

JAC Transitions

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A 2009 issue of *BOOKFORUM* published a cartoon titled “The Lost Library — where all of the unwritten books go” (Shaw, 2009). As depicted in the cartoon, the Lost Library is a lonely place. Dusty shelves overflow with books and publications of untold value — novel and creative ideas that never see the light of day.

Why books and articles go unwritten is not hard to figure out — often it’s a matter of busy people trying to do too much. Usually, it’s our creative projects that are put on hold. That’s unfortunate for us as individuals and as an organization, as we’re deprived of ideas that could impart new forms of creativity, improved styles of management, or more efficient ways to perform our jobs. Despite their potential, none of our great ideas produce value if not shared. Florita Montgomery and her ACE colleagues (1996) summed up the situation for applied communicators more than 10 years ago:

... Unshared knowledge spawns duplication of effort — or sometimes just plain frustration — in land-grant offices in other states and countries. Keeping the wealth locked away also slows the growth of the body of knowledge for applied communications: If everyone is working simultaneously but separately on similar problems, some will waste time building where they need not. Others will be unaware of foundations that could let them build higher. (p. 40-41)

Publishing your novel ideas and creative works in the JAC is one of the best ways to share this wealth. While our publishing schedule has been delayed in recent issues, we want JAC readers to know we are committed to maintaining the JAC as a forum for professional development and research in applied communications. Working closely with ACE leadership, the JAC editorial team is now focusing on the following measures:

- Implementing Manuscript FastTrack to improve the efficiency and transparency of the manuscript review process
- Working to promote the journal internationally to more potential scholars willing to share fresh, creative ideas
- Striving to get the first JAC online issue published later this fall
- Anticipating getting the JAC publication schedule back on track in the coming year

Introduction

If you believe in the JAC mission, there are a number of ways you can help. We need authors to continue to develop and submit professional development and research content, reviewers to continue to evaluate articles and ensure quality control, and readers to continue to use and comment about our content. We want to thank those of you who have supported the journal during these transitional times. Your efforts are helping keep the JAC from the Lost Library.

In This Issue...

We offer a special note of thanks to the authors who share their creative wares in the following pages. In our professional development section, Jerold Thomas and his coauthors review the performance of various technology tools and provide advice for their adoption and use. Then, Lisa Hightower and her colleagues share lessons learned in developing the University of Florida's successful STEP Program to deliver outreach programs and help secure grants.

In our research section, Kaufman and his colleagues assess levels of consumer confidence in Florida agriculture and investigate whether and how residential differences and demographic characteristics influence levels of confidence. Cindy Christen and Robert Fetsch share results of mail survey research to help increase awareness and use of the Colorado AgrAbility Project. Finally, Shari Veil and Timothy Sellnow draw on data and experiences from a North Dakota anthrax outbreak to introduce and discuss a best practices model for crisis planning.

Rounding out this issue is a research brief by Jacob McCarthy and his colleagues that summarizes readership survey data from 750 subscribers of *Michigan Dairy Review*, a quarterly Extension publication that targets Michigan dairy producers.

References

- Montgomery, F. S., Donnellan, L. M., & Whiting, L. R. (1996). Why haven't you published that research (and your other ideas)? *Journal of Applied Communications*, 80(1), 29-41.
- Shaw, D. (2009). *BOOKFORUM*, 16(2), 31.