

Editors' Corner

The Editorial Board is pleased to welcome you to the first issue of the Quarterly Journal “Forum for Electromagnetic Research Methods and Application Technologies (FERMAT),” which is being launched during the first quarter of 2014, under the auspices of the FERMAT Foundation—a non-profit organization established to support this venture—with technical support provided by Pro-Tech and the EMC Lab of Penn State. In common with the traditional scientific Journals, FERMAT offers its contributors a platform for sharing research results with their peer group, and for announcing the latest technological advances to its readers. What distinguishes FERMAT from the traditional journals, however, is that it has a number of unique features such as:

1. Open Access.
2. Invited review papers—book-chapter style, plus a few “selected” contributed papers solicited by the Editorial board.
3. Comments and discussions of these papers.
4. Forum on "hot topics" debating open issues.
5. Multi-media features
6. No page limit (within reason).
7. No page charges.

To the best of our knowledge, no such Journal and Forum exist anywhere at present, at least in the Electromagnetics area. The review system is unique as well, since the Editorial board asks the reviewers to simply scan the “invited” contribution to check for obvious typos and omissions, if any, and to make suggestions for improvement in the presentation, if needed. The FERMAT review policy banks on the readers to play the roles of *de facto* reviewers, since they have the opportunity to comment, to criticize, to question, as well as to add-on information relevant to the article *post fact*, after the article has appeared. This type of reviewing policy also solves the “biased reviewer” problem, which can create nightmares and deep frustrations for the “victimized” authors in conventional publications. Such reviews can now appear side-by-side with the author’s response, and FERMAT lets the readers be the judge which side they want to take. The readers have an opportunity to weigh in themselves and to join the debate, if they so desire.

The Forum Section selects topics that have been in the news lately, topics that are being hotly debated, and may even be controversial. It encourages debates on the relevant issues, attempts to clear the smokescreens if any, and to separate hype from reality.

FERMAT is comprised of five Sections, listed below.

Section-1 *Articles*: primarily invited “review” type, though selected contributed papers will also be welcomed in the future. Comments and Discussions on the Articles will be solicited from the readers and will be entered in the space provided below the Articles.

Section-2 *Forum*: Platform for airing “hot” topics, or controversial issues in EM Research and Applications, e.g., Metamaterials, High-Power Microwaves, Transformation Optics, High-data rate Communication systems, Energy Harvesting, to name a few.

Section-3 *Multimedia*: PPT files and videos of selected symposium presentations. Feature articles on the History of EM, and other interesting topics will also appear in this Section.

Section-4 *Education*: Articles, presentations and opinions on EM education

Section-5 *News & Views*: Newsworthy items and Announcements of interest to the EM community

University Laboratories and industrial organizations in the EM area, including software companies, will be welcomed to contribute to Section-5, with their latest “news” that might be of interest to the EM Community. Announcements to selected Symposia and Workshops will also be featured in this Section, both before and after the meetings.

All submissions will be via the web, and should be emailed to: rajmitra@ieee.org, until further notice. Detailed guidelines for submission and information on format and copyright aspects can be found in the website: www.e-fermat.org. Authors are requested to strictly follow the style we recommend, so that the Editorial office would not have to invest its time “fixing” the format problems to ensure the uniformity of the publication. Publication will be free to the authors, unless the manuscript requires extensive corrections, either in terms of English or format changes. The authors are urged to take care of these issues at their end, not only to help us publish their papers in a timely manner, but to also avoid unnecessary costs.

The new Journal and Forum, FERMAT, should be viewed as a complement to the traditional ones, e.g., T-AP, AP Magazine and PIERS. The authors would be free to publish their works in regular Journals, and would be expected to address the copyright issues on their own. FERMAT would assign the copyright to the authors themselves. Additional guidelines will be sent to the authors and will be available on the website.

IEEE policy may consider publication in FERMAT and submission of substantially the same material to an IEEE publication would constitute duplicate publication. An author could certainly reuse material published on FERMAT in a manuscript submitted to an IEEE publication, by citing the FERMAT publication, and explain in the manuscript how it differed sufficiently from the FERMAT publication to justify publication. FERMAT would be treated as any other online open-access journal, including those of the IEEE. We have given considerable thoughts to this potential IEEE policy and here are our own thoughts on this issue. Most of the papers in FERMAT would be “review” type, similar to book chapters, in which considerable amount of the material will be drawn from previous publications, which would be acknowledged, and whose permission would be sought by the author.

If a “contributing” author does choose to publish his new work in FERMAT to take advantage of the rapid publication schedule, as he would when submitting an Abstract for a symposium, he would be free to publish an enlarged and updated version later in a regular Journal, provided that he meets the guidelines mentioned above.

Of course, we hope that when FERMAT gets firmly established in two-to-three years, and its citation index begins to look attractive, it would be the first choice for publication for many authors. The "other journal" issue would then become moot for them, we also hope.

The webpage for FERMAT (www.e-fermat.org) summarizes our motto, which is reproduced from the FERMAT banner that appears in the website:

Dedicated to publishing high-quality papers written by leaders in our field, promoting freedom of scientific expression, providing a forum where burning issues are aired and diverse viewpoints are debated, and facilitating social networking with colleagues like never before in any other EM-related publication.

We close this section with an appeal to the EM community. Please accept our invitation to browse through FERMAT frequently, and send us your comments on the articles, using a pseudonym if you prefer. Please be sure and identify the article you are referring to by its tag#, and mention the title of the article as well as the name of the author(s). Also, we are counting on you to propose some issues you would like to see debated in the Forum section, and we welcome you to air your views or just share your own experiences with the topics in the Forum section.

Clearly, the success of this new venture in the publication business will depend squarely on active participation by the members of the EM Community. To-date, more than 100 luminaries in our field have agreed to "join the Club" and contribute to FERMAT, and the number is growing every day. We sincerely hope that you too, dear EM professional, will be a part of this groundbreaking adventure, and contribute to its success by submitting articles, comments on articles, your favorite Forum issues and newsworthy items to the journal.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Raj Mittra and Dave Giri
Editors-in-Chief