

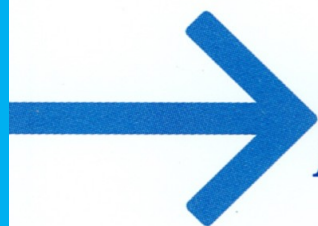


# Business Communication Quarterly

## Annual Report

September 2008

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Editor



A Publication of the Association for Business Communication

This report describes the status of *BCQ* since the September 2007 report and briefly reviews the four issues since then. It also comments on other areas such as the feature columns, Website, and production developments at Sage. It concludes with a look at initiatives for the coming year.

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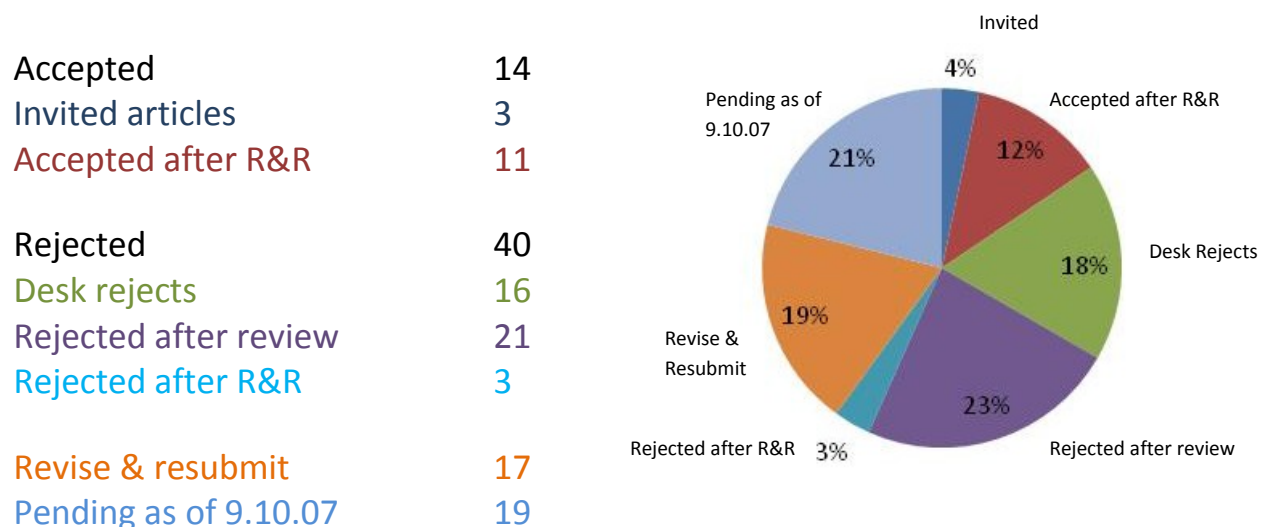
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# Status of Submissions

The summary below analyzes manuscripts submitted since the last annual report. This summary takes into account feature articles and Innovative Assignment articles, but not edited columns such as Focus on Teaching or book reviews. The counting method and categories are those recommended by the Publications Board (Appendix A).

A total of 90 manuscripts were submitted between September 1, 2007 and September 9, 2008.

As indicated by the numbers below, submissions are up quite a bit compared from the last annual report. This increase in submissions has coincided with something of a rise in the acceptance rate. The below graphic shows acceptance rates based only on the 71 manuscripts on which decisions were returned between September 1, 2007, and September 9, 2008. The 2008 acceptance rate is up to 16%, compared to only 9% in the year ending September 1, 2007. All of the accepted manuscripts were resubmissions of items that had originally been classed as “Revise and Resubmit.” This trend suggests that reviewers are doing a good job of giving authors usable and encouraging commentary.



**Fig. 1 Manuscript Submissions (90 total, up from 63 last year, an increase of 46%)**

The rise in both number of submissions and acceptance rate has resulted in a backlog of enough feature articles to fill the first three issues of 2009—a positive development since it will enable the inclusion of more feature articles in each issue. This is the largest backlog the journal has had since I became editor in June 2005.

