

# Message from the Editor

FOR THE MOST PART, authors of papers and correspondence items for the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON MICROWAVE THEORY AND TECHNIQUES need little specific information before submitting a paper and can usually determine most of the information they need by examining several late issues.

The question as to whether or not the subject matter is suitable can be answered in part by reference to late issues to determine topics of current interest. The fields of interest of the IEEE Microwave Theory and Techniques Group include Microwave Theory, Techniques and Applications; Microwave Components, Devices and Circuits; and the Generation, Amplification, Transmission and Detection of Microwaves. In addition, techniques originally developed at wavelengths of the order of a few centimeters are finding application at higher frequencies on into the optical range.

Not all microwave topics are more suitable for these TRANSACTIONS than for other publications. For example, the IEEE Group structure is such that papers on some microwave topics, such as those relating to Antennas and Propagation, Electron Devices, or Military Electronics are often more appropriate in the TRANSACTIONS of other groups. The author's judgment as to which place is most appropriate is usually good. In cases where an overlap of interest occurs, papers are occasionally referred to the PROCEEDINGS or to other TRANSACTIONS. However, if of sufficient interest to members of G-MTT, they may be published in these TRANSACTIONS, even though they might be equally suitable for other TRANSACTIONS.

Potential authors can also determine the time lapse from receipt of the manuscript to the eventual publication date, since this is given for each paper and correspondence item published. For example, in a recent issue, the time lapse for most papers was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 6 months, and for most correspondence items 3 to 5 months. Occasionally longer delays can occur if the paper or item needs considerable revision before publication.

Authors should set high standards for themselves in the preparation of the manuscript submitted for publication, as this will increase the probability of acceptance, reduce the work of the reviewers, reduce the amount of revision required before publication, and minimize the time lapse between receipt and publication. If originals of the figures are not initially submitted, they will be requested if the paper is accepted for publication.

The average length of papers accepted for publication can be determined by examining an issue of the TRANSACTIONS.

In a recent issue, for example, the average length including figures was  $7\frac{1}{2}$  pages. This corresponds to a manuscript of approximately 15 double-spaced,  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  inch typewritten pages plus 10 figures. For purposes of estimation divide by two the number of pages of manuscript text excluding figures, in order to obtain the approximate total number of pages in the printed paper.

Correspondence items average approximately 1 printed page in length, including figures, and this corresponds to 3 double-spaced  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  inch typewritten pages plus 3 figures. Longer items occasionally appear when a paper has been condensed for publication in the Correspondence Section.

Information about the review process and reasons for revision or rejection of papers which should benefit both authors and reviewers are given as follows in answer to recent requests.

Three manuscripts of each paper received are simultaneously sent to three members of the Editorial Board for review. After careful consideration, they are returned to the Editor along with recommendations and usually with specific suggestions for improving the manuscript. The three recommendations are usually similar, but occasionally a wide difference of opinion needs to be resolved, requiring extra time.

Some of the suggestions to authors which frequently occur are the following:

- 1) Condense the paper. Publication costs require that space be used to best advantage, and verbosity is therefore discouraged. Quite often a paper is improved by more terse writing.
- 2) Make adequate reference to previous work and put your own work into proper perspective. It is becoming increasingly difficult, but no less important, to search the literature to see whether you are duplicating at least in part what has already been adequately covered.
- 3) Give some motivation for the work described, and draw some conclusions, comparing it with other similar work. The value of a particular good work may be obscure unless this is done, and it increases reader interest.
- 4) Organize the presentation, telling clearly what was done and give the essence of the contribution early in the paper. Making the paper more readable is usually worthwhile.
- 5) Reduce the amount of mathematics in the paper, putting as many ideas as possible into words. A

presentation which is too mathematical will not be read by many and may cause the reader to lose sight of the important ideas which made the mathematics necessary.

Among the reasons for rejection of a paper or for a recommendation that it be condensed and published as correspondence are the following:

- 1) The work presented is not new. The theory may be a rehash of what is already well covered in the literature or the ideas presented may already be well known.
- 2) The work described is incomplete. Perhaps a theory is presented which is unsupported by any kind of measurements or other evidence. The hoped-for results may not be obtained, or if obtained are disappointing. There may be no comparison with other theories or techniques so that one cannot tell the relative value of the work.
- 3) The presentation is so difficult to follow, even after revision, that publication would not be justified.

Short items submitted for the Correspondence Section are usually not sent out for review, in order to publish them as soon as possible. However, it does not follow that all such items are automatically accepted. Some

of the reasons for rejecting correspondence items are the following:

- 1) The idea presented duplicates work already published.
- 2) The topic presented is not within the scope of interest of G-MTT.
- 3) The idea presented is trivial, or technically unsound.
- 4) The item is too long. Items usually average a printed page in length, although occasionally exceptions occur for special reasons.

No attempt is made to impose complete uniformity of style on the authors, although it is customary to use the 3rd person singular in writing technical papers. Abbreviations should be used that are well understood, or they should be defined the first time they occur in the paper.

Other suggestions to authors are given in the paper "Information for IRE Authors" which was published in PROC. IRE, September, 1960, pp. 1536-1539. Reprints are available on request from the IEEE Editorial Dept., Box A, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N. Y. 10021.

In addition, a recent article by James Lufkin entitled "Join the Writer's Elite—If You Can" in the May, 1964 issue of the IEEE STUDENT JOURNAL is recommended as both informative and entertaining.

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