



## Editorial

25 years of *IJRM*: Reflections on the past and the future

## 1. Introduction

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. Many new journals fail. Others have a brief (or long, in the case of the *Journal of Business*) run and then fade from prominence and/or existence. Thus, the task of creating a journal “for the ages” is a Herculean undertaking.

For a startup journal to succeed and prosper, at least four elements must co-align. The first is an opening in the market. At the time of *IJRM*'s foundation by Berend Wierenga, there was a strong sense of the need for a broad-based international journal in the field of marketing. Second, there must be enough support from within a leading community of scholars. In *IJRM*'s case, there was a growing community of world-class scholars willing to support such a journal by contributing both their time as reviewers and some of their best work to it. Third, there must be sufficient commitment not only to launch the journal but also to maintain it. *IJRM* was fortunate for there were enough strongly committed individuals to give massive (and under-appreciated) amounts of their time to birth and nurture the journal. Finally, a vital organization (here EMAC) must support and sustain it. Hence, the success of *IJRM* relies on both effort and good fortune (e.g., the growth in the field in general).

Many things have changed over the past 25 years, but these four critical elements remain in place and still foster *IJRM*'s future growth. First, the number of international scholars contributing breakthroughs in marketing thought has continued to increase. In the last 25 years, contributions by authors with non-U.S. affiliations to major marketing journals have increased from 14% to 23%, while contributions by authors with non-U.S. origins, regardless of geographic affiliation, have increased from 35% to 54% (Stremersch & Verhoef, 2005). *IJRM* is now recognized as the top non-U.S. journal in marketing. Second, as we will detail below, the journal is experiencing an increasing number of submissions. A growing number of reviewers also support the journal with increasingly high-quality reviews. Third, successive editors – Berend Wierenga, Gilles Laurent, Piet Van den Abeele, John Saunders, Jan-Benedict Steenkamp, and Hubert Gatignon – have invested a huge amount of their (unremunerated) time to strengthen the journal. Several of them have contributed further to *IJRM* by becoming Vice-President of Publications of EMAC, an office in which they oversee the journal editors. Finally, EMAC has grown into the major international association of marketing scholars and has grown in both size and geographic reach. For example, American scholars have increased their involvement in EMAC and are now represented by high-level scholars, such as Gary Lilien and Gerard Tellis.

Indeed, while good fortune is needed, it is our opinion that *IJRM* has grown into EMAC's biggest success story mostly because of the continued effort of authors, reviewers, EMAC officers, and past

*IJRM* editors. In this anniversary editorial, we review the contributions of these stakeholders and look back on and forward to *IJRM*'s editorial policies and positions. To make this editorial “evidence-based”, we provide information that we have inventoried through multiple channels. First, we contacted the prior editors to generate insights on *IJRM*'s history (see list of prior editors in Table 1). Second, we undertook a citation analysis and an analysis of the Best Paper Award to identify the most important contributions to *IJRM*. Third, we present submission and review process statistics and pay homage to our reviewers and area editors. We end with a concise statement of editorial policy to guide the future evolution of *IJRM*.

2. *IJRM*'s history

The *International Journal of Research in Marketing* originated from and is the flagship journal of the European Marketing Academy (EMAC). As Berend Wierenga (founding editor, 1984–1986) recalls, “The original idea was to create a truly *European* journal... [as] reflected in its original title, *European Journal of Research in Marketing*.” Luckily, the founders of *IJRM* realized that this name was too narrow, geographically limiting the journal's content. *IJRM* has since become the first, and is still the only major global marketing journal.

From its origin, *IJRM* was meant to be integrative across geographies, disciplines and methods. As Wierenga correctly states, “...these topics are still mentioned in the current Aims and Scope of *IJRM*, which are the same as those in the first issue of 1984.” This commitment to its original goal and the consistency with which it has been pursued are important factors in *IJRM*'s success. The persistent support of Elsevier as the publisher has been another major success factor.

While its original position and purpose was clear and remains more or less unchanged today, many obstacles were overcome in building the journal into what it is today. The first obstacle was maintaining a sufficient flow of submissions.

Wierenga processed 240 papers over his entire term. This year, we will process close to 300. Wierenga reports a geographical breakdown of submissions as 45% U.S., 45% European and 10% other origins. The balance between Europe (35% of all submissions) and the U.S. (30% of all submissions) remains similar today, while submissions from Asia have increased (now 19% of all submissions). The build-up of sufficient submissions was considered by many prior editors as a key challenge; as Wierenga puts it: “In those early years, there were not always enough accepted papers to fill an issue when the time came to publish.”

