



## Manufacturing & Service Operations Management

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:  
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To cite this article:

Christopher S. Tang (2015) The Past, Present, and Future of Manufacturing & Service Operations Management. *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management* 17(1):1-3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/msom.2014.0510>

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# The Past, Present, and Future of Manufacturing & Service Operations Management

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As the fifth editor of *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management* (M&SOM), I am grateful to all previous editors-in-chief (Leroy Schwarz, Garrett van Ryzin, Gérard Cachon, and my predecessor Stephen Graves), who laid the foundation, paved the path, and led M&SOM to become a premier journal of the OM research community. The reader is referred to Schwarz (1999), van Ryzin (2003), Cachon (2006), and Graves (2009) for their significant contributions to the mission of M&SOM since its inception.

M&SOM has become a preferred OM research outlet for articles that are rigorous and relevant. This phenomenal success is due to the support of our OM research community (authors and reviewers) and the unceasing effort of the editorial board members (editors and associate editors) in providing *high-quality reviews with short cycle time*. Because I have benefitted tremendously from the support of our OM research community over the last 30 years, it is an honorable duty for me to have this privileged opportunity to serve my professional community.

I am committed to follow the footsteps of my predecessors to ensure that M&SOM will continue its rigor and relevance so as to create impactful knowledge and insights for the OM research community. The submission process, the review process, and the type of articles M&SOM would like to publish will continue in the same spirit as articulated in Graves (2009).

Based on the advice I learned from Stephen Graves, the associate editors' insightful comments I collected from Morris Cohen (chair of the search committee), as well as the many thoughtful suggestions I gathered from various presidents of the MSOM Society (past president Mark Ferguson, current president Serguei Netessine, and president-elect Brian Tomlin) and numerous OM researchers located in five continents (North America, South America, Asia, Australia, and Europe), I plan to encourage impact, further streamline the review process, and promote M&SOM to a larger community, as outlined below.

## 1. Encourage Impact

In addition to inviting special issue proposals and encouraging regular submissions, M&SOM should strengthen its impact. Specifically, I plan to use the OM Forum section to do the following:

(a) Invite proposals and high-quality articles that explore *new frontiers of OM* (e.g., OM and business/social innovations, OM and digital economy (m-commerce/social media), OM and public/nonprofit sector). These articles should describe, classify, and illustrate (to a certain extent) *what* kind of OM research opportunities exist in these areas and *how* OM researchers can pursue this stream of research.

(b) Invite proposals and high-quality *survey articles* that synthesize knowledge of certain important or emerging areas in OM so that the OM community can learn of the state of the art on the subject, gaps in the literature, and open research topics.

To a certain extent, (a) and (b) can help M&SOM to differentiate itself from *Management Science* and *Operations Research*. More importantly, I think that these kinds of articles can help M&SOM to advance the thought leadership of OM research. Consequently, the visibility of M&SOM and the ISI impact factor will improve, which can help M&SOM to be included on the Business Week list and/or the Financial Times list in the future.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Further Streamline the Review Process

**Reduce the number of review cycles and reduce the default number of required reviewers.** M&SOM takes pride in providing high-quality reviews with short cycle times. However, there is an opportunity for us to *reduce the number of review cycles*. Some reviewers are perfectionists who come up with

<sup>1</sup> High-quality literature reviews usually receive higher citations. For example, some most cited M&SOM articles are excellent survey papers. Also, among all economics journals, *Journal of Economic Literature*, which publishes survey articles, has the highest impact factor of 7.1, whereas *American Economic Review* has an impact factor of 2.5.

additional demands during each review cycle. There are occasions that certain demands do not seem to change the results or insights much; however, these demands can take up a lot of time for the author(s) to address. To maximize the “*return on investment of everyone’s time*,” I shall work closely with the associate editors to make conscious decisions that reduce the number of review cycles so that each submission will be accepted (or rejected) “in principle” after no more than two review cycles. (This idea is motivated by the arguments articulated by Spiegel (2012).) Also, I would like to reduce the *default number of required reviewers* from three to two.

**Develop a common set of evaluation criteria and a standardized review process.** While reviewers have traditionally focused on “rigor” and “relevance,” I would add “novelty” as a new criterion so that *M&SOM* can encourage authors to submit some OM articles that examine certain innovative operations.<sup>2</sup>

Criterion	Evaluation question
Novel	Does this paper examine an innovative issue/idea in OM?
Rigorous	Does this paper contain rigorous analysis (and/or new approach/methodology) for examining a certain OM issue?
Relevant	Does this paper offer new managerial insights (and/or practical ideas that can be implemented in OM practice)?

By establishing these three criteria more explicitly, it would enable reviewers and the editorial board members to provide constructive suggestions that would improve the novelty, rigor, and relevance of the paper.

**Manage review process efficiently as the number of submissions increases.** Up to this point, the review process of *M&SOM* is managed centrally; i.e., the editor-in-chief (EIC) manages the review process for every single submission. This process works well when the number of submissions is relatively small. However, as the number of submissions increases, the review cycle time will lengthen unless the EIC delegates the review process to others. When the number of submissions increases, there is a need to develop a department structure so that each department editor will take on the role of the editor of the corresponding department so that the EIC can have some time to promote the journal and encourage more submissions. To maximize flexibility and to fully capitalize

on the expertise of different associate editors, each department editor can continue to draw on a *common pool* of associate editors. When that happens, the journal will be managed in a decentralized manner even though the evaluation criteria and the review process (as stated above) will continue to be maintained centrally.

