



International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork (IJTMB): A Second-Year Retrospective Reflecting Google Analytics and Open Journal Systems Sources

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August 20, 2010 represented the two-year mark since the launch of the inaugural issue of the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork* (IJTMB). During that period, eight issues of the journal were published: in August and December 2008; in March, June, September, and December 2009; and in March and June 2010. This editorial identifies information sources that interested readers may consult for data that profile the journal's accessibility and progress thus far.

The principal data source is the IJTMB's Google Analytics web statistics site, which is available to interested parties through a generic visitors' account. This source is accessible either through the hyperlink just cited or at <http://www.google.com/analytics/>. In either case, once the Access Analytics option is activated, the complete database can be examined by entering info@massagetherapyfoundation.org (username) and ijtmbsstats (password). Various sectors of this database provide information such as the extent of site usage, a visitor overview, a traffic sources overview, a map overlay with visitors' countries ordered by rank, a content overview, new and returning visitors, visitor loyalty, and keywords used in accessing the journal. For understanding certain terminology specific to the Google Analytics reporting format, the Glossary, available through a standard Help option while navigating the site, is particularly useful.

Table 1 shows selected excerpts of the IJTMB's Google Analytics statistics specific to the August 20–to–August 20 periods ending in 2009 and 2010. For each of those periods, the table lists the number of visitors from only the top 10 ranked countries, but it is of particular note that the colleagues who have most recently visited the IJTMB's site represent as many as 145 countries. That statistic alone gives testimony to one of the major objectives of immediate, open-access scholarly publishing: that is, the expansive availability of a professional resource that might otherwise be quite limited because of any one or a combination of financial, political, geographic, and logistical constraints.

Another data source that provides valuable information about the progress of the IJTMB is the

Stats & Reports sector of the journal's own website. This feature is a component of the Open Journal Systems (OJS) software used by the IJTMB and referenced in an earlier editorial⁽¹⁾ as part of Canada's Public Knowledge Project. Although pertinent information from this database is readily accessible to readers through the About the Journal option at the top of the home page, the journal's editorial board will periodically highlight portions for the readership. Relevant data provided on a calendar year basis include the number of issues and items published; the total number of manuscripts submitted; the submissions that have been peer-reviewed, accepted, declined, and resubmitted; the days to review; the days to publication; and the number of registered users and readers. Additional data not yet publically accessible, but available by request to the journal's editorial board, include article view counts across all published issues thus far. Table 2 shows pertinent data spanning the IJTMB's eight issues published through and including June 2010.

Another information source available for periodic dissemination to the journal's readership is the number of views per entry in each issue of the IJTMB. These data span not only articles *per se* appearing in the journal, but also editorials and entries in the Commentaries and News/Announcements sections. In the context of the eight journal issues published through June 2010, the five entries eliciting the most views as of September 13, 2010, are these:

- Orthopedic Massage Protocol for Post-Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome: A Case Report by Zalta⁽²⁾ (12,895 views)
- Understanding the Process of Fascial Unwinding by Minasny⁽³⁾ (4735 views)
- Steps toward Massage Therapy Guidelines: A First Report to the Profession by Grant et al.⁽⁴⁾ (4665 views)
- Clinical Reasoning in Massage Therapy by LeMoon⁽⁵⁾ (3807 views)
- Fascia Research II: Second International Fascia Research Congress by Findley⁽⁶⁾ (3762 views)

Several data-based trends and experientially-informed conclusions may be identified. Among the most important—from a formative evaluation standpoint, and in the context of the journal's

TABLE 1. Year-Over-Year Web Statistics from Google Analytics for the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*

| Statistic | August 20 to August 20 | | |
|---|------------------------|----------------|--------|
| | 2008–2009 | 2009–2010 | |
| Overview of site usage and visitors | | | |
| Visits (<i>n</i>) | 18,124 | 27,891 | |
| Unique visitors (<i>n</i>) | 13,531 | 21,101 | |
| Page views (<i>n</i>) | 77,920 | 95,422 | |
| Average page views per visit (<i>n</i>) | 4.30 | 3.42 | |
| International scope | | | |
| Countries/territories (<i>n</i>) | 120 | 145 | |
| Visitors from top 10 countries/territories (<i>n</i>) | | | |
| United States | 10,999 | United States | 15,348 |
| Canada | 3,584 | Canada | 3,976 |
| United Kingdom | 732 | United Kingdom | 1,743 |
| Australia | 671 | Australia | 1,134 |
| New Zealand | 249 | New Zealand | 537 |
| India | 186 | Germany | 418 |
| Philippines | 92 | India | 382 |
| Germany | 91 | Brazil | 311 |
| Spain | 68 | Netherlands | 257 |
| Malaysia | 68 | Philippines | 225 |
| New and returning visitors [<i>n</i> (%)] | | | |
| New | 13,296 (73.36) | 20,702 (74.22) | |
| Returning | 4,828 (26.64) | 7,189 (25.78) | |
| Overview of traffic sources [<i>n</i> (%)] | | | |
| Direct traffic | 7,693 (42.5) | 11,981 (42.96) | |
| Referring sites | 5,277 (29.1) | 6,199 (22.23) | |
| Search engines | 5,083 (28.1) | 9,704 (34.79) | |
| Other | 71 (0.3) | 7 (0.03) | |

two-year anniversary reached on August 20, 2010—are these:

