



# CIRUGÍA ESPAÑOLA

[www.elsevier.es/cirugia](http://www.elsevier.es/cirugia)



## Editorial

### Cirugía Española: Adapting to the evolving world of publishing and times of crisis<sup>☆</sup>



### Cirugía Española: adaptándose a la evolución del mundo editorial y a los tiempos de crisis

In recent decades, the influence of the digital revolution on the world of publishing has been unquestionable, accompanied by profound changes in the way that information generated by the scientific community is understood, produced, disseminated and shared. The classic publishing model of a printed issue that is distributed monthly to subscribers, members of societies and libraries (with the consequent delay in the publication of studies and results, production and distribution costs, as well as the ecological impact of paper consumption) has changed to immediate access to information by means of electronic formats and online publications.

Although the disappearance of printed journal editions was the initial and most traumatic step (breaking with a classic paradigm in the scientific world), the enormous possibilities of digital access have generated several means of improvement, such as the speed of distribution, alternatives to the classic scientific article, information diffusion channels, as well as the evaluation of the influence of each article by the scientific society. *Cirugía Española* has closely followed this ongoing evolution, adapting to these changes. The initial modifications included electronic publication of the journal, the diversification of the types of articles, favoring those that could possibly affect the impact factor (IF) of the journal (original and review articles), but also seeking other formats to encourage the participation of members of the Spanish Association of Surgeons (*Asociación Española de Cirujanos*, AEC) (Surgical Innovation, Image of the Month, Video of the Month, Case Report). At the same time, “Visual Abstracts” have been incorporated as a simple complement to an article that facilitates its dissemination on social media, with a demonstrated effect on the number of citations or views of published articles.<sup>1,2</sup>

Digital advances have allowed us to better understand the influence that a journal has on scientific knowledge in general,

as analyzed by the IF, which is an especially important marker for evaluating the scientific quality of a journal. At the same time, other measurable options have been developed that have become markers of the quality of journals in other areas. Thus, in addition to the number of citations (i.e. FI), we are able to determine the number of times an article is consulted or downloaded by an interested reader (which is the real or most important purpose of the journal), or has been consulted in specific repositories offered by large publishers, such as Science Direct. Perhaps the most promising novelty are the ‘scores’ or markers that summarize the diffusion of an article on any possible channel (citation, download, social media, web pages, blogs, Google, etc) such as Altmetrics<sup>3</sup> or PlumX<sup>4</sup> (Table 1), which provide data for the universal dissemination of that article in a practical, visual way. All these changes will undoubtedly have an important effect on the assessment of the scientific importance of a journal, which is a legitimate objective of any publication, even calling into question the classic paradigm that IF stands for.

The most spectacular and promising advancement that has occurred in the publishing world in recent years is the use of #SoMe (social media) for the diffusion of scientific publications, with the added value of being a forum for open discussion of scientific news.<sup>5-7</sup> There is evidence that the use of these media (Twitter, Facebook) increases the number of citations of a publication, especially if it is accompanied by a visual abstract. This amplifies the final objective of any author or publication, which is the widespread dissemination of scientific knowledge.

*Cirugía Española* and the AEC have maintained a proactive approach to these issues, and the Facebook and Twitter accounts (@cirugiaespanola) continuously provide publishing news with a significant number of followers (2213 on Facebook or 4937 on Twitter). We are aware that exclusive exposure of

<sup>☆</sup> Please cite this article as: Targarona EM, Balibrea JM, Ferrer J, Frasson M, López-Cano M, Ríos A. *Cirugía Española*: adaptándose a la evolución del mundo editorial y a los tiempos de crisis. *Cir Esp.* 2021;99:327-328.

