Special Thematic Issues

Commissioning Content for the Betterment of Your Journal

By: Bart Wacek, Anita Yadav, Ram Anbazhagan
Your Role as Editor

Handle the Peer Review Process

Have a Vision for the Journal

(this presentation will focus on vision and how recruited content can help you guide your editorial vision)
Vision for the Journal

Set the Aims & Scope
Initiate Different Article Types
Proper Representation on Editorial Board
Attend Conferences & Promote Journal
Call for Papers

SPECIAL THEMATIC ISSUES

- passive to slightly active
- very proactive
Benefits of a Special Issue

Gets Journal Into a Scientific Area It Wants or Needs to Be**
**(most important point, as experts in field, you can see where content will be going in the future. Recruiting early can mean your journal will be place for newer research & tech)

Helps with the Impact Factor (Reviewers are cited on average 4 times higher than other articles)

Improves Engagement
- Scientific Community
- Editorial Board

Regional Representation & Diversity (examples are growing research in China or India)
Makeup of a Special Issue

Typically, size is that of an issue

*Flexible*; smaller amount of articles are “Special Section”

Appointment of Guest Editor (Expert in Specialty Area)

Recruitment of Authors

Typically, manuscripts are reviews... but can also include original research

(Can recruit reviews and then do an open call for papers that are original research)

Different than a Sponsored Supplement (primarily for health sciences)
Talk to Your Publisher

Status Quo

Administrative Support (“Chasing”)...  
(editor finds authors, and staff can set up deadlines and reminders)  
(takes out uncomfortableness of editor chasing his colleagues to turn in papers)

Identifying Guest Editors

Identifying Topics & Guest Editors from Data Analysis
Examples

Ram Anbazhagan & Anita Yadav
Editorial Board Member Survey for ECHO

A update on the survey
- 10 Special issue ideas
- 6 Special issues with potential guest editors
- 4 Special issues are active and 2 others are being planned

Key points
1) All activities will be consulted with the Editors
2) On behalf of Guest editors invite potential authors
3) Periodic updates to Editors on status of special issues
4) Flexibility
Identifying Guest Editors

Drug Development Research (DDR) had an idea for Special issue and but without a Potential Guest editor

Identified top contributors in the subject area using the keywords in Scopus and Web of Science.

Criteria used for the analysis:
1. Data to be taken for the last 5 years
2. Authors with minimum of 30 articles
3. Average citation of 6 or above
4. Authors with h-index of 40 or above

Result:
After the analysis and discussion with the Editor, and have shortlisted 10 researchers who can be right fit for the special issue

Currently, the researchers are being reached out for their interest with the special issue idea.
The most decisive and challenging aspect of any special issue is getting the articles submitted.

As Commissioning editor we can assist Editors with gentle reminders to Guest editors and Invited authors for Submission.

1) Periodic reminders in discussion with Editors
2) Timeline status updates to Editors
3) Escalate unresponsive authors

Only inflexibility is closing issues: In fairness to authors that have already submitted, latecomers can still publish in regular issues.

Results:
Closed 6 special issues in the last 2 months.
Provides overview and control for Editors.
Examples

International Journal of Applied Linguistics (IJAL)
Special Issue on Corpus-based language teaching and learning: applications and implications-May Zaki (Closed the submission in 3 months)
Growth and Change (G&C)

Special issue on Taking the Systems Approaches out of their Comfort Zones: Local Applications in the Global Periphery and Beyond (submission deadline June 2019)

- Initiated discussions in January 2019
- Guest Editor shared proposal in early Feb 2019
- Searched for potential author to be invited and invitations sent in March
- Reminder to be sent in May
- Scholar1 set up for submissions
- Posted call for paper on journal homepage-March
Snapshot

In 2019...

• Closed submissions for 34 special issues
• Article output- 548 manuscripts
• Special issues in pipeline- 109
• Journals in the special issue program- 47
• Conducting editorial board survey for 4 journals
Thank You!

Contact:
Bart Wacek
bwacek@wiley.com