

# NEWS FROM ACM TRANSACTIONS ON COMPUTATION THEORY: NEW EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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## Abstract

The journal ACM Transactions on Computation Theory has now entered its tenth year of existence, having begun accepting submissions in February, 2008. A new Editor-in-Chief, Venkatesan Guruswami, assumed control of the journal in February, 2017. In this article, the outgoing Editor-in-Chief shares a few thoughts about the journal.

## 1 The News

This is a short note, whose purpose is to update the readers of BEATCS on the status of ACM Transactions on Computation Theory (ToCT).

The main piece of news is that, as of February, 2017, the new Editor-in-Chief is Venkatesan Guruswami, of Carnegie Mellon University. There have also been some other changes to the Editorial Board; Martin Grohe and Ryan Williams have joined as associate editors.

Some other long-serving editors have also stepped down from the board, including BEATCS Editor-in-Chief Kazuo Iwama. At his suggestion, I am writing this update as the outgoing ToCT Editor-in-Chief, to share with you some information that is not otherwise available at the journal's website: <http://toct.acm.org>.

## 2 History

Lance Fortnow was the driving force behind the creation of ToCT. He wrote the initial proposal, and obtained the full endorsement of SIGACT, which ultimately led to the decision by ACM to begin publication. Lance also served as the first Editor-in-Chief, as the journal started receiving submissions in February, 2008.

Lance stepped down as Editor-in-Chief in October, 2010, and I stepped in, ultimately serving two three-year terms as Editor-in-Chief. (As a matter of policy,

ACM limits Editors-in-Chief to two terms for all of its journals.) It took a while for submissions to build up to sustain a regular publication schedule, but since 2012 ToCT has published one complete four-issue volume per year. Lance should receive full credit for initially setting high standards for publication quality, and those high standards have been maintained over the years.

### **3 Why ToCT?**

Professional societies such as ACM, SIAM, and IEEE are vital to the health of the communities they serve. Publishing academic research journals is one of the important functions provided by these societies. However, prior to the creation of ToCT, there was no journal published by ACM (the main professional society for computing) that focused primarily on computational complexity theory and allied disciplines. Most of the other journals that cater to the complexity theory community are published by commercial publishers, and a sizable portion of the community feels that having an ACM-sponsored journal is desirable.

By the same token, it is important that the community support ToCT, in order to ensure the success of this enterprise within the ACM framework. The profile of complexity theory within ACM is closely tied to the prominence of ToCT. Please do consider ToCT for the publication of your high-quality papers, as a healthy pipeline of submissions is perhaps the most important factor dictating the success of the journal. (You may wonder why I haven't followed my own advice. By ACM policy, an Editor-in-Chief may not submit work to the journal. I do plan to submit some work to ToCT soon.)

### **4 Indexing**

Readers of BEATCS may want to know whether ToCT is indexed by Thomson Reuters (part of Clarivate Analytics) in the Web of Science (formerly known as the ISI Science Citation Index). The answer is “not entirely” – and thereby hangs a tale.

Web of Science wants to see two years' worth of regular publication before indexing a new journal. Consequently, ACM initiated the process of having ToCT be evaluated in 2014. Thomson Reuters says that this process may take up to two years, but the most recent communications from them indicate that they won't be done until at least August, 2017 (nearly three years later). In the mean time, ToCT *is* indexed by the same organization in their “Emerging Sources” index, and has been since the 2nd issue of the 2015 volume.

## **5 Conclusion**

The future looks bright for ToCT. An outstanding new Editor-in-Chief is in place, the journal has a healthy stream of high-quality submissions, and there is every reason to expect that the journal will soon be indexed in the Web of Science. For more information, including the list of topics that defines the scope of the journal, see <http://toct.acm.org>.