Gilles Laurent (1987–1989) received only about 60 manuscripts every year, despite heroic efforts. The key to *IJRM*'s success today is the decision of many of our editor-predecessors to keep standards at a

**Table 1**  
IJRM editors

Berend Wierenga	1984–1986
Gilles Laurent	1987–1989
Piet Vanden Abeele	1990–1994
John Saunders	1995–1997
Jan-Benedict Steenkamp	1998–2000
Hubert Gatignon	2001–2006
Stefan Stremersch and Donald Lehmann	2007–present

very high level. “During my first six months as editor, I accepted only two papers for publication. I remember a conversation with someone at Elsevier, justly worried about the small number of papers, during which I said, “Well, I cannot write the papers myself” (Gilles Laurent). Nonetheless, Laurent managed to keep the IJRM baby alive by building successful special issues and safeguarding IJRM's reputation.

Piet Vanden Abeele (1990–1994) continued Laurent's pilgrimage, balancing the European background and the diversity within IJRM and its aspirations of quality. As of the early nineties, IJRM had established a sufficient submission flow to survive. “The flow of manuscripts did not stop, despite the application of demanding methodological standards, and the publication backlog...kept increasing” (Vanden Abeele). Around that time, quality and diversity became the key drivers of IJRM's sustained growth. Vanden Abeele remembers, “There was an apparent conflict, then, between a publication being of ‘European inspiration’ and it being of ‘acceptable quality’... Becoming less ‘American’ then was less a statement about U.S. research and researchers in the field, than about Europeans coming of age.” Under Vanden Abeele, IJRM finally achieved a sufficient supply of submissions to allow quality aspirations to become the journal's major focus.

Saunders (1995–1997) effectively stimulated diversity in research traditions and aimed to embrace both qualitative and quantitative traditions, “even though that meant a split in the board according to the methodologies they favoured (or hated)” (Saunders). Saunders sensed that “despite IJRM publishing many non quant papers, most people thought that quant papers was all the journal accepted – even after the journal published two shambolic special postmodernist issues”, an impression that we still sense as current editors.

Steenkamp's editorship (1998–2000) overcame two challenges. While Vanden Abeele increased paper quality, it still remained variable. “Top journals have both high quality and little variation, the latter was not the case for IJRM” (Steenkamp). Steenkamp successfully reduced variability in quality and brought the journal from a B+ status to an A– status. He also did wonders with the review process and ensured a sufficient pool of reviewing resources for IJRM that turned around reviews at the same rate as IJRM's American counterparts. The turnaround dropped from 6 months to 3 months, and Steenkamp took a very active role in the process, giving clear direction as to “what should be done, what not”.

The decreased variability in quality and the strong pool of reviewers and authors provided Hubert Gatignon (2001–2006) the means to further expand the visibility and reach of IJRM beyond Europe. “This improvement has recently accelerated with a greater visibility of the journal outside Europe, and especially among our colleagues in the U.S. This was the result of many years of steady attention paid to quality but should also be attributed to the active promotion of the then Editor, Jan-Benedict Steenkamp” (Gatignon). Hubert Gatignon achieved an increased awareness of the journal, a continued expansion to international audiences, and a substantial increase in submissions (from 116 in 2000 to 223 in 2005).

### 3. Important contributions in IJRM

The fortune of a journal depends upon its ability to publish breakthrough ideas. With this fact in mind, we took inventory to

determine the most-cited papers that IJRM has published. We retrieved in April 2008 the citation count for each paper from ISI's Web of Science. As it is well known in citation analysis that the most important predictor of the number of citations is a paper's age (Stremersch, Verniers, & Verhoef, 2007), we identify the 2–3 most cited papers in each volume (see Table 2).

Several characteristics about IJRM can be observed from Table 2. First, Table 2 represents an amazing diversity of topics, such as networks, market orientation, method development, new product management, international marketing, brand choice and brand management, relationship marketing and competition, among others. Diversity is both present across as well as within volumes. A strong diversity in geographic origin is also represented. There is also a clear diversity in methods, including literature reviews (e.g., Steenkamp & Ter Hofstede, 2002), scale development (Rossiter, 2002), qualitative methods (e.g., Gadde & Mattsson, 1987), postmodernism (e.g., Firat & Venkatesh, 1993), quantitative analysis (e.g., Leeflang & Wittink, 1992) and experimental studies (e.g., Verlegh, Steenkamp, & Meulenberg, 2005).

