Computer Science and Information Systems: Publishing an International Open Access Journal in a Developing Country

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Introduction

- It may be hard for journals from DTCs to adopt open access
- Computer Science and Information Systems (ComSIS): open-access, peer-reviewed scientific journal from Serbia
- Based on our experience with ComSIS, we analyze feasibility of OA from journal's standpoint
  - Business model
  - Patterns of article submission and citation
  - Coverage in major databases (WoS)
  - Journal perception in the scientific community
- Goal: provide journal editors and publishers (from DTCs) with useful guidelines

Open Access Publishing

- The open-access policy of distribution of published manuscripts ensures free availability on the public Internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of published articles

- Points of view
  - Readers: Ideal
  - Authors: Great, but with concerns about perceived journal quality
  - Journals: Difficulties in generating revenue, scaling up

Open Access Publishing

- OA business models for journals
  - Advertisement
  - Subsidies
  - Author charges
  - Umbrella agreements with publishers
- Journal accessibility vs. impact
  - Varying observations in different fields and settings
  - Prevailing opinion: OA journals tend to have stronger immediate impact than non-OA journals

Open Access Publishing

- **Author perceptions of OA journals**
  - Authors generally go not object to author charges (with concerns for DTC)
  - OA journals may need to do more to reassure authors of their quality
- **Roads to OA (authors' view)**
  - Gold road – publish in a pure OA journal
  - Green road – publish in a non-OA journal that allows self-archiving
- **Our view: Important for journals from DTC to take the gold road**

The ComSIS Journal

- **Computer Science and Information Systems (ComSIS) journal**
  - International OA journal published in Serbia from 2004
  - Publisher: ComSIS Consortium
    - Group of leading academic institutions from universities in Serbia and Montenegro, including the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
  - Topics
    - Computer Science: Information Systems, Software Engineering
    - Theory, practice
    - Original research, survey articles
  - Indexing
    - Thomson Reuters JCR (IF 2010: 0.324)
    - Scopus, EMBASE, EBSCO, Inspec, DOAJ, DBLP, SCIndex…
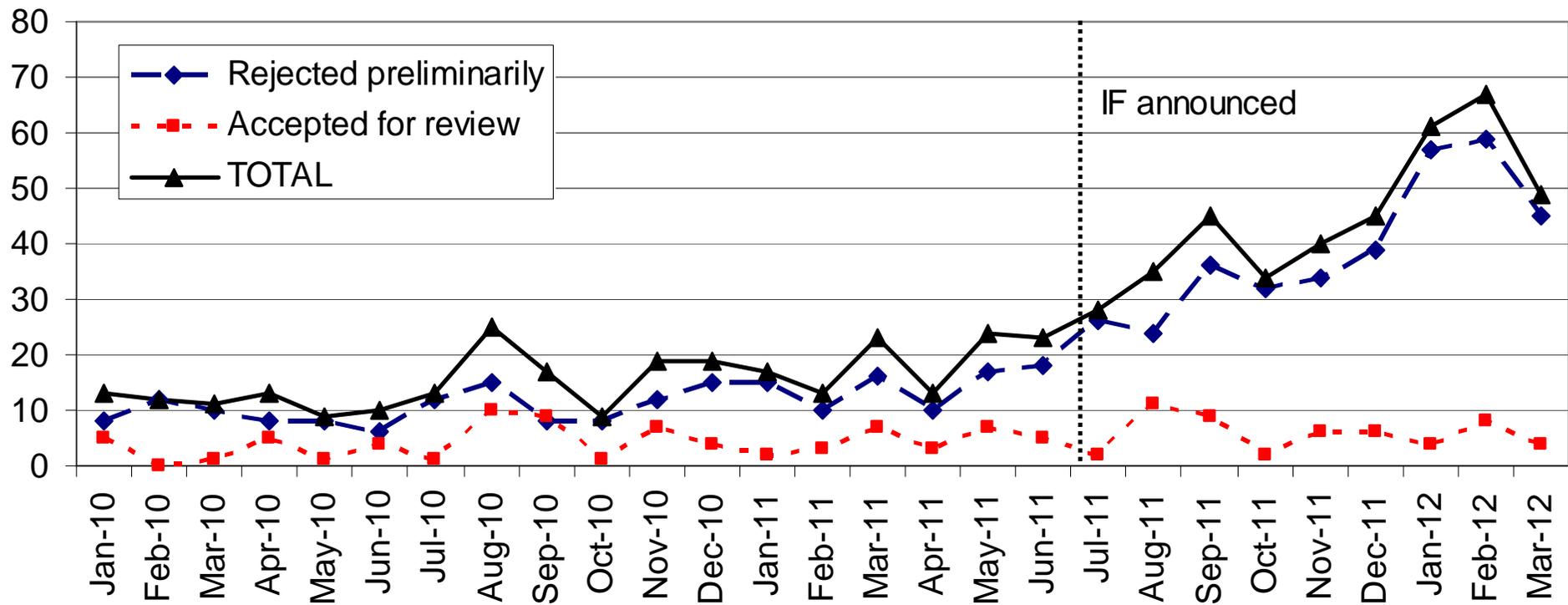
ComSIS Business Model