- **Expanding International Scope:** The international scope of the journal continues to broaden, as evidenced by the 145 countries from which readers are accessing one or more issues of the journal. This fact bodes quite well regarding at least the potential for the journal's content to increasingly reflect the contributions of colleagues from diverse regions of the globe. Across the eight issues published through June 2010, contributing authors have presented work originating from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United States.
- **Increased Number of Visits and Unique Visitors:** In a year-over-year comparison based on the journal's anniversary date, Table 1 shows visits increasing in number to 27,891 from 18,124. Also noticeable is an elevated number of unique

visitors (to 21,101 from 13,531). These increases are presumably encouraging at this stage in the journal's evolution. The practical significance of these data in the broader context of what should be expected of an open-access journal at the end of its second year, however, is difficult to ascertain. Accordingly, input from readers is encouraged if data sources are available against which the IJTMB's statistics may be compared.

- **Increased Manuscript Submissions:** The 89 submissions through and including those published in the June 2010 issue (Table 2) include manuscripts spanning all six sections of the journal—hence, contributions of an editorial, article, letter to the editor, and news/announcements nature. A continuing increase in manuscript submissions is always an obvious objective of any scholarly publishing effort. Viable submissions of any genre are of course invited, but we particularly encourage the obvious: a greater number of manuscripts pertaining to potential articles

TABLE 2. Publication Year Statistics from Open Journal Systems for the *International Journal of Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork*

| Statistic | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Issues published (n) | 2 ^a | 4 ^b | 2 ^c |
| Items published (n) | 15 | 25 | 12 |
| Total submissions (n) | 26 | 36 | 27 |
| Peer reviewed (n) | 21 | 28 | 18 |
| Accepted [n (%)] | 16 (76) | 25 (89) | 14 (78) |
| Declined [n (%)] | 5 (24) | 3 (11) | 4 (22) |
| Resubmitted [n (%)] | 4 (19) | 4 (14) | 3 (17) |
| Days to review (n) | 47 | 23 | 23 |
| Days to publication (n) | 62 | 48 | 60 |
| Registered users (n) | 1139 | 1912 | 2768 |
| Registered readers (n) | 1115 | 1869 | 2708 |
| Article view counts (n) | 41,639 | 40,141 | 11,246 |

^aAugust and December.

^bMarch, June, September, and December.

^cMarch and June.

per se and letters to the editor that highlight reader response to published articles. The three principal journal sections, emphasizing research, education, and practice, were intended from the outset to catalyze author input that is as diverse and extensive as possible.

- *Most Extensively Viewed Journal Entries:* The journal's top five articles cited earlier as eliciting the most views by readers (29,864 *in toto*) appeared in the journal's Practice ($n = 3$), Editorial ($n = 1$) and Research ($n = 1$) sections. Although a competitive theme is certainly not the intent here, the effectiveness of the journal would seem to be enhanced if greater balance were in place across all journal sections with respect both to the number of manuscript submissions received and, by implication, to the number of articles actually published per section. Prospective contributing authors are encouraged to contact any member of the editorial board for assistance in manuscript preparation and submission. Furthermore, this type of assistance is also available through the journal's publishing firm—Multimed—and can be coordinated in tandem with any editorial board member.
- *Needed Qualitative Input on Journal Impact:* The data provided in this editorial are obviously quantitative in nature and, accordingly, provide certain metrics regarding the journal's progress and inferred impact. To augment the numeric data available via Google Analytics (Table 1) and the OJS (Table 2), qualitative data are needed that would further document the journal's impact on the research, educational, and practice activities of our readership. To that end, we remind readers

about the Comments feature that appears at the end of each journal entry's published HTML file. (For example, please see the activated comments feature for the HTML version of the Zalta⁽²⁾ article that is the journal's most viewed entry.) Again, we strongly encourage reader input via this mechanism. It is perhaps the most direct and efficient method for communicating the various ways in which any given journal entry may be affecting colleagues. The combination of quantitative statistics and qualitative feedback from our readership is obviously critical to highlighting the positive features of the journal and also encouraging constructive input that will lead to improvements in whatever ways are possible.

The calendar year of 2009 provided the IJTMB with its first opportunity for a complete range of quarterly issues, a publishing schedule obviously in place for 2010 that will continue into the future. Additionally, 2009 and 2010 allowed the IJTMB to serve as a publishing venue for selected papers from both the Second International Fascia Research Congress (Amsterdam, October 2009) and the Second Highlighting Massage Therapy in CIM Research Conference (Seattle, May 2010).

The IJTMB's track record established in its first two years of existence—in combination with anticipated affiliations with future research conferences—should permit, in the near future, an accelerated expansion of the journal's impact among colleagues involved in the research, education, and practice aspects of the massage and bodywork professions. As mentioned earlier, your feedback on the journal's quarterly entries is encouraged so that we can gauge not only our successes, but also areas needing improvement.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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