



from IUPS

IUPS website and newsletter —strengthening the communication

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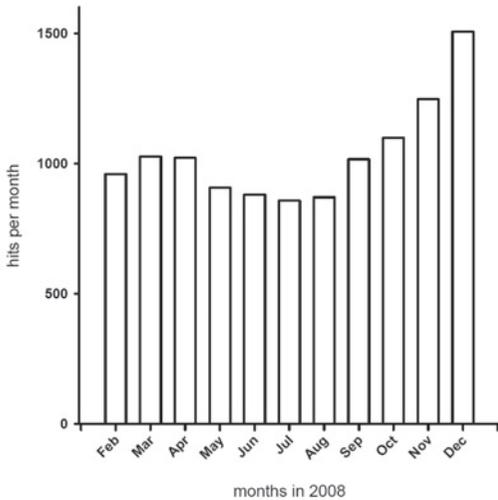
In 2007 the IUPS website (www.iups.org) has experienced a major change in its basic design. A primary goal of the renovation of its make-up has been to simplify and speed-up the access to important information about IUPS. In its current form the IUPS website lists details about the member societies, IUPS council, the upcoming IUPS congress (www.iups2009.com) and other announced and past events as well as links to the IUPS official journal *Physiology* (nips.physiology.org). Finally it addresses the history of the Union and its archive. An important part of the IUPS website is also the Newsletter section, which lists regular *Physiology* Editorials; however, a classical IUPS Newsletter has been discontinued since 2005 and needs to be resurrected.

We can evaluate the statistics concerning visits to the IUPS website since February 2008. The IUPS website has been contacted on average about 1000 times per month, with a significant upward trend in the last months of 2008 (see Figure). Most contacted sites within the deeper layers of the IUPS website concerned IUPS council details and member society details.

Both the IUPS website and Newsletter are and will be the mirror of the activity of the IUPS. The information presented on both media should be of

major interest to active members as well as to those deciding to join (or stay) as members, sponsors or the general public. It needs to be informative and beneficial to the reader with both general and specific interest in physiology, ranging from general issues in physiology, IUPS innovative projects, specific topics within the commissions, science politics and finally career development. It has to provide up-to-date key contact information regarding the IUPS member societies. Many of these features are available now, however many are not. We shall use the website to better present work of IUPS officers, committees, institutions active in physiology and members, particularly covering the efforts to organize physiological meetings and specific IUPS projects. The information on the website should be frequently updated, preferably on a weekly basis to be able to attract an audience at regular intervals. The Newsletter should have a similar role, serving as an add-on (reminder to check the website for details) presenting more detailed snapshots of the most important activities in the IUPS and should be released at regular intervals every month or at least every three months.

The IUPS website and Newsletter should also be a major support to IUPS during reassessment



Figure

of the priorities and organization as indicated in the Long Range Planning Committee report. There are several areas that can be attractive to the IUPS website audience :

- IUPS projects, for example education in physiology, African initiative, popularization of physiology, joint meetings with other disciplines, etc.,

- career opportunities, job market,

- people and institutions (solutions are too

often reinvented in different parts of the world),

- awards and nominations,

- communication with the general public and fund raising, influencing global policy.

It is vital to also promote physiology for the general public. In the absence of national and regional efforts IUPS can serve to promote public relations to help national and regional societies to address public issues related to the benefits of physiology in relation to health issues, education policies, laboratory animal welfare issues and general accessibility of physiological knowledge. A physiological 'wikipedia', answering questions about physiological science to the general public has also been planned. In particular younger generations, prefer this kind of information.

Long Range Planning Committee in its recent report recommended the formation of a Communications Committee. Functions of this committee would include the IUPS website and Newsletter in order to optimize their function, not only to monitor but also promote IUPS activity. As far as the website is concerned, we are technically limited only by lack of imagination, and ideas continue to be proposed that will enrich this effort.