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Editorial

Dear Readers,

This new issue of SComS that we are pleased to present is, as you have seen at a glance, much thicker than earlier editions. The previous issue, 2008-1, was a special edition, financed courtesy of the European university summer term for young communication researchers, organised in Geneva in 2006. The purpose of the 2008-1 edition was to encourage the next generation's of researchers scientific production. Thus, we still owed you two editions which we have combined in this book.

This was an extremely busy year for the four editors, our deputy-editor and our editorial secretary. As is the case for all of you, our professional activities are increasingly intense and while the first issue of 2008 cost less in monetary terms, it required a significant investment of time and energy. As the year went by, we had to accept that we would not be able to publish two more issues. Consequently we decided to bring out a double issue. Thus we have managed to meet the deadline, offer you the two issues you are entitled to, broaden the thematic section somewhat and keep from disappointing the many authors, validated by our reviewers, awaiting publication. Hence the double issue you now have before you.

This issue may be different as to its scope, but its structure will not come as a surprise: it includes the by now familiar SComS sections, namely: the thematic and general section, the book reviews, news and events, plus referrals to relevant scientific journals. However, the first part, the thematic section, marks the beginning of a new practice of our journal: the editorial responsibility for this part is entrusted to researchers who do not belong to the SComS editorial board. Why this strategy of guest editors for the thematic section?

Communication science and media are vast fields with very diverse subjects and approaches. Despite the competencies of the editorial board, it cannot cover the entire scope of the discipline. Just as we seek outside

expertise to assess the scientific quality of submitted articles, we feel it is enriching to occasionally go to the field in search of specialists on a given topic. This can only enhance the scientific quality of our journal. The risk of losing the homogeneity of the whole, or of excessive variations from one issue to the next, are more than offset by the competence and contacts that guest editors bring to the journal. We trust his or her expertise entirely, but we do not hesitate to share our point of view, so as to preserve the unique spirit of our journal, that is, its multi-cultural approach to scientific matters.

Dr. Hans Giessen, Privatdozent at the University of Saarbrücken (Germany), was chosen to introduce a topic many of you have requested: the influence of media on different cultures. As an author of many works and articles devoted to the media (*Medienadäquates Publizieren. Von der inhaltlichen Konzeption zur Publikation und Präsentation*, 2004), looking at how they are received (“Assumptions on the Impact of Television on Social Structures,” in: *Long-Term Consequences on Social Structures through Mass Media Impact*, 1998) or at their transnational dimension (*La Visioconference transfrontaliere: Der grenzüberschreitende Einsatz von Videokonferenzen in der Lehre*, 2005), Dr. Giessen seemed to us to be particularly competent to act as guest editor.

We wish to thank Dr. Giessen for having accepted this onerous task and responsibility and for the smooth collaboration. While we are on the subject of thanks, we would not want to forget to acknowledge our reviewers, whose activity is rising hand-in-hand with the reputation of our journal. Our thanks to them for being so kind as to entertain our future requests; it is their work that determines the quality of this journal.

Martin J. Eppler

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