How to Get Published: 
An Inside View of the IEEE Peer-Review Process

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Outline

1 Why Publish?
2 Types of Publications
3 Conference Review Process
4 Journal Review Process
5 Conclusion
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1. Why Publish?
2. Types of Publications
3. Conference Review Process
4. Journal Review Process
5. Conclusion
Reasons to Publish

- Lends credibility to your thesis or dissertation defense.
- Helps to land a better job.
- Stake out IP claims prior to patenting.
- An opportunity to influence the research of others.
- Required for promotion in some professions, e.g. academia.
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"It’s publish or perish, and he hasn’t published."
“I see by the current issue of ‘Lab News,’ Ridgeway, that you’ve been working for the last twenty years on the same problem I’ve been working on for the last twenty years.”
Outline

1. Why Publish?

2. Types of Publications

3. Conference Review Process

4. Journal Review Process

5. Conclusion
Conference Papers

- Binary decision: Accept/reject.
- Short time to from submission to publication (9 months).
- Ideas typically less developed than in a full journal paper.
- Expectations may vary widely across conferences.
- Most conferences require attendance.
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Journal Papers

- Multi-round process.
  - Authors respond to reviewer comments.
  - Most full papers require 2 (or 3) rounds before publication.\(^1\)
  - An (associate) editor is involved in the process.

- Longer time from first submission to publication (18-36 months).
- Greater archival value and impact than conference papers.
- More professional weight, especially in academia.
- Cost varies from free to over a thousand dollars.

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- Much more extensive than a paper.
- Typically need to establish research track record first.
- Review process varies by publisher; usually based on a proposal and market survey.
- Most book authors do not make money.

"It doesn't work as a novel. But we're willing to publish it as a desk calendar."

M.C. Valenti (Lane Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, U.S.A.)
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- The review procedures vary from conference-to-conference.
- Rather than making generalizations, we will focus on a particular conference.
- The 2009 IEEE International Conference on Communications (ICC).
  - Held in Dresden, Germany.
  - June 14-18, 2009.
- In 2008, ICC was held in Beijing.
  - 3135 papers were submitted.
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Organization of ICC

- The chair is Hamid Akhavan (CEO, T-Mobile International).
- The technical chair is Gerhard Fettweis (Technische Universität Dresden).
- Conference is organized into 11 symposia, each with its own chair or co-chairs.
- The largest of the symposia is the Wireless Communications Symposia (WCS).
- Co-chairs of WCS:
  - Sonia Aissa, University of Quebec (Canada)
  - Nallanathan Arumugam, National University of Singapore (Singapore)
  - Yi Qian, National Institute of Standards and Technology (USA)
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Official ICC Timeline

- 17 Sep. 2008. Register paper in EDAS.
  - Need to select which symposium.
  - Need title, abstract, and author information.
  - 6 pages in double-column format.
  - Can be 7 pages, but will cost extra if accepted.
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- Each paper is assigned to 3 TPC members.
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Dec. 3, TPC meeting in New Orleans to make preliminary decisions.

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A demonstration of the EDAS system.
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2. Types of Publications
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4. Journal Review Process
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Types of Journals

- **Open call:**
  - Authors submit when they are ready.
  - Can be on any topic of interest to the journal.
  - Publication date is indeterminate.

- **Special Issue:**
  - Authors respond to a *call for papers* on a special topic.
  - A set deadline.
  - Typically faster publication dates than open call.
  - Some issues can be very competitive due to limited space in the issue.

- **Letters:**
  - Like open call, no deadline or special topic.
  - Usually short papers (3 pages or less).
  - Like conference, decision is binary (accept/reject).
  - Fastest time to publication.
  - No opportunity to account for reviewer comments.
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An Example Journal

- IEEE Transactions on Wireless Communications
  - Began publication in 2002.
  - Stats for 2007
    - 1470 papers submitted.
    - 526 papers published.
  - Organization:
    - The editor-in-chief is Vijay Bhargava (UBC).
    - 6 areas, each with an area editor.
    - 114 associate editors.
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Submission Guidelines

- Two types of papers.
  - Transactions Papers:
    - No longer than 20 double-spaced pages, excluding figures.
    - No more than 12 figures and tables.
  - Transactions Letters:
    - No longer than 10 double-spaced pages, excluding figures.
    - No more than 6 figures and tables.
- Papers submitted through Manuscript Central.
- If accepted, overlength charge is $220 for every page after page 7.
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Review Timeline

- **First week.**
  - Editor-in-chief assigns to area.
  - Area editor assigns to associate editor.

- **Second week.**
  - Associate editor requests reviews.
  - Invited reviewers accept or decline review requests.
  - At least three reviewers are needed.

- **Next six weeks (often longer).**
  - Papers are with the reviewers.
  - Editor waits for reviews to be submitted.

- **Last week**
  - Once reviews are in, associate editor makes decision.
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Unlike conferences, decision is not binary.

Possible decisions:
- Accept.
- Minor Revision.
- Major Revision (*most common*).
- Reject & Resubmit.
- Reject.
- Revise and Resubmit as Letter.

Decision is made by the Associate Editor guided by the reviewer comments.

Letter from Associate Editor will give the decision and the comments from the reviewers.
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Outcome of First Review Cycle

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Most papers require at least a minor revision.

- Revisions must be completed within three months.
- Revised paper is resubmitted along with a response to the reviewers.
- Editor will usually ask for another round of review.
- Decision is mostly based on whether the reviewers believe their concerns have been addressed.
- Sometimes a third round of review is required.
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The IEEE review procedure is a complex, multi-step process.

- The review process takes time to conduct properly.
- The process is run by volunteer reviewers, editors, and program committees.
  - These are your peers.
  - Once you begin to submit publications, you will be asked to review.
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Questions?