A total of 77 authors were represented in feature and column articles (excluding book reviews), compared to 52 authors in the last annual period.

Of these 77 authors, 58% (45) were affiliated with U.S. universities, while 42% (32) were affiliated with universities outside the U.S. This represents a 17% increase in non-U.S. authors over the last annual period.

Both of these trends are worth emphasizing because of two goals suggested in the September 2006 “review of the editor” report: to include a greater number of authors and to include more non-U.S. authors. One year later, *BCQ* is doing a good job of representing a wide number and variety of authors while maintaining a respectable rejection rate. Greater international participation is also a criterion for SSCI inclusion; certainly the figures above indicate a healthy representation of international authors in recent issues of *BCQ*, which may help the next time the journals are considered for SSCI inclusion.

The proportion of female and male authors was nearly even: 51% (39) to 49% (38), which is consistent with the last annual period.

# The Past Four Issues

The following table is an overview of the four issues of *BCQ* that have appeared since the September 2007 annual report. All issues carry standard copy such as the list of ABC officers, information for authors, and the ABC conference calendar. All issues have appeared on schedule, and the full page count for 2008 (volume 71) will be used.

	December 2007	March 2008	June 2008	September 2008
<b>Special Content</b>	Editorial  Index	Guest Editorial	Call for JBC Editor	Speical column on “2007 ABC Publications Award Winners.”
<b>Feature Article</b>	1	2	3	3
<b>Innovative Assignment</b>	X	1	X	X
<b>“Focus on Teaching”</b>	5	7	7	7
<b>“Focus on Business Practices”</b>	4	6	3	4
<b>“Focus on Research”</b>	X	X	1	X
<b>Book Reviews</b>	2	5	5	2
<b>Page Numbers</b>	413–519	1–128	137–269	277–410

**Table 1: Summary of the past four issues of *BCQ***

# Staffing and Production

## Developments at Sage

I have continued to have a very positive working relationship with the Production Editor at Sage, Ailene Kanbe, who has been unfailingly responsive and helpful. Associate Publishing Editor John Paul Gutierrez continues as the Sage ABC/BCQ/JBC liaison. He and I met in Chicago in 2008 and will meet in person at the ABC meeting, where he plans to attend the BCQ Review Board Meeting. However, since most of my issue-to-issue dealings are with Ailene, her continuity on the Sage team is my most important concern.

The most significant behind-the-scenes accomplishment this year was the transition of BCQ to an online submission system, Manuscript Central. This effort required extensive preparation and training during the last months of 2007 and the first few months of 2008 on the part of myself and editorial assistant Jim Maciukenas, whose experience in working with content management systems was quite valuable during this transition. Tasks included remote training on the system, customization of dozens of email templates used in the system, construction of a reviewer database, and trial runs of several manuscripts. We successfully met the target launch date of early spring 2008 set in last year's annual report; effective with the March 2008 issue, authors were directed to use Manuscript Central to submit feature articles.

At this time, submissions to "Focus" columns, as well as book reviews, continue to be submitted directly to the column editors (as Word documents sent by email) rather than through Manuscript Central. One of the main benefits of Manuscript Central is that it streamlines the process of "anonymizing" manuscripts, sending them to reviewers, and tracking reviewers' responses and reports to authors. However, since the column submissions (unlike feature articles) do not undergo masked peer review, the column editors would probably not benefit enough from Manuscript Central to make it worth their while to invest time in training.

Appendix B shows screenshots from various sections of the Manuscript Central system.

# Feature Columns

*BCQ* has continued to benefit from the strong efforts of a dedicated team of column and feature editors.

I would especially like to commend Marilyn Dyrud and Rebecca Worley for their continued outstanding work on the “Focus on Teaching” column. Their calls for papers continue to attract dozens of submission, to the point where column topics must sometimes be extended over two issues.

