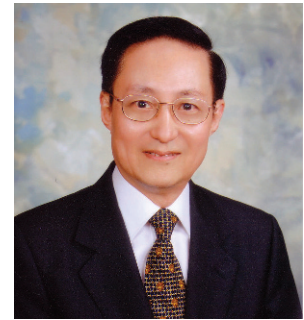




Editorial

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Electronic Distribution of *International Surgery*

In my initial personal letter to you in the first quarter, 2011, issue of *International Surgery*, I emphasized that we have the highest goals for our Journal and that we have much work to do in this reference. Clearly, I requested then, and repeat here, that I and my team need all of your enthusiastic, dedicated support to accomplish the lofty goals that we so rightly have set for *International Surgery*. In the second quarter, 2011, issue, I emphasized the importance of peer review, which leads to overall quality improvement and our eventual achievement of our goals for one of the most important assets of the International College of Surgeons, *International Surgery*.

In this Editorial, I address the analysis and plans now being developed to electronically distribute *International Surgery* to all Fellows of the International College of Surgeons, and to all institutional subscribers, by electronic means only, beginning in 2012. Additional communications will be forthcoming in the next few months, as the plans are prepared for eventual presentation to the parent body governance. Certainly, should any of you have thoughts and opinions on this contemplated procedure, we would very much like to hear from you.

Like so many other scientific/medical journals, with our Journal being no exception, *International Surgery* was available only in print form for many years. Now, in recent years, we, like other societies and their respective journals, have made the Journal available in print form and in electronic format – in our case, to each Fellow who elected to pay the relevant subscription fee in print and/or electronic form.

The current, increasing preference of the scientific/medical publishing industry, including readers, for electronic distribution is unmistakable, with this

shift becoming more and more prevalent with each passing year. Institutional libraries no longer have the space, amongst other constraints, to accommodate the large number of different journals in print format.

As valid as the foregoing reasons are, I submit that even more significant justifications exist for the International College of Surgeons, and for *International Surgery*, to move to electronic distribution only. My team and I strongly believe that every Fellow in the International College of Surgeons should have access to *International Surgery* – particularly with our peer review procedures, which provide every reader with the capability to track research/methodology in the surgical field, which provide the opportunity to establish and enhance professional relationships, and which provide the opportunity for every reader and Fellow to enhance their professional identity and responsibility. All of the foregoing are, in summary, the basis for Fellows to be members of any professional society, including the International College of Surgeons.

And, electronic distribution, for us, is also the forerunner of my intended, forthright actions over the next several months to seize the advantages of electronic publishing in the broadest sense. In future Editorials from me, I will focus on the many opportunities available from electronic publishing for *International Surgery*. It is quite clear that we must think and act in this manner if we are to achieve the goals that we have set for *International Surgery*.

I ask for your continued support and for your ongoing suggestions/commentary as we proceed.

Thank you.

Professor Christopher Chen
Editor-in-Chief
International Surgery