Editorial: A Publishing Plan Fulfilled

T. R. Girill
Editor in chief, ACM Journal of Computer Documentation
trg@llnl.gov

Long-time SIGDOC members may recall that this journal began life 24 years ago as a small newsletter called *Asterisk (*).* In 1990, to revitalize SIGDOC, a new editorial board reconstituted that newsletter as **The Journal of Computer Documentation*. One explicit goal was intellectual: to provide a unique service to documentation professionals by accompanying every formal article or classic reprint with multiple open commentaries, and by publishing multiple comparative commentaries on every book reviewed (Girill, 1997). That commentary strategy (which supplements but does not replace private prepublication refereeing) has enabled the journal to grow in size, scope, and depth for a decade, from a single 40-page issue (in 1990) to 256 pages spread across quarterly issues (in 1999).

A second original goal for SIGDOC's journal was organizational: to participate fully as a standard ACM serial publication. Starting with the current (February 2000) issue, that goal now has been realized as well. This is perhaps best understood as a change in official publisher, from the Special Interest Group on Documentation to the larger Association for Computing Machinery. The change should be transparent to most JCD readers. It does, however, provide readers and contributors alike with several practical benefits:

(1) Inclusion in ACM's Digital Library (http://www.acm.org/dl/). Through the Digital Library's archiving and search features, *JCD* becomes available online directly to every SIGDDOC member, as well as to thousands of employees or students of institutions with digital-library site licenses, even those to whom SIGDOC as a group is unknown.

(2) About three times as many default institutional (and hence archival) subscribers as before, mostly university or industrial research libraries.

(3) Broader exposure and more extensive classification and indexing for every article, commentary, and awareness essay that *JCD* prints.

Editorial enthusiasts will notice a few technical or bureaucratic symptoms of JCD's new organizational status. The journal's official name is now ACM Journal of Computer Documentation, and dropping the legacy asterisk entails using a new International Standard Serial Number (1527-6805) as well. ACM now copyrights every contribution, so beginning with this issue a suitable copyright statement (including a commercial reprint code) now resides within each paper. The instructions for authors have been revised accordingly. And finally, JCD has adopted across-volume instead

of across-issue pagination, which helps searchers locate each article even if the issue number is unknown.

To all those along the way whose dedication and leadership have contributed to this accomplishment the journal extends its warmest thanks.

References

Girill, T. R. (1997). Contributions of the Open-Commentary Journal to the Documentation Profession. In *International Professional Communication Conference 1997 Proceedings* (pp. 295-302). Salt Lake City, UT: IEEE.