

## From the Editor

### Editor's Corner: Hard copy or digital

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## **EDITOR'S CORNER: IJOM – HARD COPY OR DIGITAL**

The keys to any successful organization are leadership and membership. Leadership helps to direct the organization in ways to meet organizational goals. Leadership needs to institute methods to provide members with a voice in the organizational activities. The mainstay of any organization is the recruitment and retention of members. Leaders focus on establishing a connection with members that centers on two-way communication. Members need to feel that leadership cares not only about their opinions, but also takes action to solicit member input on matters that have an impact on their membership.

Membership drives the organization in numerous ways. Important ways this happens is when members feel included in the activities of the organization and that their voice is being heard by leadership. Members who feel that they are receiving benefits by being associated with an organization tend to 'spread the word' about the organization among their associates and colleagues. This has the potential to increase member recruitment. Members who feel that the leadership truly cares about what they think is important, are members who are more vested in the organization. This creates an environment that increases retention of current members.

The International Association of Orofacial Myology (IAOM) is an organization that holds its membership in high esteem. One of the topics that has been discussed many times among leadership is the need to provide its journal, the International Journal of Orofacial Myology (IJOM), in digital format so that it would be accessible to a wider audience including both members and non-members. The question arose regarding the need to continue to also provide IJOM in hard copy. To obtain information about how the members felt about this question a survey was distributed to the membership.

The results of the IJOM Survey regarding members' feelings about their preferred format for our publication included 141 replies from among the 270 individuals who were members at the time the survey was distributed. The response rate was 50.54%, or half of the membership at that time. This is higher than the expected response rate for an internal survey, which is thought to be between 30% to 40% (<https://www.surveymoz.com/survey-blog/survey-response-rates>.)

Members expressed the following preferences:

- 26.24% of the respondents would like only a digital copy;
- 31.92% of the respondents would like only a hard copy;
- 41.84% of the respondents would like both a hard copy and digital access.

When combining the replies indicating the preference for a 'hard copy only' with the replies for 'both hard copy and digital' 73.76% (104 of 141) of the members who responded, continue to prefer receiving a hard copy when compared with 26.24% who would prefer having only digital access. On the other hand, 68.08% (97 of 141) of the members who responded would prefer to have a method of digital access.

A similar survey was presented to members in 2000. The survey was presented to 228 members, with 64 members responding (28%). At that time 39% of members responding preferred to have IJOM in hard copy, while 61% preferred to receive IJOM in a digital format of either CD or floppy disc (Taylor, 2000). While the number of members who preferred to receive a hard copy version is similar for the two surveys (39%-31.92%), the number of members who preferred to receive only a digital version declined from 61% in 2000 to 26.24% in 2015. Interestingly, the percentage of members who in 2000 preferred to have the option of having both a digital and hard copy version is similar to the current results: in 2000 it was 74.2%, and in the current survey it was 73.76%

There are advantages and disadvantages to both digital and hard copy formats. The digital format is easily accessible on a computer or other device, doesn't take up a great deal of physical space in an office or home, is searchable allowing information to be easily retrieved, and digital information is



easy to share with others. However, Liu (2005) found that digital readers do not do as much in-depth reading as those who read from hard copy. Studies by Daniel and Woody (2013), and Rosen (2013) indicate that readers are more likely to be distracted when e-reading. This in part may be due to the scrolling, clicking, skimming texts, and zooming. It has been noted that individuals who use computers for reading text blink their eyes less often than individuals who read from books. The hard copy format is easier to read, and is thought to enhance comprehension. Ackerman and Goldsmith (2011) indicated that individuals who demonstrated greater self-control and better performance were more likely to be those who read from hard copy. Hard copy texts are not as portable, and can take up a great deal of storage space. However, the verdict is still out on the benefits and drawbacks of each format. And, we don't know yet if the trends that are being observed at this time will continue as the 'cyber babies' who have been computer users since early in their life will exhibit the same characteristics as those of us who were raised on hard copy books. A recent study suggests that learning strategies between reading a hard copy book when compared with reading a book on a digital device are not the same (Niccoli, 2015). Perhaps the best advice was presented by Keim (2014) in his essay titled "Why the Smart Reading Device of the Future May Be Paper." Keim indicates that we need to begin to think about digital and hard copy reading as 'different and complimentary' formats, each with its own task specific advantages.

Members who responded to the survey seem to indicate that at this point in time most would like to have access to both digital and hard copy. It will take the combined effort of both leadership and membership to provide IJOM in both formats. There is a great deal of preliminary work to do in order to provide digital access. Volunteers are needed to help with the steps to making this happen. Many of these steps do not require sophisticated computer skills. Some of the types of things that need to be done include: creating a set of folders that are coded in a certain way that is consistent; placing already digitized articles into these folders; copying articles from an issue and making them single file articles; scanning issues that have not been digitized yet. My thoughts are that if IJOM had 10 volunteers who would provide one hour a week for about 7 weeks, we would be well on the road to being able to provide digital access. Any member who would like to participate please contact me. And, of course volunteers will have access to the issues that are already in digital format. I will be able to explain what needs to be done for each step. When leadership and membership work together an organization can accomplish many things.

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