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Editorial

Alergología e Inmunología Clínica in the Internet

The journal *Revista Española de Alergología e Inmunología Clínica* or, under its current name, *Alergología e Inmunología Clínica*, first started its "electronic life" back in 1997. The first accessible issue is that corresponding to June of that year, and all successive issues are since then available and accessible in PDF format, offering magnificent text, graph and figure quality¹. At that same time, a bibliography database was set up rendering possible an easy and user-friendly access to all articles and papers published in the Journal ever since its inception. Overall, these two measures aimed at facilitating consultation and, indirectly, at increasing the number of references to these articles. Access was initially restricted to the Members of the Spanish Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (*Sociedad Española de Alergología e Inmunología Clínica*, SEAIC). In February 1999 the English-language version began through a decision of the new Editorial Committee, and finally, at the end of 2000, access to the Journal was made available to any person wishing to consult it. Thus, four years have elapsed since the development and establishment of the electronic version of our Journal, and we consider this to be a good time to set up a balance of its situation and degree of acceptance.

Access and consultation statistics are available for this Journal as from January 2000. Among the many data and parameters compiled, the Figures show the numbers of monthly visits by internavts and the number of pages downloaded and printed during each month of the year; these two parameters may and do clearly reflect the level of interest achieved by our Journal among professionals.

As the Figures show, the Journal has progressively acquired readers throughout the year 2000, reflecting increasing access and use by the Members of SEAIC. The striking increase during the year 2001 is beyond any doubt due to readers from without the SEAIC, this being the moment when access to the Journal was made open to any interested person, although, unfortunately, it is at present not possible to ascertain their countries of origin. These data, however, show that this publication is being accessed and consulted by professionals who would be unable to read it in any other manner.

Generally speaking, electronic editions of medical journals have had a very positive acceptance among professionals², and a certain evolution in the mode of access to scientific information may well be underway³. This might be particularly relevant in the case of those journals

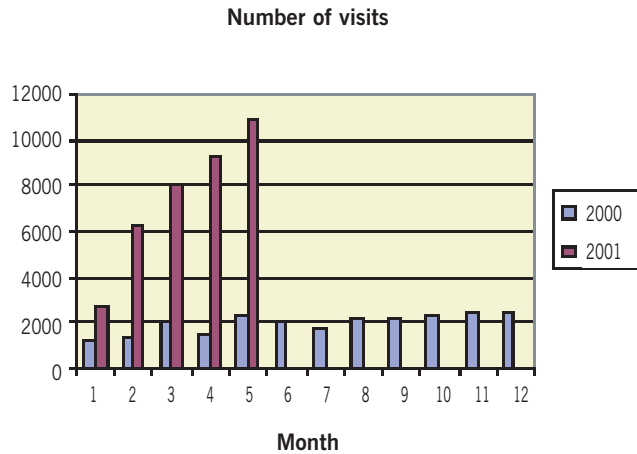


Fig. 1.

that are published in languages different from English⁴, such as ours, which have to compete with the severe disadvantage of a much more restricted potential market and readership. However, it is but obvious reality that almost 11,000 persons have consulted papers and articles in our Journal during May 2001. Thus, the most important conclusion to be derived from these data is the increasing importance the fact of publishing papers in this Journal is achieving for the authors, an importance much greater than what we may have been able to predict or even surmise.

In taking our farewell for now, we should like to express our appreciation and gratefulness to the Mem-

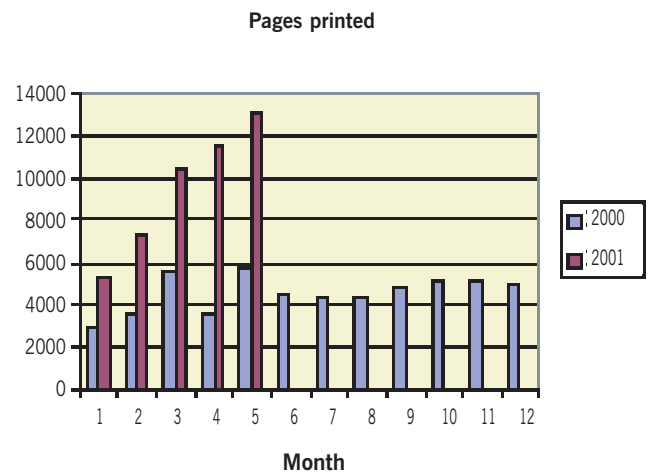


Fig. 2.

bers of the Editorial Committees and to all those who have rendered possible this project. Without their unstinting effort, it would not have been possible.

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