

Editorial

THE NICE thing about the last editorial of the term of an Editor-in-Chief is the opportunity to thank a number of people without whom this task would not have been possible. First in this long list are José Moura and Arye Nehorai, former and current Vice-President of Publications, for their total support and continuous advice throughout my term.

Next in my long list is the Editorial Board, past and present members included. Throughout these three years, it has been a great privilege to work with all of you. Your feedback has been tremendously helpful. The significant reduction in the review cycle that we have achieved is all due to your hard work, and that is also one of the reasons for the growth in the number of submissions that we have witnessed. To achieve this, while keeping up with the high quality that has always characterized the Transactions, was not an easy task, and I share with you my pride in publishing articles of current interest that people are excited to receive.

It is not practical to list all of the IEEE Signal Processing Society staff. However, Kathy Jackson, the Administrative Assistant, Jo-Ellen Snyder, the Publications Manager, and Mercy Kowalczyk, the Society's Executive Director, deserve a special notice. Together, we have traveled the long journey since the early days of the transition to the online manuscript system. We just crossed the 1000 paper milestone, and the credit for having them all running smoothly on Manuscript Central goes to them. Thanks for this and for many helpful suggestions!

Another very significant reason for this growth was the publication of special issues. Several special issues have already been published: Spontaneous Speech Processing; Multichannel Signal Processing for Audio and Acoustics Applications; Data Mining of Speech Audio and Dialog. Others are on the pipeline: Speech-to-Speech Machine Translation; Statistical and Perceptual Audio Processing; Expressive Speech Synthesis; Progress in Rich Transcription; Objective Quality Assessment of Speech and Audio; and Blind Signal Processing for Speech and Audio Applications. The list is long but very exciting, and will contribute to broadening the scope of the Transactions and energizing the community to band together on timely topics of popular interest. These special issues are the combined effort of a number of people acting as Guest Editors whom I cannot thank enough.

Including so many special issues in a bimonthly journal has not been easy, and had also implications in terms of increasing the acceptance-to-publication delay of regular papers. This negative impact has been counterbalanced by the publication of relief pages, and namely by the rapid posting of accepted papers on *IEEE Xplore*. The TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO

PROCESSING was the first journal of the Society to go into electronic prepublishing of accepted papers. I owe the support and vote of confidence for these measures to my colleagues on the Publication Board. Thank you once more!

I ended my first editorial thanking my colleagues in the Speech Technical Committee for their wonderful words of encouragement and support; at the risk of sounding repetitive, I must include these words again. This time, I have to add to the Audio and Electroacoustics Technical Committee, a community with which I was not so familiar, but which helped me enormously in this joint work.

I particularly would like to thank three people who acted as recent STC Chairs: Alex Acero, Michael Picheny, and Mazin Gilbert. During the last year, we had endless discussions on the future of speech within the Signal Processing Society, namely on how to integrate in its journals and conferences the new areas that have emerged: spoken language understanding, spoken language discovery, spoken language generation, spoken document retrieval, information extraction from speech, question/answering from speech, spoken document summarization, machine and speech translation, speech data mining, human computer interface, applications and standards for spoken language, and multimodal processing. These discussions led to a document presented to the Board of Governors at the last ICASSP Conference. The Ad-Hoc Committee chaired by José Moura, that was formed to study the possible solutions could not have been more helpful. For that, I do need to thank past, present and future Presidents: Fred Mintzer, Rich Cox, and Al Hero. I also need to thank Mike Goodwin, AETC Chair, for his invaluable feedback.

One of the motions recently approved by this Ad-Hoc Committee was the renaming of the journal to TRANSACTIONS ON AUDIO, SPEECH, AND LANGUAGE PROCESSING (T-ASL), together with the reformulation of the EDICS, that will include an explicit major category of "Spoken Language Processing." This significant and exciting modification, which has been approved by IEEE, will contribute to keeping pace with the changes in the technology, broaden the scope of the Transactions and attract new authors and readers, with the new Editor-in-Chief, Mari Ostendorf, at the helm. Three years ago, I had lingering doubts whether I was the right person for this job, but I have no doubts at all that Mari is the right person and I wish her all the success in this task!

Last but not least, I'd like to thank all the authors, reviewers, and readers of the TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING.

ISABEL TRANCOSO, *Editor-in-Chief*

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