Publication Models in Computing Research: Is a Change Needed? Are We Ready for a Change?

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Biosketch

- Member of numerous program committees
- Chairs of several program committees
- Organizer of several conferences
- Associate editor of several journals
- Managing editor of open-access journal
- EiC of Communications of ACM
Publication-Models Issues

- Uniqueness issues
- Cultural issues
- New publication models

- *Simplifying generalizations*
Uniqueness Issues

- The emphasis on conference publishing and the decline of journal publishing
- The large and growing number of specialty conferences and workshops that are really conferences
- Coping with established publication cultures in the (other) sciences and with the different cultures of different computing sub-communities
Cultural Issues

- The culture of hypercritical reviewing and the decline of thorough constructive reviewing
- Tenure and promotion practices that encourage short-term research
- The influence of bibliometry on publication behavior and tenure practices and the quality of bibliometry
New Publication Models

- The tension between open access and reader-pays publishing, and the spectrum in between
- The role of social media in scholarly publishing
- The role of various actors: commercial publishers, scientific societies, academic publishers and archives
- The place of self-publishing or publishing in public repositories
- The need to develop new rules for data citation, sharing, and archiving.
Conference Publications

- Limited length (10-15 pages)
- Limited-duration review process
- Review process aimed at selection
- High reviewer load
- Papers presented in conference by authors
- Conference attended by authors and others
Journal Publications

- Generous length (e.g., 35 pages)
- Open-ended, iterative review process
- Ad-hoc selection of reviewers
- Papers “flung” to public
CRA’s Historical Role

"Evaluating Computer Scientists and Engineers for Promotion and Tenure" – CRA Best Practices Memo, August 1999

Challenged Journal-publication expectation for promotion:

- "... rationale can be applied to conference proceedings, provided they are as carefully reviewed as the prestige conferences, ..."

- "Publication’s indirect approach to assessing impact implies that it is useful but not definitive."
Today's Questions

- Is a Change Needed?
- Are We Ready for a Change?