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The Journal and online activities

My coeditor Jonathan Meakins is on a 3-month sabbatical at Oxford University. The magic of electronic communication has allowed him to continue his work at the Journal even though he is separated from our office by several thousand kilometres and 5 time zones. This radical change in information transmission and technology in recent years is also reflected in the continual challenge that editors and publishers of scientific journals face to keep their journals current and relevant.

Print journals such as the one you are holding are often thought to be obsolescent and in danger of extinction owing to the availability online of journal contents or abstracts as well as the ability to place on a single compact disc months or years of scientific content from even the largest and most voluminous journals.

Despite these technologic advances, print journals continue to survive and in some cases thrive. They do so, in my opinion, because of their portability, convenience and ease of turning exactly to the page you want — all things that are not as readily done electronically using even a laptop or a hand-held computing device.

However, your editors recognize the need to move more vigorously into the online world, and with CMA Publications we would like to explore the many different options available in this innovative form of information exchange. We would like to move all

of our case reports into this format and use a chat room format for dialogue and correspondence among surgeons in Canada. We believe this would be particularly valuable in the exchange of information regarding unusual surgical problems and the innovative solutions that are required to address such problems. In addition, we hope that this would generate considerable exchange of information surrounding the educational activities available in different parts of the country that may be uniquely suited to surgeons who are not necessarily part of the specialty society sponsoring the event. For example, programs put on by the Trauma Association of Canada may have a broad interest among all surgical specialties in the country, but it would be difficult for the sponsoring organization to contact, either individually or in groups, those surgeons who might benefit from attending such an educational activity.

The *Canadian Journal of Surgery* recognizes that tremendous support is necessary for this type of activity to begin and to be sustained. We hope that in the near future we will be able to work with CMA Publications to increase our online presence for all our readers. Our presence online is more noticeable and the number of visits to the journal site is increasing slightly but steadily. As we expand our offerings to the readership we anticipate a rapid growth in this activity. We hope this will be supported by our readers and that we will be able to expand our influence within the surgical community both in Canada and abroad through this technology. Readers comments and suggestions are, as always, welcome.

