ACES Online Review Process

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Introduction

The paperless office is an idea that has been evolving since the computer became as common to the world as the pencil. Until recently, however, the supporting technology was not mature enough to enable this to become reality. With the advent of advanced web server scripting languages and portable document formats it is now possible to take what once was a very intensive paper process, that of reviewing submissions for a journal or conference article, and making it completely paperless over the internet. The push for creating an online review process has been seen all over in many different organizations. A few larger organizations with many resources have taken the path to purchasing software to do this at great expense. The ACES website staff, in our ever-ongoing effort to bring as many resources to the society as possible, took it upon ourselves to create our own system for moving the review process online at the http://aces.ce.olemiss.edu website. This paper gives a small glimpse into what happens when you submit an article for the ACES journal.
It All Begins With a Click

The first step in the whole review processes is to submit an article for possible publication. In order for it to be electronically submitted the document must be in either Adobe Acrobat PDF format (preferred), or in PostScript format. The Adobe Acrobat PDF format is the preferred method of submitting documents due to its high portability and wide availability of viewers for all type of computers. Any postscript submission will be converted by the ACES web site staff to PDF format before processing. While uploading your document to the website, it is necessary to enter the relevant information about your submission. Items such as title, author names, keywords, and abstract are entered on the submission form to allow your document to be added to the ACES database and allow it to be searched and accessed by editors and reviewers (Fig 1). By entering this information at the submission stage, when it comes time to add this paper to the online searchable database of published articles, it simply becomes a matter of a single click.

Figure 1. The upload page.
Making The Rounds

After the manuscript has been uploaded to the ACES server, an email is dispatched to the journal editor(s) and the corresponding author alerting them to the successful submission. The editor(s) then are able to log on to the system to start the review processes and are presented a quick view (Fig 2.) of what is being submitted and any other information related to the currently active papers. Figure 2 shows items such as recently submitted papers, active papers currently in the review process, submitted reviews for the active papers, accepted papers by the editor(s), papers requiring major and minor revisions, and rejected papers. From this main page the editor(s) will have a sense of what is currently going on in the review system. At this point with a recently submitted paper, the editor(s) are able to quickly view the paper and its information. If the editor(s) decide to activate this paper and assign reviewers, a new page is opened presenting them with the option of assigning reviewers to the paper (Fig 3.). This page not only shows which reviewers have been added, but also suggests reviewers based on the keywords supplied by the authors of the paper. Also here is an option to add new reviewers to the database of reviewers in the ACES system if needed. Every time the editor assigns a reviewer to the paper, the system sends an email to that reviewer notifying him about the editor’s request for reviewing a paper. When the editor(s) are finished assigning reviewers, the paper is moved to the active papers category while it is being reviewed.

To Review Or Not To Review

After logging on to the system, the reviewer is presented with a similar quick view of everything the reviewer has been requested/accepted to review (Fig. 4). The first step for a reviewer is to decide if he or she wants to review the paper. The potential reviewer can examine the basic information about the paper (title, authors, and abstract) and decide either way by simply pushing
Figure 2. The journal editor main page.

Figure 3. The assignment of reviewers page.
the "will review" or "will not review" button to finalize their decision. If the reviewer declines to review the paper, an email is sent alerting the editor and the paper is removed from the reviewer screen. If the reviewer decides to review the paper, the paper is moved to the active review category of the reviewer screen. Here the reviewer may examine the actual paper, and proceeds to compile and edit the review. When editing the review, the reviewer has options on rating the paper, adding comments, and suggesting the course of action for the editor to take (accept, reject, etc) (Fig 5.). The reviewer can choose to come back later and change the review as long as it has not been submitted to the editor using the Submit Review button. To make the review final and alert the editor, the reviewer simply clicks the Submit Review button and the paper is removed.
from his screen. Once submitted the review is final and no further action on the reviewer’s part can be taken related to this article.

Completing The Cycle

After all the reviews have been completed and delivered to the editor, it is time for the editor to make the decision on the final status of the paper. The editor can quickly see the summary reviews on the main page and open the full reviews by the simple link provided. To change the status of the paper, the editor simply opens up the information page about the paper in question and selects which status is appropriate and the paper is filed in that category.

It is hoped that this whole process will not only simplify the process for everyone involved, but also speed it up as well. The ACES website staff is constantly working on new features and
improvements for the ACES website. Comments and suggestions are always welcome at aces@aces.ee.olemiss.edu and will be promptly responded to.

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Introducing The Authors

Atef Z. Elsherbeni received an honor B.Sc. degree in Electronics and Communications, an honor B.Sc. degree in Applied Physics, and a M.Eng. degree in Electrical Engineering, all from Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt, in 1976, 1979, and 1982, respectively, and a Ph.D. degree in Electrical Engineering from Manitoba University, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, in 1987. He was a Research Assistant with the Faculty of Engineering at Cairo University from 1976 to 1982, and from 1983 to 1986 at the Electrical Engineering Department, Manitoba University. He was a part time Software and System Design Engineer from March 1980 to December 1982 at the Automated Data System Center, Cairo, Egypt. From January to August 1987, he was a Post Doctoral Fellow at Manitoba University. Dr. Elsherbeni joined the faculty at the University of Mississippi in August 1987 as an Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering. He advanced to the rank of Associate Professor on July 1991, and to the rank of Professor on July 1997. He spent his first sabbatical term in 1996 at the Electrical Engineering Department, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA).

His professional interests include scattering and diffraction of electromagnetic waves, numerical techniques, antennas, remote sensing, and computer applications for electromagnetic education. He has
published 55 technical journal articles and 10 book chapters on applied electromagnetics, antenna design, and microwave subjects, and presented over 160 papers at professional conferences. Dr. Elsherbeni is a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). He is the electronic publishing managing editor of the Applied Computational Electromagnetic Society (ACES). He serves on the editorial board of the Book Series on Progress in Electromagnetic Research, the Electromagnetic Waves and Applications Journal, and the Computer Applications in Engineering Education Journal. He is the Chairman of the Educational Activity Committee for the IEEE Region 3 Section.

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Matthew J. Inman received his BSEE in 2000 from The University of Mississippi, and is currently pursuing graduate studies in electromagnetics. He has been recently involved in projects dealing with the animations and visualization of electromagnetic fields. He is the electrical engineering department visualization lab manager and is currently the head maintainer of the ACES website under the supervision of Dr. Atef Elsherbeni.

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