State of the Journal and Call for Editorial Nominations

The *Journal of Operations Management*’s editorial office at Wake Forest University has received word that the journal will now be indexed starting with Volume 18 (2000) by the Institute for Scientific Information in their Science Citation Index Expanded (also known as SciSearch® or SCI), as well as in their CompuMath Citation Index® and Current Contents®/Engineering, Computing, and Technology. [Note that this is not in SSCI (Social Science Citation Index), where business journals might be expected, but rather in SCI due to *JOM*’s more scientific nature]. This is in addition to *JOM*’s existing coverage in ISI’s Alerting Services®, as well as in Engineering Information Inc., Executive Sciences Inst., INSPEC, Int. Abstracts in Operations Research, Information Access Company, and Cambridge Scientific Abstracts. The editorial office, as well as our publisher, Elsevier, has been trying for 7 years to get *JOM* listed in these databases, where business journals might be expected, but rather in SCI due to *JOM*’s more scientific nature. This change in *JOM*’s existing coverage is due to the efforts of a string of dedicated editors, associate editors, reviewers, and authors, as well as to APICS, and most recently and crucially, Elsevier, our publisher. Although there isn’t space to acknowledge everyone here, I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions of the past editors of *JOM*, in order. Lee Krajewski was the first editor when the journal started in 1980, and later on did another short stint with Gene Woolsey in 1988 when the journal was in trouble. Lee endured many hardships, including attacks on even the desirability of such a journal as well as upon his own character, in trying to successfully launch *JOM*. Lee’s tenure was followed in 1983 by that of Earle Steinberg, who instituted some valuable changes in *JOM*’s format and design, but wound up leaving academia and thus passed the journal on to Ron Ebert in 1989. Ron gave *JOM* the solid footing and publishing regularity it desperately needed. He also was the one who eventually changed *JOM* into a solid empirical journal. This change by itself was probably more crucial to *JOM*’s ultimate acceptance as a top research journal than any other single change.

In addition to this good news, we have also received word that the *Financial Times* of London, in their annual evaluation of business schools, is now including *JOM* in their set of 35 top academic and practitioner journals which they use to evaluate the faculty research component of their rankings. *Journal of Operations Management* thus joins *Management Science*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Operations Research*, and *Harvard Business Review*, among others, in this elite group of top journals.

These accolades for *JOM* are due to the efforts over many years of a string of dedicated editors, associate editors, reviewers, and authors, as well as to APICS, and most recently and crucially, Elsevier, our publisher. Although there isn’t space to acknowledge everyone here, I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions of the past editors of *JOM*, in order. Lee Krajewski was the first editor when the journal started in 1980, and later on did another short stint with Gene Woolsey in 1988 when the journal was in trouble. Lee endured many hardships, including attacks on even the desirability of such a journal as well as upon his own character, in trying to successfully launch *JOM*. Lee’s tenure was followed in 1983 by that of Earle Steinberg, who instituted some valuable changes in *JOM*’s format and design, but wound up leaving academia and thus passed the journal on to Ron Ebert in 1989. Ron gave *JOM* the solid footing and publishing regularity it desperately needed. He also was the one who eventually changed *JOM* into a solid empirical journal. This change by itself was probably more crucial to *JOM*’s ultimate acceptance as a top research journal than any other single change.

After Ron completed his tenure in 1991, the journal foundered for lack of funding, and almost went under if it weren’t for the efforts of a few people who pushed heavily to get *JOM* back on track, primarily Roger Schroeder, Art Hill, and Tom Hoffmann. Art and Tom then executed a major and permanent improvement in *JOM*’s funding and sponsorship by arranging for Elsevier to assume responsibility for the editorial and publishing direction of the journal so APICS wasn’t burdened with this effort. Continuing with the rescue, Art and Tom then jointly assumed editorial responsibilities for *JOM* in 1993. Following Tom and Art, I took over responsibility for *JOM* in 1995, signing on for what then sounded like an enormous 5 years of duty, which has now been extended into 2002.