- **Three main sources of income**
  - Grant from the Serbian Ministry of Education and Science
  - Institutional fees for consortium membership
  - Special issues
- Subscription for printed volumes
- Advertisements used rarely
- No author charges
- Expenses rising due to increased number of submissions
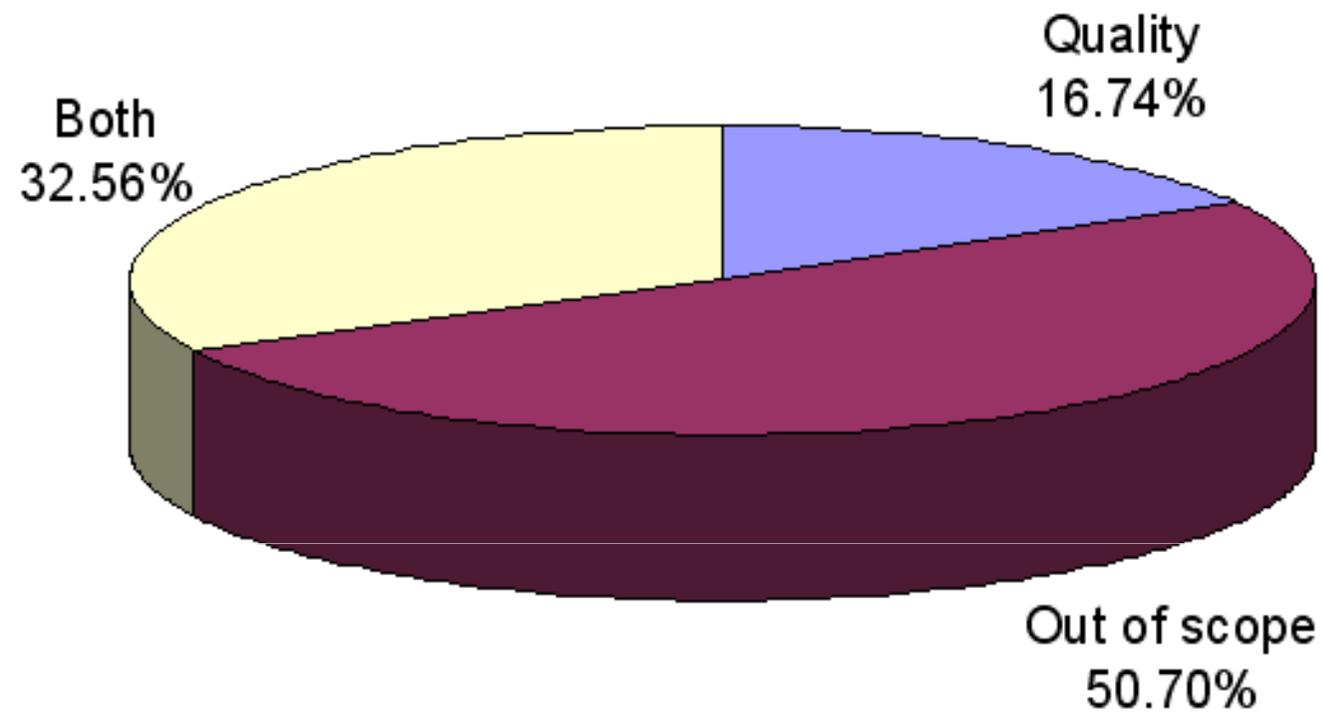- ComSIS self-sustainable, but not-for-profit

ComSIS Article Submission

- **Standard review procedure**
  - Preliminary examination by Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Board members
    - Criteria: scope, (basic) quality
  - One or more review cycles, at least two reviewers
    - Criteria: scope, originality, presentation, technical correctness…

