Electronic publishing offers speed, global access, and savings. On the other hand, we do not know how many of our readers can, are willing, or prefer to read online. The official “journal of record” for Stroke is the online version, and it offers some advantages. Stroke ASAP, our publish-ahead-of-print feature, posts articles within 2 weeks after the proofs are returned by the authors without having to wait for other articles of a given issue and without incurring the additional time required to distribute the print version. Moreover, authors can find where their Stroke articles have been quoted, with direct links to the respective articles.

In February, we introduced our Ongoing Stroke Trials as our first “online-only” feature. This will also continue to be published online in its regular June and October installments. We have had no reactions to the change. Moving a popular feature like letters online will draw some readers to the Stroke web page who have never before read the journal online.

Others might not be so willing to make that change in their reading habit.

After animated discussion among the associate editors and after consulting the members of the Editorial Board, we took the decision that led to some noticeable changes in this issue of Stroke. For the first time ever, letters to the editor will appear online only. Titles will still be listed in the Table of Contents, but full text can only be found online. Sister AHA journals have introduced similar online-only features in the past year. Letters, Research Reports, Short Communications, and Case Reports will appear online only from this point on as they are accepted. A few Research Reports appear online only in this issue.

With any change, response will naturally be mixed. The opinion of our readership is important, and with that in mind, Stroke—in cooperation with the American Heart Association and our publisher, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins—is undertaking a readership survey to gauge readers’ responses on various features in the journal, and reading patterns and interests of subscribers.

Moving some shorter features online frees space in the journal for more original research, substantial articles and reviews, and it helps fulfill Stroke’s aim to be the voice of stroke in the scientific community.

David Scott, BA, Managing Editor
Vladimir Hachinski, MD, DSc, Editor-in-Chief
Stroke: Online-Only Features
David Scott and Vladimir Hachinski

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