Working with Elsevier has been absolutely a delight. They pay the supporting institution a significant sum to defray expenses, as well as supporting the editor in various and helpful ways. As submissions increased, and more special issues were planned, Elsevier increased the number of annual issues from four (about 22 pa-
pers a year), to five, and now to six (about 34 papers a year). They have also promised to keep increasing the number of issues as long as there are enough good papers to continue publishing at that rate. Also, under Elsevier and the dedication of APICS E&R Foundation administrators including Brooke Saladin, Mike Lythgoe, and Mike Spencer, we have been able to move the association of the journal from the parent APICS to the more appropriate APICS Education and Research Foundation. Tow years ago, E&R helped initiate the annual JOM Awards Program and, along with Elsevier, contributes to the yearly prize awards.

The editorial process with JOM has largely stabilized now. We have a little under 700 total subscribers and receive about 100 submissions a year, many in September and October after the summer research period. Of these, somewhat less than half are returned, typically due to a poor fit with JOM. At any given time, I typically have 12 first submissions and 5 revisions in process. The response times have also stabilized, averaging about 10 weeks (ranging though from 5–20) for first submissions and 5 weeks (ranging from 0–12) for revisions. Our acceptance rate has been edging up, moving from the high teens some years ago to about 20% more recently since authors have learning what types of papers to submit and what it takes to get published in the journal.

Although we have been publishing about one special issue a year for the last few years, that will probably start increasing since we now have six special issues in various states of preparation. The next special issue which should be coming out soon is Operations Strategy for the New Millenium, to be followed not long thereafter by Managing the Interface Between Marketing and Operations. A third, which is at the revision stage, is Simulation Studies in Operations Management. Three special issues are still at the call-for-papers stage: Metrics and Performance Measures in Operations Management (due Feb 2001), Case Study and Field Research (due March 2001), and the latest Operations Within Today’s Demand Chain Framework (due Aug 2001). For information about these special issues please check the JOM website: www.mba.wfu.edu/jom/.

Under my editorship, I have strived to make the journal a respected empirical research outlet. However, I have been bombarded with complaints about this, a few wanting to see regular teaching pieces in the journal, many wanting to see papers developing mathematical theory concerning operations-type situations, but most wanting to see papers concerning hypothetical operations situations (grievously misnomered, in my opinion, as theorital research). The argument, which certainly sounds plausible (even to me), is that the top journal in a field should be open to all forms of research. I do consider JOM as open to all methodologies of research, and have lately been trying to especially encourage mathematical and simulation research pieces, but only if the work is based on real-world data. (For example, we have a special issue coming out in the future on simulation-based research. There is also the Notes section of the journal, which accepts good research but in special segments of the field, such as tutorials, conceptual work, methodological studies, and comments). Nevertheless, most of the work that seems to come to JOM, and get published, is based on statistical survey methodology.

I have three reasons for being obdurate about requiring an empirical basis for papers submitted for the regular section of the journal. First, I have a philosophical objection to research that is simply someone’s fantasy, and especially if the fantasy is cloaked in real-world terms making managers think that this work may be of relevance to one of their real-world problems. Second, if I considered including hypothetical research, I’m afraid I would be overwhelmed with papers, most of which were rejected from other journals. And finally, as I look at the journals selected by Business Week, Financial Times, U.S. News and World Report, and other such ranking entities as the top research journals in business, I do not see a wide variety of types of papers but rather primarily papers that follow one rigorous, consistent, accepted research methodology.

So now it is once again time to pass on the torch to a new Editor-in-Chief. The past has been tumultuous, but JOM is now on solid footing with a global reputation for research excellence. I have enjoyed my tenure as editor, and have made, in my opinion, some slight improvements in the journal but my enthusiasm is waning and the weight becomes heavier. It is time for new blood, more ideas, further improvements, newcomer’s enthusiasm, greater accolades. I have contacted the publisher, the consulting editors, the associate editors, and the editorial advisory board to let them know of my departure and solicit candidates for consideration as the next editor. Those candi-
dates selected for further consideration will be asked to submit a proposal outlining their commitment to the journal, their ideas for further development, and documentation of the commitment of their institution to their editorship duties, typically including release time from teaching. If there is someone, including yourself, that you would like the publisher to consider for the next editor, please send your nomination by January 31, 2000 to Gerard Wanrooy (g.wanrooy@elsevier.nl), publisher, Elsevier Science or to Jack Meredith (jom@mba.wfu.edu) who will send it on to the publisher.

It has been a pleasure to serve you, and I cannot adequately thank all the committed people who have spent freely of their time to support JOM and make it a top research journal in operations management.

Jack Meredith
(Editor in Chief)