Table 2 also shows that IJRM is a prime outlet for leading scholars. Leading scholars within marketing, such as past editors of leading American journals Wagner Kamakura, Dick Wittink and Frank Bass, past executive directors of the *Marketing Science Institute*, such as Rohit Deshpandé, as well as leading economists, such as Richard Schmalensee, and leading psychologists, such as Rick Bagozzi, all published highly-cited contributions in IJRM. Contributors of highly-cited papers are Jan-Benedict Steenkamp (6), Wagner Kamakura (5), Michel Wedel (4), Dick Wittink, Arvind Rangaswamy and Inge Geyskens (3 each).

To recognize outstanding contributions, the IJRM editorial board – since 1995 – elects a best paper at the start of every year among all papers published in the immediately preceding volume. The history of best paper award winners is shown in Table 3.

### 4. IJRM's current review process

A journal can thrive only if it can count on a substantially large body of high-quality reviewers. At IJRM, we feel fortunate to be in that situation. We echo the appreciation for reviewers expressed by John Saunders: “We have some amazing colleagues within our community who review thoroughly and diligently. It is not surprising that these are the same people who respond speedily and positively to reviewers' comments. I remain in awe of you.” To all our editorial review board members and the many experts we invite ad hoc to review a paper, thank you for your continued support to the journal!

When we took over IJRM from Hubert Gatignon in 2006, we made some major changes to the review process (see Stremersch & Lehmann, 2007). One of them was to introduce area editors to IJRM. After almost two years, our experiences with this system have been extremely positive. Whenever we see their reports, we are impressed by the quality and thoroughness that our AE's put into the process. Peter, Marnik, Jacob, Bruce, Jeff, Sandy, Gita, Aradhna, Eitan, Werner, Aric, David, Rick, Harald, Stijn, Peter, Luk, Russ, and Stefan, we will remain thankful to you for many years to come!

IJRM's review process is second to none. Our average turnaround (net of desk rejects) now is about two months, and we frequently turn around papers within a month. We maintain an active desk reject policy in order to not unnecessarily waste reviewers' or authors' time. The rejection rate is very similar to that of top U.S. journals, and now stands at around 90%. While we take no pleasure in rejecting papers, many of which have admirable components, these statistics show that IJRM is currently a mature top journal (see Table 4).

### 5. Editorial policy and the future evolution of IJRM

It is a basic principle that, in any area, from sports to academia, it is impossible to stay the same. Slowly, inexorably, one either gets better or worse. Since its birth a quarter century ago, IJRM has published

