
Organic Process Research & Development

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Editorial

For this first issue of 1998, I thought it would be appropriate to review progress on the first year of OPRD, which has been acclaimed with enthusiasm by readers from all over the world. I have been delighted by the response which indicates that the Journal has been needed for many years.

Comments from academic chemists have also been favourable since the papers in OPRD provide excellent teaching material, giving examples of key reactions that can be performed on kilo or even tonnage scale. I have been telling my academic friends that OPRD should be a good source of undergraduate practical experiments. Most experimental work in OPRD will have been repeated many times by several chemists and is highly reproducible.

The first six issues of the Journal produced a total of 441 pages and 74 articles; many of these articles may not have otherwise been published, since there was no journal which was appropriate. The majority of the papers, as expected, have come from the pharmaceutical industry, with Bristol-Myers Squibb being the company with the most articles. They also hold the prize for the paper containing the most authors (36!) [Anderson, N. G.; et al. *Org. Process Res. Dev.* 1997, 1 (4), 300–310].

More recent issues, however, have shown a broadening of the scope of the Journal to include papers from agrochemicals, speciality chemicals, polymers and surfactants, and I welcome this. Further broadening of the authorship has occurred with the increasing number of papers from chemical engineers, and from academia, and this is also welcome. However, I would like to invite authors from these two areas to increase their contribution to the Journal, which at present is predominantly industrial organic chemistry.

Most articles from the pharmaceutical industry have examined synthetic route options to target molecules and possibly described preliminary scale-up. For 1998 I would encourage authors to include more details of the scale-up of the processes describing what differences there were from the laboratory, what problems arose and how they were solved. Many papers are too concise, and whilst length of articles may be an issue for other journals, at present OPRD has the luxury of allowing authors more freedom to explain

why they chose certain routes, reagents, and scale-up options (for example for environmental considerations, cost, safety etc.). This discussion makes the papers more readable and enhances the understanding of the work.

In the coming year I hope to receive more articles describing scale-up issues, particularly mixing and mass transfer for which an understanding—as all chemical engineers know—is vital for successful achievement of high yields and constant product quality. I have heard some good papers on this issue at symposia this year, including the successful events we organised in London in April 1997 and in November in San Francisco to launch the Journal.

The geographic spread of papers is also an area where progress can be made. The papers have been predominantly from the USA and, to a lesser extent, Europe, and I would encourage European chemists and engineers to write up their work to try to address the balance. A significant number of contributions are now coming from Asia, particularly India, but the number of Japanese papers remains small. This is an obvious area for targeting in 1998.

My objective for 1998 is to produce a further six issues containing high-quality chemistry and chemical engineering, but with 20% more papers than 1997 and with a broader scope. The quality of the 1997 papers was high, and we have to maintain that standard by strict but constructive refereeing. I would like to thank all our referees/reviewers who helped to turn around papers quickly, but also for their constructive comments, which often brought praise from the authors. Many papers were enhanced by incorporating ideas from the referees. In 1998, we wish to expand the number of referees to cope with the expected increasing number of articles, so, if interested, please send your name to me (for Europe), to Richard Pariza (for the USA) or to either (for the rest of the world). At present we have no Japanese reviewers, so I invite volunteers from that region.

I would like to encourage those managers of process chemistry and chemical engineering to contribute more general articles to OPRD. Since process R & D is the critical path for most companies in getting products to the market in the minimum time, there are a number of issues regarding the organisation of resources (productivity in process R &

D; the seamless transition of processes from laboratory to manufacture; the interface between chemistry and chemical engineering; the introduction of robotics into process R & D for reagent screening and optimisation of reactions; the design of new pilot plant facilities; approaches to process validation, etc.) for which OPRD would be the ideal forum for discussion. Some of these issues are discussed in a book from the Harvard Business School (*The Development Factory*, by Gary Pisano, 1997, Harvard Business Press) and at a symposium in London scheduled for January 29/30 on Integrating Process R&D and Scale-Up into Drug Development (organised by the ECPI), so it is clear they are of

increasing importance. Anyone who wishes to contribute an article on such issues would be advised to first discuss the scope of the article with one of the Editors to ensure that the content is appropriate for the Journal.

Finally, may I thank all those who contributed to a very successful first year of OPRD and ask you to continue to promote the Journal in the coming years.

Trevor Laird

Editor

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