Could you write your next paper within the manuscript submission system?

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Last week I wrote about web-based writing tools. I believe that these tools are almost there and someone has to put the pieces together to make them work for writing a scientific paper.

EJ Press System by EJournal Press, Manuscript Central by ScholarOne and Editiorial Manager by Aries Systems are among the most popular web-based online submission systems. From a technical point of view, it would make a lot of sense if these submission systems are extended to also cover the paper writing process. The major advantage of web-based systems – in contrast to writing your paper in a traditional word processor such as Microsoft Word – is collaboration. And the actual paper submission becomes much easier both for the author and the publisher if the paper is already in the submission system. This could also streamline the peer-review process, as reviewers could (anonymously) write their comments directly into the online text.

An online paper writing tool could also make business sense. I believe that a large number of authors would consider such a system even with a fee of $25-50 per paper. This could generate enough revenue to cover the development and maintenance costs of such a system.