**Table 2**  
Highly-cited papers throughout the history of IJRM

Issue Title	Authors (year) (vol)	# ISI-cites
4 Expectancy-value attitude models: An analysis of critical measurement issues	Richard P. Bagozzi (1984) (1)	29
1 A comparison of Japanese and American business negotiations	John L. Graham (1984) (1)	14
3 Marketing investments and market investments in industrial networks	Jan Johanson and Lars-Gunnar Mattsson (1985) (2)	29
2 Perceived risk and information search. A systematic meta-analysis of the empirical evidence	Hans Georg Gemünden (1985) (2)	21
4 The impact of telephone notification strategies on response to an industrial mail survey	David Jobber, Neal Allen, and John Oakland (1985) (2)	14
2 Market definition and segmentation using fuzzy clustering methods	H. Hruschka (1986) (3)	20
1 Managerial intervention in forecasting. An empirical investigation of forecast manipulation	Brian P. Mathews and A. Diamantopoulos (1986) (3)	19
1 Stability and change in network relationships	Lars-Erik Gadde and Lars-Gunnar Mattsson (1987) (4)	24
1 Early product life cycle forms for infrequently purchased major products	Christopher J. Easingwood (1987) (4)	12
4 Perceptual maps and the optimal location of new products: An integrative essay	Richard Schmalensee and Jacques-Francois Thisse (1988) (5)	25
1 Long-term view of the diffusion of durables: A study of the role of price and adoption influence processes via tests of nested models	Wagner A. Kamakura and Siva K. Balasubramanian (1988) (5)	22
2 A citation analysis of selected marketing journals	David Jobber and Paul Simpson (1988) (5)	21
4 A fuzzy clusterwise regression approach to benefit segmentation	Michel Wedel and Jan-Benedict E. M. Steenkamp (1989) (6)	29
1 Consumer benefit segmentation using clusterwise linear regression	Michel Wedel and Cor Kistemaker (1989) (6)	15
1 Mixed Markov and latent Markov modelling applied to brand choice behaviour	Carsten Stig Poulsen (1990) (7)	21
4 A comparative image analysis of domestic versus imported products	Nicolas Papadopoulos, Louise A. Heslop, and Gary Bamossy (1990) (7)	16
2-3 On the relative performance of linear versus nonlinear compensation plans	Amiya K. Basu and Gurumurthy Kalyanaram (1990) (7)	12
4 The use of LISREL in validating marketing constructs	Jan-Benedict E. M. Steenkamp, Hans C. M. van Trijp (1991) (8)	168
4 Applying latent trait analysis in the evaluation of prospects for cross-selling of financial services	Wagner A. Kamakura, Sridhar N. Ramaswami, and Rajendra K. Srivastava (1991) (8)	35
2 Incorporating distribution into new product diffusion models	J. Morgan Jones and Christopher J. Ritz (1991) (8)	32
3 Developing a market orientation: an organizational strategy perspective	Robert W. Ruekert (1992) (9)	104
1 Diagnosing competitive reactions using (aggregated) scanner data	Peter S.H. Leeflang and Dick R. Wittink (1992) (9)	53
4 Advances in international marketing	Susan P. Douglas and C. Samuel Craig (1992) (9)	40
1 Measuring brand value with scanner data	Wagner A. Kamakura and Gary J. Russell (1993) (10)	44
3 Postmodernity: the age of marketing	A. Fuat Firat and Alladi Venkatesh (1993) (10)	34
1 Brand equity and the extendibility of brand names	Arvind Rangaswamy, Raymond R. Burke, and Terrence A. Oliva (1993) (10)	29
1 Commercial use of conjoint analysis in Europe: results and critical reflections	Dick R. Wittink, Marco Vriens, and Wim Burhenne (1994) (11)	56
3 Replications and extensions in marketing: rarely published but quite contrary	Raymond Hubbard and J. Scott Armstrong (1994) (11)	51
5 Concomitant variable latent class models for conjoint analysis	Wagner A. Kamakura, Michel Wedel, and Jagadish Agrawal (1994) (11)	25
3 Measuring subjective meaning structures by the laddering method: theoretical considerations and methodological problems	Klaus G. Grunert and Suzanne C. Grunert (1995) (12)	46
3 A means-end chain approach to consumer goal structures	Rik Pieters, Hans Baumgartner, and Doug Allen (1995) (12)	43
1 Discrete choice models with latent choice sets	Moshe Ben-Akiva and Bruno Boccara (1995) (12)	40
2 Applications of structural equation modeling in marketing and consumer research: a review	Hans Baumgartner and Christian Homburg (1996) (13)	117
4 The effects of trust and interdependence on relationship commitment: a trans-Atlantic study	Inge Geyskens, Jan-Benedict Steenkamp, Lisa K. Scheer, and Nirmalya Kumar (1996) (13)	96
1 Consumer evaluations of new technology-based self-service options: an investigation of alternative models of service quality	Pratibha A. Dabholkar (1996) (13)	73
5 Loyalty programs and their impact on repeat-purchase loyalty patterns	Byron Sharp and Anne Sharp (1997) (14)	41
5 Retail relationships and store loyalty: a multi-level perspective	Gerrard Macintosh and Lawrence S. Lockshin (1997) (14)	39
4 The changing dynamic of consumer behavior: implications for cross-cultural research	Susan P. Douglas and C. Samuel Craig (1997) (14)	29
3 Generalizations about trust in marketing channel relationships using meta-analysis	Inge Geyskens, Jan-Benedict E.M. Steenkamp, and Nirmalya Kumar (1998) (15)	79
5 Exploiting the installed base using cross-merchandising and category destination programs	Xavier Drèze, Stephen J. Hoch (1998) (15)	19
1 External moderation of associations among stakeholder orientations and company performance	Gordon E. Greenley and Gordon R. Foxall (1998) (15)	19
1 The effect of channel relationships and guanxi on the performance of inter-province export ventures in the People's Republic of China	Tim Ambler, Chris Styles, and Wang Xiucun (1999) (16)	24
3 Heterogeneity and purchase event feedback in choice models: an empirical analysis with implications for model building	Kusum L. Ailawadi, Karen Gedenk, and Scott A. Neslin (1999) (16)	23
1 Visual attention during brand choice: the impact of time pressure and task motivation	Rik Pieters and Luk Warlop (1999) (16)	14
1 Consumer choice behavior in online and traditional supermarkets: the effects of brand name, price, and other search attributes	Alexandru M. Degeratu, Arvind Rangaswamy, and Jianan Wu (2000) (17)	52
2-3 Building models for marketing decisions: past, present and future	Peter S. H. Leeflang and Dick R. Wittink (2000) (17)	28
4 Market share response and competitive interaction: the impact of temporary, evolving and structural changes in prices	Shuba Srinivasan, Peter T. L. Popkowski Leszczyc, and Frank M. Bass (2000) (17)	25
1-2 Perspectives on joint competitive advantages in buyer-supplier relationships	Sandy D. Jap (2001) (18)	17
3 Do international entry decisions of retail chains matter in the long run?	Katrijn Gielens and Marnik G. Dekimpe (2001) (18)	17
1-2 Structural analysis of competitive behavior: new Empirical Industrial Organization methods in marketing	Vrinda Kadiyali, K. Sudhir, and Vithala R. Rao (2001) (18)	14
4 The C-OAR-SE procedure for scale development in marketing	John R. Rossiter (2002) (19)	42
3 International market segmentation: issues and perspectives	Jan-Benedict E. M. Steenkamp, Frenkel Ter Hofstede (2002) (19)	19
4 How cannibalistic is the Internet channel? A study of the newspaper industry in the United Kingdom and The Netherlands	Barbara Deleersnyder, Inge Geyskens, Katrijn Gielens, and Marnik G. Dekimpe (2002) (19)	18
2 Customer satisfaction and loyalty in online and offline environments	Venkatesh Shankar, Amy K. Smith, and Arvind Rangaswamy (2003) (20)	30
1 Cross-selling through database marketing: a mixed data factor analyzer for data augmentation and prediction	Wagner A. Kamakura, Michel Wedel, Fernando de Rosa, and Jose A. Mazzon (2003) (20)	20
3 A social influence model of consumer participation in network- and small-group-based virtual communities	Utpal M. Dholakia, Richard P. Bagozzi, and Lisa Klein Pearo (2004) (20)	23
1 Organizational culture, market orientation, innovativeness, and firm performance: an international research odyssey	Rohit Deshpandé and John U. Farley (2004) (20)	17