By 2016, I would like to create three departments that handle papers arising from the manufacturing and service industries. These three departments are classified according to OM issues, and each department should welcome different research methodologies (analytical, empirical, experimental, etc.). At the same time, these departments are designed in a way that each MSOM Special Interest Group (SIG) belongs to a designated department:

- *Manufacturing Operations and Supply Chain Management.* This department will handle submissions that deal with issues such as *supply chain management* (one of the SIGs) and other issues arising from the operational aspect of manufacturing (e.g., interfaces between manufacturing and marketing/strategy). This department may also handle papers that deal with the *interface of finance, operations, and risk management* (one of the SIGs) if the papers are related to supply chain management (e.g., financial and operational hedging, vendor financing, etc.).

- *Service Operations.* This department will process papers that deal with *service management* (one of the SIGs). For example, papers that deal with *health-care operations management* (one of the SIGs), pricing and revenue management, after-sales services, service capacity allocation, technology-enabled services, and interfaces of service operations with other functional areas (marketing, human resource) would belong to this department.

- *Innovative Operations.* To differentiate *M&SOM* from *Management Science* and to enable *M&SOM* to attract more submissions and to publish more OM papers that are novel, this department will handle OM papers that examine new frontiers of OM but do not fit the other two departments. For example, this department will deal with *sustainable operations* (one of the SIGs) papers that examine new processes or operations for improving environmental and/or social responsibility. Also, papers that deal with innovative product design or new product development in the context of processes and operations will belong to this department. Moreover, papers that examine innovative operations models arising in emerging economies such as humanitarian relief operations, social entrepreneurship operations, and technology-enabled business processes and operations will belong to this department.

When the quality and quantity of inputs improve, the quality and quantity of outputs will improve.

<sup>2</sup> When *M&SOM* was first created in the mid-1990s, the original intent was to publish some OM papers that contain novel/nontraditional ideas that may not fit *Management Science*.

With fewer review cycles and shorter cycle times, the speed of publishing an article in *M&SOM* will improve. Consequently, it will help *M&SOM* to become the preferred OM research outlet for articles that are novel, relevant, and rigorous.

### 3. Promote *M&SOM* to a Larger Community

*M&SOM* should become more accessible to a larger community (researchers in other related fields (e.g., marketing, finance, public policy, etc.), OM practitioners, or graduate students in business schools and industrial engineering). To engage our larger community, I have worked with Serguei Netessine (current president of the MSOM Society) to develop the following online initiatives in 2015.

*From M&SOM Journal Editor*—an online blog to be posted on our journal website: <http://pubsonline.informs.org/journal/msom> (under the “Quick Links & Resources” column). This blog site is intended to enable the editor to create a dialogue between the editor and the OM community so as to facilitate mutual learning.

*M&SOM Review*—an online blog to be posted on our journal website: <http://pubsonline.informs.org/journal/msom> (under the “Quick Links & Resources” column). This blog is intended to increase readership and to improve visibility. I believe *M&SOM* should disseminate new OM knowledge to a wider group of potential readers so that the knowledge and insights developed in various articles can influence research and practice in the near future. Because *M&SOM* articles are written for OM researchers primarily, non-OM researchers are unable to see through the thicket of technical analysis; unable to appreciate the relevance of various *M&SOM* articles; and unable to apply the research findings of many *M&SOM* articles that could influence research in other fields or OM practice. To make *M&SOM* articles more accessible, authors of recently published *M&SOM* papers will be invited to distill the essence of their respective articles into short articles (say, 1,000–1,500 words) without any technical jargon or analysis.

We should leverage the power of social media to promote *M&SOM*, and I am calling on all readers

to support *M&SOM*. Specifically, I would encourage our readers to “share” these blogs with their LinkedIn connections, Google+ connections, etc. Moreover, I plan to work with INFORMS to turn some of these *M&SOM* Review articles into press releases for the media.

The online *M&SOM* Review can create a more vibrant OM community that engages academics, practitioners, and graduate students. Through this kind of interaction, our OM research community can learn more about issues arising from practice and the practitioners can benefit from our academic research. As we promote the authors of *M&SOM* articles, I believe it would attract even more high-quality submissions to *M&SOM*.

*New Articles in M&SOM*—an e-flyer that is intended to promote our forthcoming papers. This e-flyer will be disseminated through email to INFORMS members and through our online blog “From *M&SOM* Journal Editor” with open access on a quarterly basis. By alerting our members about our forthcoming papers (e-flyer) and providing short articles highlighting the relevance of *M&SOM* research (*M&SOM* Review), we can build awareness of our high-quality papers, provide value to our wider community of academics and practitioners, and, in turn, improve our impact factor.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our OM community. With the support of our authors and our editorial board members, *M&SOM* will continue to thrive. Together, we can shape the future of OM research, and we can build a much stronger OM research community!

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