

Editorial

IN the last few years the IEEE MICROWAVE AND GUIDED WAVE LETTERS (MGWL), the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON MICROWAVE THEORY AND TECHNIQUES, and the *IEEE MTT-S International Microwave Symposium Digest* have experienced an increasing number of instances of unethical publication practices. The number of such incidents appears to be increasing, and thus has become a matter of great concern to the Editors of these journals and to the MTT Administrative Committee.

Recent incidents have included the following.

- Submission of identical papers simultaneously to two journals, or to a symposium and a journal. This practice not only violates IEEE policy, but may constitute a violation of copyright law.
- Submission of two papers, having only minor differences, to the same or different journals. For example, the TRANSACTIONS once received a paper entitled "TE Waves in . . ." followed shortly by a paper, from the same author, entitled "TM Waves in . . .," where both papers had nearly identical text but different equations.
- Submission of a paper that has not been properly cleared by an employer or funding organization. Occasionally such a paper has divulged the employer's or organization's proprietary or classified information.
- Submission of a large number of papers, which are not identical but have essentially the same information, to various journals.
- Submission of a symposium paper to a journal, without expanding its content.
- Publication of a paper by minor contributors to the work,

while the major contributor was not listed as an author. In one incident, this practice was used consciously to embarrass the major contributor.

- Conversely, people who clearly have had no contact with the work have been listed as coauthors.
- Several incidents of bald plagiarism.

Authors who engage in such practices have very little excuse. The IEEE Copyright form, which all authors must sign, states, "The undersigned hereby represents and warrants that the work is original and that he/she is the author of the work . . ." and "The undersigned represents that he/she has the power and authority to make and execute this assignment." Furthermore, the MGWL requires authors to sign a form assuring the Editor that all required clearances have been obtained, and that the manuscript has not been simultaneously submitted to another journal. The "Information for Authors" section, published periodically in the TRANSACTIONS and MGWL, has similar caveats. Finally, unethical publication practices are inevitably self-defeating: they are *always* discovered, usually before publication.

It is distressing for us to have to write an editorial like this. However, if these incidents continue, the only possible solutions will inevitably involve something we find even more distressing: additional hardships and publications delays for ethical authors.

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