



Interfaces

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Instructions to Authors

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INTERFACES

Instructions to Authors

The goals of *Interfaces* are to improve the exchange of information between managers and professionals in management science and operations research (MS/OR) and to inform the academic community about practice. Therefore, the most appropriate papers are descriptions of the practice of MS/OR in commerce, industry, government, or education with strong emphasis on implementation. Each issue of *Interfaces* features at least one article describing an application with demonstrable value. The symbol of the organization involved and a shortened title of the paper are displayed on the cover. Authors of papers describing applications are asked to obtain letters from the organizations verifying the actual use and resulting benefits.

Interfaces also publishes opinion papers describing operational problems with less quantifiable results, reports on MS/OR training programs, news items on specific applications, state-of-the-art reviews and surveys of use, and comments from corporation managers. Papers that detail the design or development of a model or algorithm — especially those that are largely mathematical — should be sent to *Management Science* or to *Operations Research*.

All papers should be submitted to the editor-in-chief:

Frederic Murphy
School of Business and Management
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122

Articles suitable for a particular column may be submitted to the appropriate editor, but a copy should be sent to the editor-in-chief.

It is understood that papers submitted have not been submitted elsewhere, accepted for publication, or published. Normally, authors are notified within two to six weeks that their papers have been accepted, rejected, or need revision.

Form

Papers should be submitted in triplicate, typed double-spaced with generous margins on one side of 8½" by 11" paper. Long quotations, figure captions, the list of references, and the abstract should all be double spaced for ease in typesetting. Separate pages should be devoted to each figure, each table, the list of references, and the abstract, and all pages after the first should be numbered. A cover sheet should be attached listing the paper title, and the name, position, and mailing address of each author.

Authors are asked to include a short, informal note (under 100 words) about their lives, activities, and interests, not a professional vita.

Writing Papers

The following outline suggests an effective way of organizing a paper:

- (1) Describe the problem;
- (2) Explain what you did, how you did it, and what obstacles you encountered;
- (3) List the resulting benefits, both quantitative and qualitative; and

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- (4) Provide an appendix giving the particulars of the model or data.

In writing your paper, explain your work so readers outside the field can understand it. If you must use a specialized term or acronym, make sure it is defined; write out an acronym the first time it appears and enclose it in parentheses immediately afterwards. Use the active voice rather than the passive, the first person rather than the third. Don't hesitate to take credit or blame for your work.

Length

Make papers as concise and brief as possible; usually under 15 pages. Only in exceptional cases will longer papers be considered, and these will probably be edited to less than 15 pages. Please do not cram your papers onto 15 pages by using tiny type, meager spacing, and miniature margins.

Title

Make your title short and specific. Instead of "Systems analysis and order processing in a multi-echelon system," try "Systems analysis speeds telephone orders." When we are told we're going to read about a telephone company, we have a vivid image that includes the notion of a "multi-echelon system." Preferably, title should be five or six words long, never more than 10.

Abstract

You should write a brief abstract (no more than 250 words) that sets forth the main point of the paper. Many people decide whether to read the paper on the basis of the abstract. Write the abstract in a clear and vigorous way, in the active voice. Eliminate all unnecessary words. Instead of:

"This paper describes the application of a vertex coloring procedure to . . ." say:

"Vertex coloring applied to . . ."

Headings

Please use only one level of heading.

Figures and Tables

Copies of any figures and tables should be submitted on separate sheets of paper. They should have captions that are interesting and self-explanatory without reference to the text. Captions should be written in complete sentences.

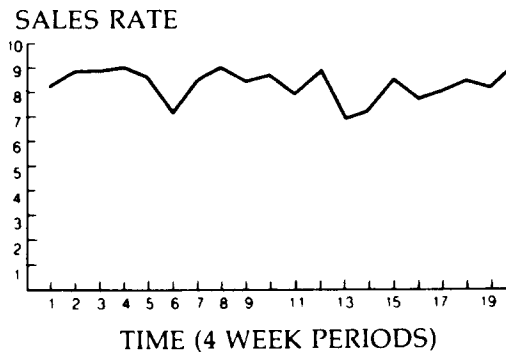


Figure 4: The healthy sales of a line of unadvertised food products show that advertising is not always required in order to sell something (Source: Little 1979).

Conversely, the reader should not have to refer back and forth from the text to the figures in order to understand the paper. The text should refer to figures where appropriate, with "(Figure 1)," but you should explain the meaning and implications of your data fully in the text. Do not require the reader to interpret the figure in order to understand what you have done, as in "Figure 1 shows the outcome of this survey." Tables should list information in some obvious logical order.

After the paper is accepted, authors

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must send reducible camera-ready drawings of all figures that cannot be typeset. Please be sure that figures are effective and efficient in their use of space. Labels interior to the figure should be large enough to be legible when the figure is reduced. Figures must be professionally prepared in black ink on vellum or a good quality white paper and should be equivalent in quality to typeset material. Figures produced by computer printers are acceptable only if they are indistinguishable in quality from those prepared by a graphic artist. Show the figure number and, if necessary, the vertical direction on the reverse side of the paper. Since the captions will be typeset, they should be typed on a separate sheet, not on the drawings.

Equations

If equations will be referred to elsewhere, they should be numbered. Equation numbers are enclosed in parentheses flush with the right margin.

References

Cite references in the body of the text: “. . . Thrump [1978] quibbled that . . .” or if 1978 was a prolific year for Thrump, “[1978b].” If the author is not cited in the text, then use [Thrump 1978]. Alphabetize the list of references according to the name of the first author. For articles use the form:

Smith, James Q. 1978, “Title of article,” *Interfaces*, Vol. 10, No. 5 (October), pp. 45–50.

and for books:

Toklas, Alice B. 1947, *Book Title*, Publisher’s name, City, State (or Country).

and for collections of papers:

Beedle, Albert A. 1979, “Title of chapter,” in *Book Title*, ed. J. J. Fox, Publisher’s name, City, State (or Country), pp. 556–572.

Avoid references to your own publications; you may use the same ideas again without fear of plagiarism. Refer to your previous publications only if the current subject absolutely requires it.

Footnotes

Avoid them. If what they contain is important, it deserves a place in the text. If not, don’t distract the reader from what is important.

Editing

Papers will be edited to improve their effectiveness in communicating to the reader. When the editing is extensive, with the danger of altering the meaning, the paper will be returned to the author for correction and approval.

For a fine discussion of writing, read Strunk, William, Jr., and White, E. B. 1979, *The Elements of Style*, Macmillan, New York.

For a more complete, formal treatment of the process of preparing a paper for publication see

The University of Chicago Press 1982, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

For sound advice on figures refer to

Tufte, Edward R. 1983, *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, Graphics Press, Cheshire, Connecticut.