



Publication of Proceeding Papers—Revisited

Many societies sponsor conferences and then publish the proceedings from those conferences. By and large these proceedings are not refereed and provide a record of the conference. They provide in one volume a view of the current state of the art of that field. This is a particularly valuable practice in the applied sciences where related materials can often be spread through a variety of publications rather than appearing in a single journal or two. Because papers in these proceedings are often not refereed, the question arises as to the need for the archival publication of some of these papers in refereed journals. SPIE—The International Society for Optical Engineering sponsors many conferences each year and currently publishes some 200 proceedings volumes a year. This led me to discuss our editorial position with the Publications Committee of the Society, which in turn, led to an editorial statement¹ that set forth a revised policy for our journal. As quoted in that editorial, our letter to meeting chairs states:

The Society has available to it a large body of knowledge developed by a wide range of competent workers in our field. At present, that material is published in our Proceedings. As Editor of *Optical Engineering* I would like to do all I can to capture some of that knowledge in the archival literature. Thus, I urge you to select material from your Proceedings and encourage the authors to present that material in the form necessary for consideration for publication in our journal.

During 1991, 51 papers were published in *Optical Engineering* that were reviewed and revised versions of papers that had appeared in a variety of conference proceedings. These 51 papers represented 21.4% of the 238 papers published during 1991. In the first five months of this year, we have published 24 papers that appeared in conference proceedings; these 24 papers represent 23.1% of the 104 papers published through the April issue of 1992.

Some believe that this process is double publication and, hence, clutters the literature. However, I believe that proceedings and journals fulfill important yet different roles, and that it is acceptable, on occasion, to have basically the same material appear in both places. Of course, there will always be some difference between the two publications of the material dictated by format, author revisions, and the review process. Nevertheless, I expect this to be a continuing area of debate.

Acknowledgment

When a paper that has appeared previously in a proceedings is published in *Optical Engineering*, that fact is acknowledged. Here is an actual example of the standard form that this acknowledgment takes:

Paper 2933 received June 16, 1990; revised manuscript received Jan. 17, 1991; accepted for publication Jan. 29, 1991. This paper is a revision of a paper presented at the SPIE conference on Propagation Engineering III, April 1990, Orlando. The paper presented there appears (unrefereed) in SPIE Proceedings 1312.

Information for Authors

I would like to stress that the submission of a paper that has previously been part of a proceedings **must be submitted in the format described in the Information for Contributors**, which appears in every issue of *Optical Engineering*. I also expect that some revision of the manuscript will have taken place because at a conference one often includes speculative statements that may not necessarily be appropriate for the journal. The authors should clearly identify the conference at which the paper was presented.

Please note that I will not accept a photocopy of the paper as it appears in the proceedings as a submission to *Optical Engineering*. This is not a bureaucratic statement. The editor and the reviewers need to know that the authors have been willing to reformat and revise their proceedings papers for the journal. The format for submission allows the reviewers to annotate the text and indicate suggested changes and questions on the manuscript itself—which is just not possible on a copy of a proceedings paper. If accepted, then our editorial staff in Bellingham needs a manuscript that they can work with as they move it along to the publication stage.

I continue to look forward to presenting some of the knowledge that has appeared in proceedings, which by their very nature have a limited circulation. These revised papers can appear in reviewed form in *Optical Engineering*, which has a circulation of more than 12,000.

Brian J. Thompson
Editor

¹ B. J. Thompson, Editorial, *Opt. Eng.* 30(1), 4 (1991).

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Phase Contrast Microscopy

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June 1993

From Numerical to Symbolic Image Processing: Systems & Applications

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Electro-Optical Flight Systems

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Manuscripts due Jan. 1, 1993.

September 1993

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Acquisition, Tracking, and Pointing

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Magnetospheric Imagery and Atmospheric Remote Sensing

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