

Editorial ► Find Us on the Internet

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Over the past twenty years or so, there has been a change in how professionals and laymen research topics, whether for published papers or simply to get background information. We all know now that Google is no longer merely a noun, it is also a verb (google it). Patients arrive at doctors' offices loaded with references; finding supporting papers for published research no longer involves visiting a library or even leaving your living room. Yet, where are we, optometry? Are we available, can we be found?

A number of recent occurrences have supplied me with the answer, and it is a resounding NO! With the passing of ILAMO, there is no longer a single place to find optometric research or references, and there has been no substitute since the closure. Recently, the Editor of *OVP* published his excellent paper on the pull away versus push up method of testing accommodation.¹ I personally eagerly awaited this article, having researched the subject myself. Imagine my surprise when my paper was not listed in the references. Of course the reason is simple, my paper appeared in the journal *Optometry and Vision Development*, which although well known to Dr. Taub, is not listed in PubMed or Medscape and therefore is easily missed in an internet search. In a 2011 review authored by Scheiman and Gwiazda, they had to add the following statement in order to "explain" how they "found" the optometric studies, "**We searched *The Cochrane Library*, MEDLINE, EMBASE, Science Citation Index, the metaRegister of Controlled Trials (mRCT) (www.controlled-trials.com) and *ClinicalTrials.gov* (www.clinicaltrials.gov) on 7 October 2010. We manually searched reference lists and optometric journals.**"²

Over the past few years while conversing on the DOC-L List, I have replied to other OVT specialists asking for references on topics such as studies connecting visual skills with learning problems by supplying references to papers that I have authored. Why were these experienced optometrists unable to find the references themselves? Well, one of my problems is a penchant for publishing my research in optometric journals and, once again, they don't show up well on simple internet searches.

On numerous occasions I have seen others (and myself) helped with references provided by the copious memory and library of Dr. Len Press or Dr. WC Maples. Rob Williams of the OEPF also provides whatever he can whenever he can.

If this is what is happening to professionals, imagine how "invisible" we are to patients seeking research information to counter the negative opinions they have heard from ophthalmology. In the year 2013 we can no longer afford to be so invisible on the Internet. The time has come, especially

with the significant increase in optometric research, to address this problem. It is not enough (as I admit I have done until now) to bemoan the fact that Medscape and PubMed won't let us in, we must solve this problem.

What will the best solution be? Will it be taking all necessary steps to be included on PubMed? Should ILAMO be brought back to life? Are there other alternatives? I do not have the answers, but I do feel that shedding more light on this problem will help focus the considerable talents of our optometric community on finding a solution. Once we have solved this problem we can work to build a second on line resource for optometrists only with a "bank" of VT procedures that have been developed (and sometimes lost) over the past 50 years.

References

1. Taub MB, Shallo-Hoffman J. A Comparison of Three Clinical Tests of Accommodation Amplitude to Hofstetter's Norms to Guide Diagnosis and Treatment. *Optom Vis Dev* 2012;43(4):180-90.
2. Scheiman M, Gwiazda J, Li T. Non-surgical interventions for convergence insufficiency (Review). *The Cochrane Library* 2011, Issue 3 Copyright © 2011 The Cochrane Collaboration. Published by JohnWiley & Sons, Ltd.

Update

Thank you Dr. Koslowe for bringing to light a very crucial topic in academia and for all of optometry. I have personally had similar issues in finding "our" literature when working on papers and posters. The question raised of course is what is the solution? I can promise you that the editorial staff of *Optometry & Visual Performance (OVP)* is stepping up to the plate in this regard. In the past year, we have set up a website where anyone can access the articles and editorials in *OVP*, as well as all of the materials in *VP Today*. With the assistance of our IT department of Justin Ashe at Southern College of Optometry, *OVP* articles and editorials are available through searching Google Scholar and are logged in the Directory of Open Access Journals. Both of these steps take time and manpower.

Of course the question everyone asks is whether we are ever going to get listed in Pubmed. The answer is simple, we are trying. It is not as easy as sending an email and asking to be included, believe me, we have tried! The journal, editorial staff, review board, and supporting organizations must jump through multiple hoops to even be ready to apply, and then we may still get denied. It is a goal we have but it is among many goals we have in creating the best journal. Thank you for serving on the review board and assisting us in this mission.

—Marc B. Taub, OD, MS, Memphis, Tennessee



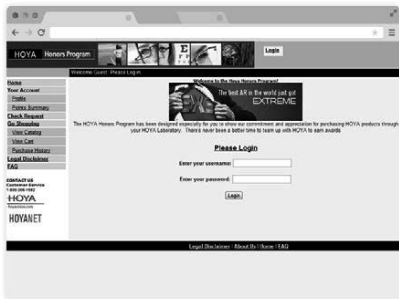
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