

## From the Editor

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The past, present and future: looking for the right balance.

Starting a new volume, a new year for the journal, is a time to (re-)think the past, the present and the future.

We have seen a gradual increase of papers for T&D. The process in processing the input for the journal is improving but it is still far away from a scheme where on a regular basis we can find a new issue of the journal on our desk. We are working on this, but it remains difficult, because a lot of the work has to be done by many people giving their own time to the editing process of the journal. What we have achieved is a real journal belonging to the AAATE, Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe. For the sake of history: the AAATE started at the third ECART conference Lisbon. The ECART conferences (1990 Maastricht/Netherlands, 1993 Stockholm/Sweden and 1995 Lisbon/Portugal) needed a formal "home" and not just the conference organisation but the whole Assistive Technology research society needed a place for communication and development of their discipline. Soon it appeared that there was a need for a scientific journal for the AAATE. In a very friendly and good cooperation, the original editors of the journal *Technology and Disability*, Joseph Lane and William Mann, decided that the AAATE was a good home base. It is just three and a half years since we formed this link.

Although one might expect that the contents are limited to the EU (from the 1st of May 2004 consisting of 25 countries), or better to Europe as a whole (44 countries), we have seen many contributions from outside Europe, and this is really what we expect from a scientific journal.

Presently we cover various types of content in T&D. The original journal was mainly a series of special issues on challenging topics. Now we are trying to get more material as free papers, taking care of a larger diversity in the large area of assistive technology research. Next to these two types we have technical notes and book reviews. The opportunity of technical notes (and clinical single case studies) is not very much used yet, but this may increase in future. The book review is new and we hope to get some feedback on this special

item. The mix of special issues, for a select readers' public and the wide scope of free papers, book reviews, technical and clinical notes is thought to be best serving the readers; but we would like to have feedback on this issue.

The future, of course, is not known to us, but there is at least one concern and that is the focus on the application of ICT for solving disability problems. The concern is two-fold.

The first question is about the proper approach in this relatively new area: articles with a good scientific approach contributing to our knowledge base are scarce. On the contrary, many more good articles on the development of new products and services are becoming available and we hope that the right balance can soon be found.

The second concern is the lesser attention in funding from the EU and other, national sources as well, for non-ICT assistive technologies (and thus effectively: lesser new research and developments). Due to the emphasis on the, in itself, very interesting approach of designing for all, less attention is given to ICT-related problems and non-ICT is put aside as less innovative and less effective in creating solutions. It is surely not my purpose to criticize any of these directions, but I would like to see the right balance and will do my best to keep the journal in the balance.

A personal concern as Editor is to keep the list of Associate Editors in balance: enough expertise on the broad topics addressed in our journal and a balanced sharing of the workload of the Associate Editors. I take a continuous review of the list of editors as a serious job. Any suggestion for Associate Editors is welcome.

Thus last but not least (a final statement is sometimes better recognized and read than one in the middle), we thank all Associate Editors for a good year of work.

*Thijs Soede*  
Editor-in-chief  
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