(continued on next page)

**Table 2** (continued)

Issue Title	Authors (year) (vol)	# ISI-cites
4 Understanding and managing international growth of new products	Stefan Stremersch and Gerard J. Tellis (2004) (20)	13
4 Quick and easy choice sets: constructing optimal and nearly optimal stated choice experiments	Deborah J. Street, Leonie Burgess, and Jordan J. Louviere (2005) (22)	9
2 Country-of-origin effects in consumer processing of advertising claims	Peeter W.J. Verlegh et al. (2005) (22)	5
4 The role of seeding in multi-market entry	Barak Libai, Eitan Muller, and Renana Peres (2005) (22)	5

**Table 3**

Best paper award winners since inception of the best paper award

Authors (year)	Title of paper
Jorna Leenheer, Harald J. van Heerde, Tammo H.A. Bijmolt and Ale Smidts (2007)	"Do loyalty programs really enhance behavioral loyalty? An empirical analysis accounting for self-selecting members", IJRM 24(1), 31–47.
Jacob Goldenberg, Barak Libai, Sarit Moldovan, and Eitan Muller (2007)	"The NPV of bad news", IJRM 24(3), 186–200.
David A. Soberman and Philip M. Parker (2006)	"The economics of quality-equivalent store brands," IJRM, 23(2), 125–139.
Raji Srinivasan, Arvind Rangaswamy, and Gary L. Lilien (2005)	"Turning adversity into advantage: Does proactive marketing during a recession pay off?" IJRM, 22(2), 109–125.
Manfred Krafft, Soenke Albers, and Rajiv Lal (2004)	"Relative explanatory power of agency theory and transaction cost analysis in German salesforces," IJRM, 21(3), 265–283.
Ashutosh Prasad, Vijay Mahajan, and Bart Bronnenberg (2003)	"Advertising versus pay-per-view in electronic media," IJRM, 20(1), 13–30.
Barbara Deleersnyder et al. (2002)	"How cannibalistic is the Internet channel? A study of the newspaper industry in the United Kingdom and The Netherlands," IJRM, 19(4), 337–348.
Katrijn Gielens and Marnik G. Dekimpe (2001)	"Do international entry decisions of retail chains matter in the long run?" IJRM, 18(3), 235–259.
Peter S.H. Leeflang and Dick R. Wittink (2000)	"Building models for marketing decisions: Past, present and future," IJRM, 17(2–3), 105–126.
Rik Pieters and Luk Warlop (1999)	"Visual attention during brand choice: The impact of time pressure and task motivation," IJRM, 16(1), 1–16.
Carl F. Mela, Sunil Gupta, and Kamel Jedidi (1998)	"Assessing long-term promotional influences on market structure," IJRM, 15(2), 89–107.
Marnik G. Dekimpe, Jan-Benedict E. M. Steenkamp, Martin Mellens, and Piet Vanden Abeele (1997)	"Decline and variability in brand loyalty," IJRM, 14(5), 405–420.
Peter S. H. Leeflang and Dick R. Wittink (1996)	"Competitive reaction versus consumer response: Do managers overreact?" IJRM, 13(2), 103–119.
Shlomo Kalish, Vijay Mahajan, and Eitan Muller (1995)	"Waterfall and sprinkler new-product strategies in competitive global markets," IJRM, 12(2), 105–119.