“Focus on Business Practices” has also been represented well in each of the past four issues, with editing shared by Clive Muir of Winston-Salem State University and Peter Cardon of University of South Carolina. A new editor for this column will be transitioning in during 2009.

During 2008, *BCQ* transitioned to a new book review editor, Peter Cardon of University of South Carolina, when former book review editor Jo Mackiewicz became editor-in-chief of *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*. Jo left us with a comfortable backlog of reviews, and the goal of *BCQ* remains to publish approximately four reviews per issue if the page count permits.

## Web Presence

Barbara Shwom has responded to requests for changes to the *BCQ* pages on the ABC site, and Ailene Kanbe has coordinated any needed changes to the Sage site. I have also responded to Barbara’s invitation to contribute “research updates” to the main ABC page by having my editorial assistant prepare summaries of articles from the most recent issues.

A Sage initiative in 2008 is that articles are now available online in advance of print, which should enhance the citation rate and hence the likelihood of SSCI acceptance.



# A Look Ahead

I continue to seek additional members for the editorial review board, especially to review manuscripts that present statistical findings.

Looking ahead, a special issue on “Teaching Teamwork in Business Communication/ Management Programs” will be published in December 2008, coedited by Cheryl Cockburn Wooten, Prue Holmes, and Mary Simpson (all of University of Waikato, New Zealand). Work on the special issue progressed on schedule throughout all stages of the process.

# Summary of Goals

My short-term goal at this point to continue building numbers and variety in the editorial review board so that I can distribute manuscripts across a wider range of reviewers and maintain the desired turnaround time to authors. The move to an online submission system should benefit editors, reviewers, and authors. As always, I continue to explore ways to keep *BCQ* useful to its readers while maintaining its status in the eyes of tenure-and-promotion committees.

# APPENDIX A

## Publications Board recommendations for Counting Submissions and Determining Acceptance rates for manuscripts submitted to our Journals.

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March 2003

### **Background**

Input for the conclusions and recommendations given below were received from our journals editors, editors of various communication and business journals, members of our editorial boards, and Publications' Board members. We also considered published journal information about these areas and discussions with members of ABC.

### **Conclusions**

1. There is no one way used to determine counting submissions and determining acceptance rates.
2. Some journals use first time submissions only in calculating the rate.
3. Some journals use first time submissions and revise and resubmit to calculate the rate.
4. Some journals use editor initial screening in calculating the rate.
5. Some journals use editor screening in articles for columns in calculating the rate.
6. Some journals use editor screening in articles for columns but do not count these in the overall journal acceptance rate.
7. Some journals do not use invited articles in calculating journal acceptance rates.
8. Acceptance rates do impact promotion and tenure and performance decisions.
9. Combinations of the above items are used by some journals in calculating journal acceptance rates.
10. Other.

## Recommendations

We suggest the following as a process for Counting Submissions and Determining Acceptance rates for manuscripts submitted to our Journals:

1. Count editor-screened manuscripts that are rejected without complete review,
2. Count manuscripts rejected by editorial board members,
3. Count manuscripts that are accepted with minimal or no revision,
4. Count manuscripts that receive a revise-and-resubmit decision,
5. Count manuscripts resubmitted after a revise-and-resubmit decision,
6. Do not count columns and invited articles if decision is a positive certainty and only reviewed by editor,
7. Do not count manuscripts submitted more than twice,
8. Do not count minimally revised manuscripts twice (we realize this is a judgment call but leave it to the editor in consultation with associate editor or content expert reviewer).

# APPENDIX B

Screenshots from Manuscript Central online submission system.


