Walking the High Wire

Walking on a high wire requires focus, balance, and a commitment to venture across a precarious distance with the confidence that leads you safely to your destination. That sums up our publications activities over the past year when we restructured the program by: introducing three new journals, reorganizing the editorial boards, changing the submission software and composition vendors, and finally, moving the ECS Digital Library (ECS DL) to HighWire Press.

HighWire Press, an affiliate of Stanford University, is the platform vendor we selected to host the ECS Digital Library. We made a seamless transition on July 1 when we moved our library of approximately 95,000 journal manuscripts, meeting proceedings papers, and abstracts from AIP's Scitation platform to HighWire. We are already seeing the benefits of being on this robust platform that provides exceptional utility for our users. As ECS approaches the 100,000 paper milestone, we feel well-positioned to provide broad dissemination of research in electrochemical and solid state science and technology from our traditional publications and archives, and from the new additions. The three new journals introduced in the ECS Digital Library last year are:

- *ECS Journal of Solid State Science and Technology* (JSS)
- *ECS Electrochemistry Letters* (EEL)
- *ECS Solid State Letters* (SSL)

The HighWire Press platform will also include the *Journal of The Electrochemical Society* (JES), the flagship journal of The Electrochemical Society, published continuously since 1902. Still accessible in the Digital Library as an archived journal is *Electrochemical and Solid-State Letters* (ESL).

With a long history of success and great recognition for our important role in the science, one might wonder why ECS would venture onto the high wire. The simple answer is that the publishing world has changed drastically, forcing ECS to make these dramatic adaptations in order to improve the impact factors of our journals and provide broader dissemination of the content. These drastic changes drove our publishing partner AIP to discontinue their publications services for ECS and other customers, and forced us to find another library platform (HighWire), new manuscript submission systems (eJournalPress), and composition services (Aptara). Finally, the impact factors reported by the commercial publishing giant Thomson Reuters (TR) compelled us to reorganize the ECS journals and editorial boards so that we could create the correct alignment within the TR journal categories. The technical scope of both JES and ESL were too broad to fit within any of the TR categories and consequently our journals were being measured against journals with dissimilar content, which made this categorical realignment in the citation indices a critical step to higher impact factors.

As the only nonprofit publisher in the field, ECS has an important stewardship role and responsibility to publish the most important research in electrochemical and solid state science and technology. In order to have the best journals in the field, we need to have the top impact factors and the fastest publications in our technical community, and these essential objectives have driven ECS to make tremendous investments in our publications infrastructure. In addition to the transition costs, we have had to make greater annual and operational investments in the ECS DL platform, submission software, editorial review processes, and paper composition. The investments have paid dividends by providing our DL with a platform that facilitates greater distribution, and by reducing the journals lag time to 9 days from acceptance to final publication (and 7 days for the letters journals). Through it all, we have not sacrificed quality.

> ***"Our goal is to provide open access to all the content in the ECS Digital Library and literally free the science for researchers in electrochemistry and solid state science all over the world. This is truly a risky walk across the high wire, but the possibilities of open access have made it an organizational imperative."***

The final obstacles to broad dissemination of the science are the publication costs assessed to both the authors and library users. We removed the page charges in 2011 to eliminate the payment obstacles that deterred authors and we are planning to offer open access options for the ECS Digital Library users as early as 2014. Our goal is to provide open access to all the content in the ECS Digital Library and literally free the science for researchers in electrochemistry and solid state science all over the world. This is truly a risky walk across the high wire, but the possibilities of open access have made it an organizational imperative.

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