roughly 600 articles (in addition to editorials and book reviews) and moved to "A" journal status in Europe and Australasia and to at least "A–" status in much of the rest of the world.

The number of manuscripts continues to rise (to 274 in 2007) as does the selectivity. Importantly, IJRM's stature in subjective ratings and objective measures has also increased. For example, its "ISI Impact Factor" (which is calculated by dividing the number of citations in the current year of articles published in the two previous years by the total number of articles published in the previous two years) is 1.28 and climbing. Even though the location of the journals on which citation counts are based is not weighted in favor of Europe, the direction of this evolution is positive and encouraging.

The question then becomes – what's next? One direction is to publish more manuscripts. Since, *ceteris paribus*, this increase would enhance the journal's impact and, more importantly, help diffuse knowledge, it is a worthwhile goal. It is worth keeping in mind, however, that quantity at the expense of quality is a costly trade-off. Put simply, without high quality standards, IJRM, or any other journal, will quickly lose its stature and respect among the community of scholars on whom we depend for contributions. Quality must take precedence over quantity, especially in a "flatter" world in which electronic access allows cheaper and more efficient scanning of a broader range of journals and other sources than was once possible.

Is the journal review process perfect, or will it ever be? Of course not. Still, overall, the process seems to produce a high-quality journal, and the quality of IJRM remains second to none. This is a tribute to those who came before us and to the authors who have submitted first-rate manuscripts to the journal. We hope and believe that the next 25 years will bring even further growth in the quality and diversity of papers in IJRM.

We foster diversity in topics and methods to the greatest extent possible. Since we took over as editors, we have undertaken a concerted effort to have more high-quality submissions from areas other than quantitative modeling, such as behavioral research. We

have been quite successful at achieving this goal, as the issues under our tenure can attest. To stimulate more novel work, we have been working on two special issues, one on Marketing and Health (to appear in 2008), and one on Marketing and Organic Growth (to appear in 2009). The focus of these issues is on conceptual, theoretical or methodological contributions with diverse methods. For the first issue, we received more than 50 submissions, an historic success, with diverse subjects, methods and geographical origins. Oliver Heil and David Montgomery will edit a special issue or section on competition that is set to appear in 2010.

We also foster geographical diversity, as we feel it is important to the discipline (see, Stremersch & Verhoef, 2005). However, we strongly feel that geographical diversity cannot be interpreted as an "equal share per country", nor can it come at the expense of quality. As a field matures, improved methodologies and theories develop. Similarly, limitations of traditional methods become more apparent. Examples are the limited external validity of case studies and the problem of common method variance in survey data. As a consequence, the standards for a contribution have increased. To be a top journal, IJRM needs to encourage new approaches (e.g., to network analysis) while also focusing on substantive content. While we are concerned about geographic diversity, geographic origin should not count in decisions for specific manuscripts.

**Table 4**  
Submissions and acceptance statistics

Year	New submissions	Revisions	Desk rejections	Refused after review	Accepted	Abandons
2003	160	65	42	83	22	2
2004	193	57	50	92	22	1
2005	223	59	82	109	21	1
2006	245	86	80	96	28	1
2007	278	63	102	183	28	6

IJRM is alive, well, and growing. We are confident that IJRM will continue to be a "must-read" journal and a desirable publication outlet. EMAC, and the profession, will be better for it. Happy anniversary, IJRM! We look very much forward to your 50th anniversary.

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