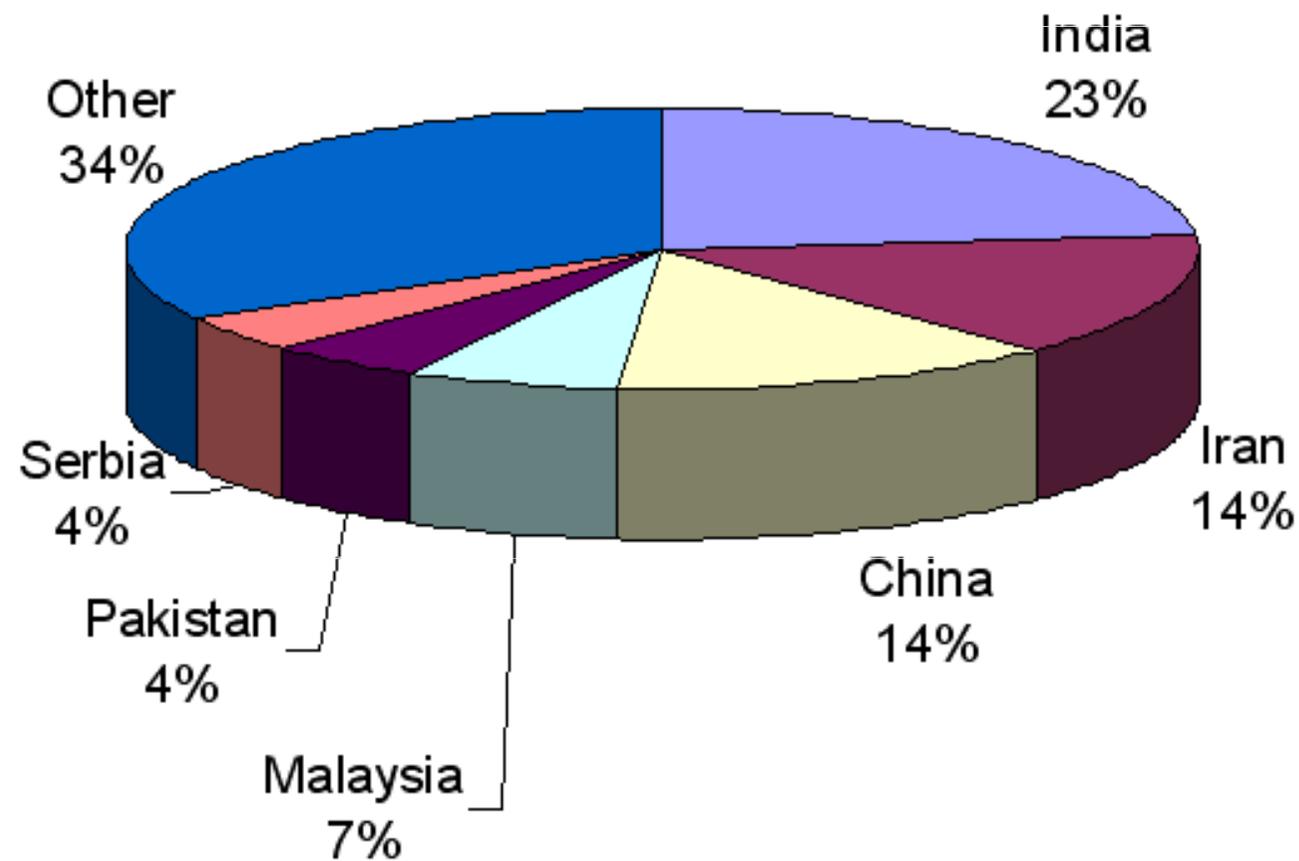- **Preliminary examination became particularly important recently**

Number of Submitted Articles per Month
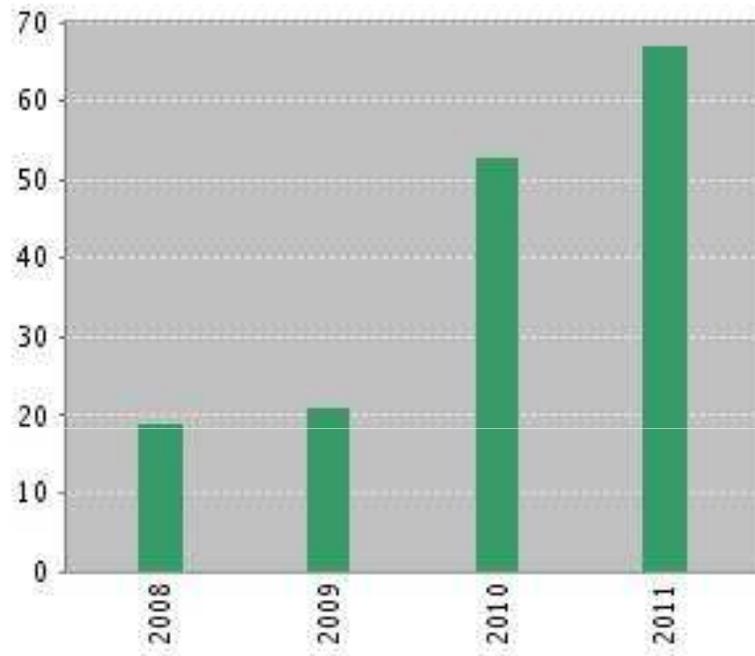
Reason for Preliminary Rejection

