



## OPEN ACCESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As Editor-in-Chief, *International Surgery*, I dedicate this editorial letter to the immense impact that open access and social media now have on scientific and medical publishing.

Over 50 years ago, Eugene Garfield participated in establishing index measures based on the number of citations associated with articles published in journals. This resulted in impact factor measurements. Given the need to publish in relation to academic advancement, many researchers selected specific journals for publishing their articles based on impact factors, with high impact factor journals being preferred.

Traditional impact factor measurements do not necessarily indicate high readership. The highest impact factor journals are not necessarily open access journals. Open access changed the relationship and emphasis between the number of citations and readership, with open access stimulating readership, given internet availability of research information on a worldwide basis in an immediate sense.

Open access in combination with enhanced usage of social media further shifts the emphasis from publications to individual researchers. The influence of social media blogging can be very significant in terms of improving published manuscripts as a result of communications between individual researchers and readers. Immediate access to up-to-date scientific evidence and collaboration of scientific ideas amongst peers lead to increased citations.

*International Surgery*, being an open access only journal, in combination with emphasized social media usage, enables *International Surgery* to provide major advantages to authors of research papers and to readers of scientific and medical articles.

I welcome any questions or comments that you may have.

Sincerely,

Christopher Chen  
Editor-in-Chief  
*International Surgery*