

# Journal of the Optical Society of America A 30th Anniversary: Editorial

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Abstract: *Journal of the Optical Society of America A* Editor-in-Chief, Franco Gori, announces the 30th Anniversary of the journal. © 2013 Optical Society of America

In January 1984, The Optical Society (OSA) launched two new journals, *Journal of the Optical Society of America A* (JOSA A) and *Journal of the Optical Society of America B* (JOSA B), out of its flagship journal, JOSA. With the launch of JOSA A, the journal cover changed and it began to solicit material when appropriate, including feature issues and review articles. As William T. Rhodes described in his 1984 *Optics News* article outlining the changes, the journal was to single out the area of image science and emphasize that “JOSA A remains the general journal of OSA for basic material”. Dr. Rhodes also outlined the need for the journal:

*In a sense, the emphasis on image science—covering image acquisition, transmission, processing, and display—is consistent with a historical point of view in optics: that optics is concerned with what you see. But the philosophy behind the new emphasis goes beyond traditional reasons. Within and without the Optical Society there are a great many researchers concerned with image science in this broad sense, and yet they have not had a journal clearly identified as appropriate for their technical correspondence... One major objective in restructuring JOSA A is to provide a home for publications in this area.*

Changes in the content and emphasis of the journal were encouraged by the Editor-in-Chief, Robert Terhune, through a new team of Topical Editors. The seven original Topical Editors were Steven Clifford, Anthony Devaney, Anil Jain, Walter Makous, Bahaa Saleh, James Wyant, and William Rhodes. The journal changed its procedures from having the Editor-in-Chief bearing the major responsibility for selecting reviewers and making manuscript decisions to having the Topical Editors do a majority of the work. The goal was to spread the load and involve more people in the effort.

As 2014 marks the 30th anniversary of JOSA A, we can reflect upon its history and see that JOSA A has clearly achieved its goal of providing a home for high quality image science. The journal continues to serve its community well, as indicated in the 40% growth in submissions just over the past 10 years. JOSA A has also seen an increase in the diversity of submissions, moving from a primarily US author base to a journal truly serving the global community. Additionally, the Cited Half-Life for JOSA A remains over 10 years

demonstrating the long term value of JOSA A articles to the community. A further asset of the journal is that its present time to publication is shorter than that of the principal competitors.

This success would not be possible without the incredible past and present editorial teams and support of the community through authorship, readership, and peer review of manuscripts. I would like to express my gratitude for this support. Stephen Burns, my predecessor, helped me a lot during the past ten years in which I served first as a Topical Editor and then as Editor of JOSA A. Kelly Cohen has been my reference point for the most disparate needs in serving JOSA A. Rob Bernstein provides clever assistance with editorial strategy and analysis. Many other people are precious for my work at JOSA A. Among them, I wish to recognize Elizabeth Nolan, Sika Dunyoh, Joe Richardson, Dan McDonold, Alexine Hart, Alice Markham, and Nicole Williams-Jones.

As JOSA A celebrates its 30th anniversary across 2014, OSA will undertake many efforts to highlight this milestone, including a dedicated website (<http://www.opticsinfobase.org/josaab30anniv.cfm>) and promotional campaigns for both JOSA A and JOSA B. Additionally, the journal will publish minireviews (8–12 page review articles) across the year on topics relevant to the journal written by luminaries to highlight important research in optics. There will be further encouragement to submit Discussion Papers, a relatively new paper type for JOSA A, that provide a deep understanding of optics topics and furnish insights into current lines of research. Such papers will keep on affording didactical, experimental, and even philosophical observations to the readers.

JOSA A must continue to identify new opportunities to remain relevant to its readers and the authors it serves. The traditional realm of optics has been of scalar nature. In recent times, however, the use of vectorial descriptions of optical themes has evolved progressively, making several JOSA A papers more akin to the style adopted by scientists working in electromagnetic engineering. This welcomed enrichment will further enhance interactions of scientists coming from optics and electromagnetism.

One characteristic of JOSA A papers is that, in most cases, particular care is taken to furnish a solid mathematical

foundation to the subject of interest. We often receive papers in which elegant and powerful mathematical algorithms are adopted, whose application range is potentially wider than that implied by the specific aim of the paper. In the coming year I would like to encourage authors and readers to explore these new applications. We expect that this analytical wealth will be further increased with the introduction of new mathematical methods into the tool box of the optician.

I welcome your suggestions, questions and other comments intended to help ensure that JOSA A continues to be successful over the next thirty years.

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