

Editorial

Developing an Electronic Presence for the IEEE/ACM TRANSACTIONS ON NETWORKING

COMPUTER NETWORKING, the area to which the technical contents of this very journal are dedicated, are changing the ways that many people conduct their business (and pleasure!). The papers we print report on the cutting edge research that is pushing network technology and services forward. With these changes, and as new services are introduced and network connectivity becomes more ubiquitous, the operations of this journal are also evolving.

The editorial and publication-related activities of IEEE/ACM TRANSACTIONS ON NETWORKING (ToN) have always exploited networking capabilities whenever possible. Editorial board members communicate amongst themselves and with our readers, authors and referees using e-mail. (Note that e-mail addresses of our editors are printed on the inside front cover of the journal, together with more traditional contact information.) We also encourage our authors to submit their initial manuscripts electronically and nearly 100 percent of our published manuscripts are sent in electronic form to the publishers.

Most recently, the IEEE/ACM TRANSACTIONS ON NETWORKING has established on-line sites for ftp, and World Wide Web (WWW) access to ToN material, including information about the journal and its scope, the editorial board, information for authors, abstracts of all published and soon-to-be published papers, and a calendar of network-related conferences and workshops. In the case of our WWW home page, pointers are also included to other WWW pages of interest to those in the networking area. The address of our anonymous ftp site is ccrc.wustl.edu; all ToN documents are in the `pub/ton` directory there. The URL for our WWW page is <http://www.cerc.wustl.edu/~ton/>. For those wanting to learn about network services, the book, *The Whole Internet: Users Guide and Catalog*, by Ed Kroll provides an excellent introduction.

The activities described above are just a start. The greater challenge in establishing an electronic presence for ToN is to define the role of the journal in a networked, electronic age. As network access becomes more ubiquitous, our role as a distributor of information, i.e., the physical printing and mailing of paper copies of the journal, is likely to become less important, although many predict that paper will continue to be the medium of choice for readers for some time. As the amount of technical information available continues to proliferate, the importance of our role as a filter, i.e., identifying important papers to our readership and working with authors through the refereeing process to produce the best paper possible, is likely to increase. This places further importance on maintaining the highest quality editorial board and refereeing process possible. Networking also enables new possibilities for the journal, such as the ability to post commentary on published papers, or add pointers to related or subsequent research in the area.

Networking and the use of electronic media are creating a tremendous number of opportunities for all publications. However, they also pose many challenges and have raised many unanswered questions. Copyright and the protection of intellectual property, a potential future blurring in the difference between conference and journal publications, and access charging are but a few of these issues. Our editorial board and each of our three sponsoring societies are all actively considering these issues. In the short term, I would like to encourage all of our readers to try out our ftp and WWW sites. Over the longer term, I again encourage you to contact us, and our sponsoring societies, with your input, suggestions, and comments, particularly with respect to electronic publishing. Our goal is to provide the best service possible to you, our readers, as we continue on into the age of networking.

J. F. KUROSE
Editor-in-Chief