via their institute.

At present, about 2000 institutes have access to the *International Journal of Mass Spectrometry* online. IJMS's online usage figures are high compared to other journals in the field. Since mid- 1998, when the journal changed to its present name, 1600 articles were made available online. The number of full-text downloads of articles published in IJMS is now well over 8000 a month and has been rising rapidly; 20% of this figure are downloads of papers published since 1968, also under former titles,

which are available as Backfiles. This is a clear sign how the wide availability of the journal online contributes to the use of the research articles published in it.

New services for authors and readers on ScienceDirect:

- The 'Colourful e-products' scheme allows authors to have their colour graphics in colour online only at no charge.
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For more information on these and other services, please visit the IJMS Author Gateway at <http://authors.elsevier.com/journal/ijms>.

More details about submission of your manuscript to IJMS can be found in the **completely revised Guide for Authors**, included in this issue, and also available at the Author Gateway. I strongly recommend that these be used when preparing your manuscript.

I hope you will continue to enjoy reading the journal in 2004, and I look forward to publishing your paper in IJMS in the coming year. I very much welcome any comments or feedback at the address below.

With kind regards,

Michiel Thijssen
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