**Table 1 – Evolution of the indicators for scientific quality and visibility of *Cirugía Española* in recent years.**

	IF	Quartile	Pages viewed in Spanish	Pages viewed in English	Access through Science Direct, Spanish	Access through Science Direct, English	Social media (PlumX)
2017	0.841	Q4	193 370	7728	567 222	51 722	n/a
2018	0.835	Q4	2 308 696	84 668	364 034	139 300	n/a
2019	1.323	Q3	3 533 882	118 828	256 497	112 610	n/a
2020	n/a	n/a	4 174 230	213 536	650 066	103 474	1149

new articles is not enough to achieve the desired results. A proactive surgeon who is an expert in the digital world is necessary to modulate and expand the potential media impact of our social networks. In order to develop the digital component of the magazine, the Board of Directors of the AEC, who are aware of the importance of being at the forefront in the application of these tools, has created a Junior Editor position, whose primary objective (in addition to the usual editorial tasks) will be to promote and position *Cirugía Española* in social media to increase visibility. The idea includes bolstering the social networks currently in use (Twitter and Facebook) and creating a YouTube channel where the videos accepted by the journal will be published.

While this is the most important project for the advancement of the journal in 2021, we are also pleased to announce another project that aims to help increase the knowledge in scientific methodology of members of the Society. In collaboration with the AEC Training Division, and in accordance with the results of a survey carried out in November 2020, an index of topics in scientific methodology has been created that will be published in 2021 and 2022 with the objective of standardizing and facilitating comprehension of the methodological tools used in surgical research.

Although these two projects (#SoMe and scientific methodology) have originated within the Editorial Committee, the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic has required changes and decisions to adapt the journal to its primary function, which is the dissemination of scientific knowledge. In March 2020, the decision was made to prioritize publications referring to COVID and to publish the documents prepared by the COVID Committee of the AEC. A total of 77 articles related to this topic have been evaluated, 32 of which have been accepted. The bibliometric analysis of the articles published in 2020 (conducted at the end of the year) has shown that an article on COVID-19<sup>8</sup> has been the most cited (31 times), most downloaded (26 141 times) and commented on social media. It has also obtained the highest PlumX score (510), which confirms the need and usefulness of the journal for the dissemination of information in times of crisis with an uncertain future.

The primary objective of the Editorial Committee of *Cirugía Española* is to evaluate and accept the highest quality scientific contributions submitted. At the same time, however, we must know how to adapt to changes and innovations in our field or to unforeseen situations that influence the regular activity of the journal. Our readers will be the judges who will determine

the interest and importance of the implemented changes. We hope that the novelties that will be incorporated in coming months will meet the approval of our readers. Certainly, we will be able to verify this fact with the various journal activity and quality markers available.

#### REFERENCES

- Ibrahim AM. Seeing is believing: using visual abstracts to disseminate scientific research. *Am J Gastroenterol*. 2018;113:459–61. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/ajg.2017.268>.
- Nikolian VC, Ibrahim AM. What does the future hold for scientific journals? Visual abstracts and other tools for communicating research. *Clin Colon Rectal Surg*. 2017;30:252–8. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1055/s-0037-1604253>.
- Bornmann L. Do altmetrics point to the broader impact of research? An overview of benefits and disadvantages of altmetrics. *J Informetr*. 2014;8:895–903.
- Lindsay JM. PlumX from plum analytics: not just altmetrics. *J Electron Resour Medical Libr*. 2016;13:8–17.
- Mayol J, Dziakova J. Value of social media in advancing surgical research. *Br J Surg*. 2017;104:1753–5. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10767>.
- Ioannidis A, Blanco-Colino R, Chand M, Pellino G, Negogodiev D, Wexner S, et al. How to make an impact in surgical research: a consensus summary from the #SoMe4Surgery community. *Updates Surg*. 2020;72:1229–35. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s13304-020-00780-z>.
- Petrucci AM, Chand M, Wexner SD. Social media: changing the paradigm for surgical education. *Clin Colon Rectal Surg*. 2017;30:244–51. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1055/s-0037-1604252>.
- Balibrea JM, Badia JM, Rubio Pérez I, Martín E, Álvarez E, García S, et al. Surgical management of patients with COVID-19 infection. Recommendations of the Spanish Association of Surgeons. *Cir Esp*. 2020;98:251–9. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ciresp.2020.03.001>.

Eduardo M. Targarona\*, José M. Balibrea, Joanna Ferrer, Mateo Frasson, Manuel López-Cano, Antonio Ríos  
Comité Editorial de *Cirugía Española*

\*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [etargarona@santpau.cat](mailto:etargarona@santpau.cat) (E.M. Targarona).

2173-5077/

© 2021 AEC. Published by Elsevier España, S.L.U. All rights reserved.