The screenshot shows the Manuscript Central login interface. At the top right is a 'LOGIN' button. On the left, under 'RESOURCES', are links for 'Instructions & Forms', 'User Tutorials', 'System Requirements', and 'Journal Home Page'. The main content area welcomes users to the *Business Communication Quarterly* submission site and provides instructions for logging in, creating an account, or recovering a password. It includes input fields for 'User Name' and 'Password', a 'Log In' button, a 'Create Account' link, and a 'FORGOT YOUR PASSWORD?' section with an email input field and a 'Go' button. The SAGE logo is in the bottom left. On the right is a logo for Business Communication Quarterly, a member of the SAGE family. At the bottom, a copyright notice for Manuscript Central v4.11 (2008) is displayed, along with links to Terms and Conditions, Privacy Policy, and a 'Get Help Now' link.


**LOGIN**

**RESOURCES**  
[Instructions & Forms](#)  
[User Tutorials](#)  
[System Requirements](#)  
[Journal Home Page](#)


Welcome to the *Business Communication Quarterly* manuscript submission site. To Log In, enter your User ID and Password into the boxes below, then click "Log In." If you are unsure about whether or not you have an account, or have forgotten your password, enter your e-mail address into the "Forgot Password" section below. If you do not have an account, click on the "Create Account" link.

User Name

Password   Log In

 Create Account: New users click here

**FORGOT YOUR PASSWORD?**  
Enter your e-mail address to receive an e-mail with your account information.

 Go

**SAGE**

**Business Communication Quarterly**  
A member of the SAGE family

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Fig. 2: Screenshot of Manuscript Central login page

## Submit a Manuscript

Select your manuscript type. Enter your title and abstract into the appropriate boxes below. If you need to insert a special character, click the "Special Characters" button. When you are finished, click "Save and Continue." [Read More ...](#)

1 [Type, Title, & Abstract](#)

2 [Attributes](#)

✓ 3 [Authors & Institutions](#)

4 [Details & Comments](#)

5 [File Upload](#)

6 [Review & Submit](#)

Save and Continue

Manuscript Type

rec Manuscript Type: 

Select...

rec Title (Limit 50 words)

Preview

Special Characters

Press Control-V (or Cmd-V) to Paste

rec Abstract (Limit 200 words)

Special Characters

Press Control-V (or Cmd-V) to Paste

Save and Continue

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Admin: [configure instructions](#)

Fig. 3: Screenshot of Manuscript Central manuscript submission page.

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**Dashboard** You can access manuscripts in each peer review status by clicking on the status queue title. The number next to each status queue title indicates the number of manuscripts in that status. You may search for specific manuscripts with the Quick Manuscript Search form or conduct an "Advanced Search" by clicking the link below (the advanced search form will display at the bottom of the screen). For tips on conducting searches, click the following link: [Read More ...](#)

[Version 4.1.1 was released on August 26, 2008. Click here to learn more.](#)

Editor Lists	Quick Search - <a href="#">Show Advanced Search</a>
<p>You may click on the manuscript list title to view a full listing of manuscripts in each status, or click on the number next to the list to jump directly to the first manuscript in the list.</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>0 Select Reviewers</li><li>0 Invite Reviewers</li><li><a href="#">1 Overdue Reviewer Response</a></li><li>0 Assign Reviewers</li><li><a href="#">3 Awaiting Reviewer Scores</a></li><li><a href="#">1 Overdue Reviewer Scores</a></li><li>0 Make Final Decision</li></ul>	<p>You may conduct a wildcard search by adding an asterisk (*) to the end of the search string. For example, to view a list of all of the manuscripts whose titles begin with the words "neuroscience" or "neurology" simply type "neuro*" in the Title field and click "Search."</p> <hr/> <p>Saved Search: <input type="text" value="Select..."/>  Edit</p> <p>Manuscript ID: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Manuscript Title: <input type="text"/></p> <p>Author's First (Given) or Last (Family) name: <input type="text"/></p> <p>* Keywords: <input type="text"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pick</p> <p> Search</p>
<b>Editor Tools</b>	
 <b>Reports</b>	
<a href="#">At-A-Glance Statistics</a>	
<a href="#">Detailed Reports</a>	

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[Admin: configure instructions](#)

**Fig. 4: Screenshot of Manuscript Central Editor's dashboard**