

Where Should you Publish?

There is definitely a pecking order

- Journals have a quality hierarchy
- Conferences have a quality hierarchy
- Generally, journals outrank conferences
- Other considerations: Books (and book chapters), invited papers

Citation rates is one (semi-objective) measure of quality

Generally, it only “counts” if it is refereed

Your goal is to get the most “credit” possible

- Don't pitch too high, don't pitch too low
- Be aware of the audience

What affects probability of success?

- Appropriateness for the audience
- Acceptance rate (10-50% typically)

Mechanics

Some venues take longer than others

- Conferences, special issues, etc. have a submission date, and usually a publication date
- Some journals need an outrageous amount of time to review and publish

Each venue normally has specs to meet

- Where is it sent?
- number of copies of manuscript; paper vs. electronic submission
- Layout? These specs might be vague, or highly constrained

Cover letter: what venue, what conditions, who is point of contact, potential changes of address, relationship to prior publication

Getting reviews, revising, negotiation with editor

Copy editing

- Set to house style
- Style edit (magazines vs. journals)

Proofs – they always contain errors

Resubmission

When resubmitting a paper for re-review, include a letter.

The letter should list in detail each of the points raised by the editor and reviewers.

Hopefully the points are “addressed” in the rewrite. On occasion, the author might instead justify why the change should not/was not made.

Make it clear what parts of the paper have been changed, and how.

Be sure to make clear on the revised copy that it **is** the revised version.

Depending on the situation, the editor might or might not have the revised paper re-reviewed.

Mechanics of Paper Handling

- Manuscript sent by author to journal editor
- Number assigned to manuscript by publication staff
- Manuscript sent to editor-in-chief
- Manuscript assigned/sent to member of editorial board (editor)
- Editor sends paper to 2-4 reviewers, along with a proposed deadline and reviewing guidelines/forms
- Editor reminds reviewers that reviews are past due
- Editor receives reviews from reviewers
- Editor makes decision (or sends to editor-in-chief for decision)
 - Accept
 - Accept with minor revision
 - Require rewrite with re-review
 - Reject

Six months is typical for this process (one iteration).

Paper Reviewing: The Players

What is a journal editor? and what do they do?

- A person
- Typically, a member of academia who is essentially a volunteer
- Assign papers to reviewers
- Insure that the reviews get done
- Make decisions on which papers get accepted
- Might arrange for special issues, etc.

What is a reviewer?

- A person
- Typically, a member of academia, almost always a volunteer
- Could be well established, could be a student
- Its not all they do in life
- Their job is to write a review, communicate information to the editor and the authors, and do it in a timely fashion.

Typical Review Criteria

1. Is the paper appropriate for the journal? (Topic, level, etc.)
2. Is the work original, and correct? (content quality) For a review paper, will it appeal to the journal audience?
3. Is the presentation clear and well organized?
4. Is the notation well conceived and consistent?
5. Does the paper appropriately cite prior work, and place itself appropriately in relation to the field?
6. Is the title appropriate?
7. Is the abstract appropriate?
8. Is the introduction appropriate?

Review Criteria (cont)

If the paper fails 1 or 2, it will be rejected. Possibly the editor will suggest an alternate venue.

If the paper is weak on 2 in some way, it will probably require a complete-review of the revision (suggestions for revision will hopefully be included in information returned to author)

If the paper fails 3 badly enough it will probably be rejected or require major rewrite and re-review

If the paper fails 4 or 5, it will probably require appropriate rewrite, and there is a good chance it will require some re-review

If the paper fails 6 through 8, it will probably need revision without re-review

How to be a Reviewer

Task: Help an editor decide whether a paper is suitable (or will be suitable after revision) for publication. (Expert Witness)

Assuming the paper had no errors, would it be worthy of publication?

- Is the paper “interesting”?
- Originality (New?)
- How much contribution
- Appropriateness for this audience

Is it correct? (True?)

- You have to read thoroughly enough
- You have to know enough

Is the presentation satisfactory?

- References appropriate
- English satisfactory, style satisfactory
- Sufficiently complete
- Can it be improved?
- Should it be required to improve?

Reviewing Mechanics

If you can't be on time, either return manuscript immediately or renegotiate the deadline immediately.

Use a two-pass approach: Decide if its "reasonable" before going into details.

You need to communicate to the editor your reasons for a decision.

The more feedback you can provide to the authors on how to improve things, the better.

- Note that this is very different than saying:
The more obligation to improve, the better

Your review doesn't need to include a repeat of material in the paper (such as a summary).

However, you might provide a "summary" that is a new interpretation of the paper.