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## Preface

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Combined liquid chromatography–mass spectrometry has a long history of promises and breakthroughs. Over the past 25 years, many interfaces have been developed and commercialized. Most of these have subsequently disappeared again, because of apparent problems and inability to solve many real world problems: moving-belt, direct liquid introduction, thermospray, and others. In the past few years, a real breakthrough has come and years of promises are redeemed. Interfaces applied in combination with atmospheric-pressure ion sources, such as electrospray and heated-nebulizer atmospheric-pressure chemical ionization, have changed LC–MS, especially with respect to ease of operation, robustness, detection limits, and applicability ranges. LC–MS and related techniques have entered routine laboratories within pharmaceutical industries and related contract research institutes, laboratories concerned with biochemistry, biotechnology, en-

vironmental analysis, natural product research, and many other areas. Furthermore, mass analysers other than linear (triple) quadrupole instruments have found extensive use. From this perspective, we invited authors from both fundamental innovative instrumental research groups and application-oriented research group to contribute papers to this special issue on the Current Practice of Liquid Chromatography–Mass Spectrometry. All these papers, both review and research contributions, were peer reviewed in the usual way. The result of this, we hereby present in this special issue. We believe this collection of papers provides a clear perspective on the current practice of LC–MS, as well as on new instrumental developments that take place.

*Leiden, Netherlands*  
*Research Triangle Park,*  
*NC, USA*

W.M.A. NIESSEN  
R.D. VOYKSNER