



## Editorial

# RBO print or electronic?



## RBO impressa ou eletrônica?

The advance of new technologies has taken place very fast, and in most cases it has not been accompanied by screening through the analysis and containment mechanisms that are available. These mechanisms, which are based on ethical, economic and social considerations and a variety of other factors specific to each topic in question, have not advanced at the speed of information technology, since they depend on other, non-electronic control systems.

Today, someone can post a message on the internet, which might be completely untrue information, and disseminate it at the speed of light without any possibility that blocking mechanisms might be applied. There is no time for selection, qualification or defense devices to be generated against communication media that are so rapid and penetrative.

There is no way to instantaneously develop ethics and responsibility.

Another matter that has been overwhelmed by the speed of evolution of the communication media is play activities. Young people do not talk any more: they send messages and thus, funny facial expressions, flushed faces due to embarrassing situations and eye-to-eye contact of trust disappear. Today, a coded message can start and end a relationship or open or close a deal.

In our setting, not long ago, a great quandary arose: should we keep the printed RBO or should we leave it to go for an electronic format? Many journals only exist in electronic format: we never see their covers and do not know who is on their editorial boards, since we only access the studies published or their abstracts, which we locate through search websites. These journals are less expensive, do away with postage, do not occupy space, use high-definition images, are accessible from anywhere around the world, rapidly disseminate ideas (no publication queue is required) and enable fast bibliographic surveys.

It seems obvious that this is the only way forward for scientific journals. However. . .

The printed journal is something that you can hold and touch. It can be filed and transported without needing a power

socket. Moreover, it is unquestionably something that you can play with.

Another important point in choosing the path to follow is the sponsorship, which is hard to obtain in the electronic format. For journals to survive, they charge authors for their studies to be published.

We were in great doubt regarding the path to follow and we contacted the editors of some important publications in order to exchange experiences.

The Revista Argentina de Ortopedia (Argentine Journal of Orthopedics), which is edited by Dr. Ernesto Bersusky, our colleague in the journal of the Latin American Society of Orthopedics and Traumatology (SLAOT), has been published since 1936. Two years ago, the Argentine journal moved to an exclusively electronic publication format. At the last congress of the Argentine Association of Orthopedics and Traumatology (AAOT), in December 2014, the association's members were asked for their opinions regarding this "advance". The response was overwhelming: 75% proposed that the printed format should be brought back.

At the Revista Brasileira de Ortopedia (Brazilian Journal of Orthopedics), we have been analyzing the possibility of having an exclusively electronic RBO, given that we already have an electronic format, in which the entire journal is published. In this format, once studies have been approved by the editorial board, they are then published quickly. Access to the electronic journal is available through ScienceDirect, on the website <http://www.sciencedirect.com/Science/journal/aip/01023616>.

Right now, we believe that we have two distinct forms of having a scientific journal that are not mutually exclusive.

One, the traditional printed format, has covers, a record of the members of the editorial board and studies arranged according to a content list, and this constitutes a true means of updating, consultation and filing. The other, an electronic format with immediate access provided in a universal manner (and not just to association members and subscribers), enables rapid access to topics that one may wish to study, but without personality.

We take the view that these formats should coexist, because they are accessed for different reasons and at different times during our professional lives: as readers and researchers.

As readers, we receive the printed journal every two months, we sit down comfortably, consult the content list and read the topics that interest us at a moment of relaxation: we get our updates at the pace that we desire. As researchers, we go to search websites looking for a topic or subject that might by chance have been published in the RBO. We read it, extract what interests us from the study or abstract, and then continue our search in other journals.

Clearly, readers also have the possibility of downloading the entire RBO to their computers, browse through it in its electronic format and select what they deem to be of interest.

This is the difference between going to a good restaurant, sitting down in good company and selecting a meal, versus ordering a dish via the internet and eating it at home; or watching a soccer match at the stadium, with the reverberations from the fans, versus seeing the goals via a website.

I do not believe that this choice is anything relating to age or how up-to-date the concepts are. These are in fact options that technological advances bring to us, without necessarily

annulling the old methods. The mobile phone has not done away with the fixed (landline) telephone: it has just improved communication.

The electronic format for consultations and searches is fundamental, necessary and up-to-date, but the traditional journal is a symbol of the Brazilian Association of Orthopedics and Traumatology (SBOT), which renews its presence every two months.

At the last meeting of the editorial board of the RBO, at the time of the 46th Brazilian Congress of Orthopedics and Traumatology (CBOT), it was decided to continue with the printed format and to seek further improvements to its electronic format for consultations and searches.

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