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# From the Editor

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# From the Editor

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Thank you for the enthusiastic response to many of the new initiatives the *Management Science* editorial board has implemented since January 2018. Together we are making sure *Management Science* continues to be the premier publication outlet for papers on the science and practice of management. Indeed, submission volume in 2018 was strong with about 2,900 papers, out of which the new submission format, Fast Track, attracted almost 240 papers. The journal enjoys outstanding review cycle time with average time to first decision of 70 days for regular papers and 26 days for Fast Track papers. Acceptance rate is at 9.2% but a few departments, e.g., Finance, have a much lower acceptance rate (7.5%).

I am excited to report that this year we will continue to introduce new initiatives and refine the journal policy. Let me focus on a few highlights.

## *Management Science*'s 65th Anniversary

2019 marks the publication of the 65th volume of *Management Science*. To celebrate this anniversary, the editorial board is organizing a conference at Questrom School of Business, Boston University, from May 20th to May 21st, 2019. The focus of the conference is "Innovations in the Science and Practice of Management," with an emphasis on integrating theory and practice. The conference will feature plenary and invited speakers across all areas of interest to the journal. Invited talks will be followed by a discussion. Speakers are expected to submit a manuscript that will be reviewed by the editorial team. These manuscripts, after proper review, will be published in a special issue of *Management Science*.

I am pleased to report the names of the plenary speakers:

- **Patrick T. Harker.** President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Harker previously served as the President of the University of Delaware and as the Dean of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He is a former EiC of *Operations Research*.
- **Rebecca M. Henderson**. Professor at Harvard Business School with a joint appointment in the General Management and Strategy units. Henderson is also a research fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research.
- **Wallace J. Hopp.** Associate Dean at Ross School of Business, University of Michigan and a former EiC of *Management Science*.
- **Thomas L. Magnanti.** Institute Professor and former Dean of the School of Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Magnanti served as President of the Singapore University of Technology and Design. He is a former EiC of *Operations Research*.
- **Alvin E. Roth.** Professor of Economics at Stanford University, former President of the American Economics Association, and a Nobel Laureate in Economics.

The editorial board will provide more information about the conference in the near future.

## Updating the Fast Track Submission Process

Since the introduction of the Fast Track submission process, the editorial board has been studying the review process and the publication criteria. This has motivated the editorial board to revise both to make sure we improve the journal and its impact on the community and beyond. The memo published in the journal website provides details on these updates, but in this editorial, I would like to provide some insights on the Fast Track publication criteria.

When deciding whether a paper is worthy of publication as a Fast Track, editors should focus on its main contribution and start by answering the following question:

- Are the contributions of the paper, without robustness checks, extensions, full generalizations, etc., consistent with those of a regular length publication?

The objective of this question is to find out whether a regular length version of the paper is likely to meet the publication standards of the journal. Thus, Fast Track or no Fast Track, papers must have the *Management Science* quality.

To be a Fast Track, a paper must also satisfy **at least one** of the following three criteria that will characterize the distinctive features of Fast Track papers:

1. The paper will have a substantial impact on academic research—that is, it will open up new research directions or will have many follow up work;

2. The paper will have immediate applicability to some managerial or societal problems;

3. The paper will be appealing to a broad audience, e.g., *The Economist*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, etc.

It is useful to illustrate the three criteria using examples of past *Management Science* papers that, if shortened, fit the editorial board vision for Fast Track papers. Examples of recent papers that satisfy at least

- **Criteria 1**, the work on "Intertemporal Price Discrimination" (Besbes and Lobel 2015) and "Prospect Theory Explains Newsvendor Behavior" (Long and Nasiry 2015);
- **Criteria 2**, the paper on "Remanufacturing" (Agrawal et al. 2015) or "Safety Tipping Points in Hospitals" (Kuntz et al. 2015);
- **Criteria 3**, the paper on "Strategic Consumers" (Li et al. 2014) and "Offline Showrooms in Omnichannel Retail" (Bell et al. 2018).

## Data Provenance Policy

In the last few months, I have been collaborating with the EiC of *Marketing Science* and *Information Systems Research* on challenges associated with papers that raise legal and ethical questions. For example, papers that apply scraped data from a variety of websites, some of which ban such practice; or papers that use fake accounts to generate data. Based on this collaboration, *Management Science* has recently revised its data provenance policy, which you can find on the journal website. Beyond the formal wording of the policy, it is important to clarify its intent. The objective of the policy is for authors to not use data obtained by means that materially harm individual, business, public sector, or societal interests.

It is appropriate to highlight how *Management Science* is now applying the Data Provenance policy by discussing three types of challenges we have faced in the last twelve months.

- **Data scraping from websites that explicitly ban such practice.** *Management Science* allows such papers to be reviewed and finally published but authors are aware that such papers may be retroactively withdrawn if an entity complains to INFORMS and demonstrates that the **data collection** inflicted significant material harm. *This interpretation does not apply to the results of the studies*, i.e., if the results discover and demonstrate findings that may be interpreted as inflicting material harm, that in itself cannot be a reason to retract the paper.
- **Authors use fictitious guest accounts to collect data.** The key question is whether the authors, in the process of collecting the data, used means that materially harmed the organization. While "material harm" is a matter of interpretation, in some cases the Department Editors may ask authors to provide more information on the data collection process before making a final determination.
- **Stolen or unauthorized data.** *Management Science* will not allow review or publication of papers that use data that was "originally" obtained in an illegal manner (e.g., stolen or hacked) regardless of the availability of the data in public forum. The only way to use such data is to obtain explicit permission from the company from which data was stolen.

## Data Disclosure Policy

In November of last year, I shared the proposed data disclosure policy developed by a committee consisting of senior people in our community. In response to my request for feedback, I received overwhelming support for establishing a policy that enables replicability of results. It was widely recognized that, beyond the validation of research findings, sharing data and code would be of value to the relevant research communities, allowing them to leverage this prior work in their own pursuits. This sharing should increase the rate of scientific progress and impact.

However, while there has been significant support for a new policy, some responses have raised concerns about the process and criteria for handling exception requests related to authors with a non-disclosure agreement. The current proposal provides an overall framework for dealing with exceptions but not with enough details. I am working with the committee and the editorial board to address this concern and will finalize the *Management Science* policy soon.

## Final Words

As I mentioned at the beginning of last year, I look forward to your ongoing input. It is this input, and the hard work of many people including authors, the editorial board, referees, and INFORMS' publication office that makes *Management Science* such an important outlet for our community.

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