Quality
16.74%

Both
32.56%

Out of scope
50.70%

Preliminary Rejection by Country

India 23%
Iran 14%
China 14%
Malaysia 7%
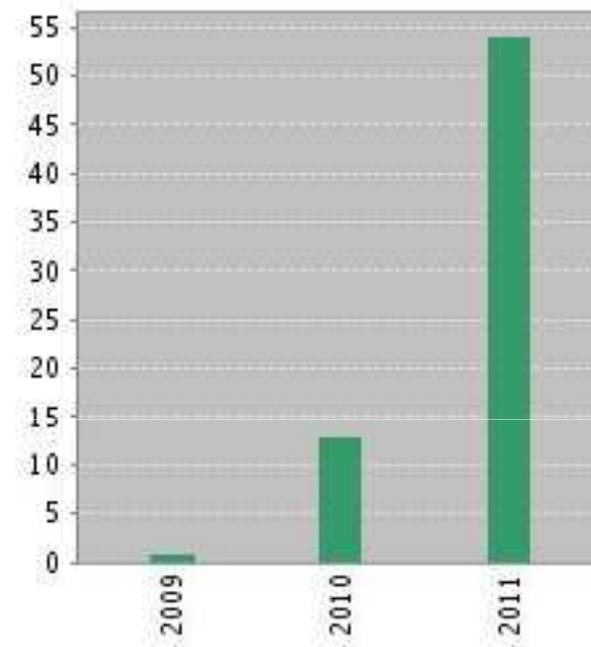Pakistan 4%
Serbia 4%
Other 34%

ComSIS Article Citation: WoS

Published Items in Each Year

Citations in Each Year

ComSIS Article Citation: Google Scholar

- **Google Scholar citation data less reliable**
- **Still good enough, and important**
  - Conference and workshop papers play important roles in the field of computer science
    - Reviewed like journal articles
    - Top conferences have low acceptance rates (e.g., <10%)
- **Google Scholar author profiles**
  - We stretched this functionality to create a profile not for a person, but for the ComSIS journal

Computer Science and Information Systems (ComSIS) Journal

Citation indices

	All	Since 2007
Citations	759	647
h-index	11	10
i10-index	18	13

Citations to my articles

Select: All, None [Export]

Show: 20 ∨   **1-20** Next >

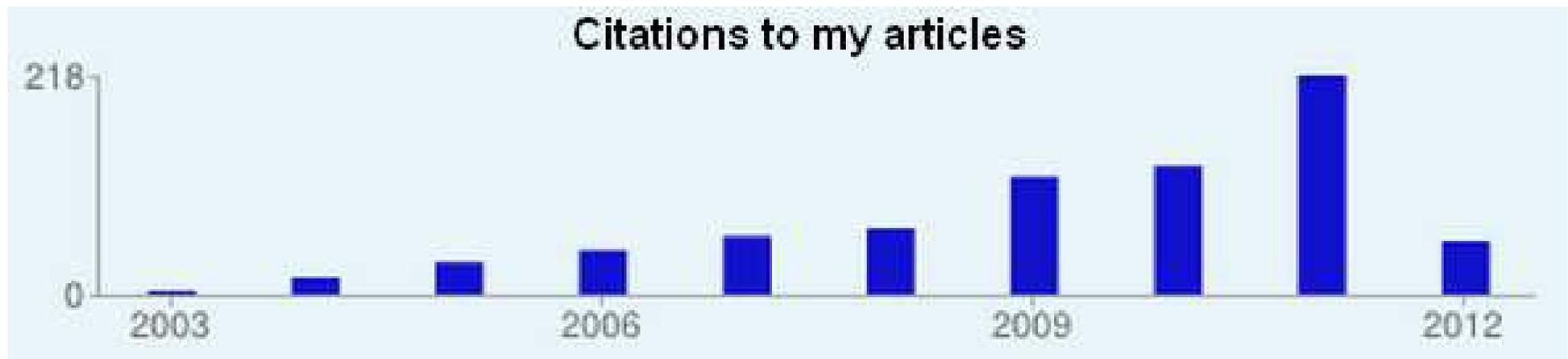| Title / Author	Cited by	Year
Ambient intelligence: Concepts and applications JC Augusto, P McCullagh Computer Science and Information Systems/ComSIS 4 (1), 1-26	74	2007
MDA-based ontology infrastructure D Đurić Computer Science and Information Systems 1 (1), 91-116	66	2004
Learning technology standardization: making sense of it all E Duval Computer Science and Information Systems 1 (1), 33-43	61	2004

IF 2010 announced

Citations to my articles

218

0

2003   2006   2009   2012

Coverage in WoS started

Efforts to expand coverage started

Discussion

Conclusions and recommendations for journal editors in DTCs

- OA and financial sustainability can coexist in a developing country
  - OA: Long term gains for journal visibility, citations
  - Our institutional support not strong enough internationally to ensure success of closed-access
  - We were able to avoid author charges, but we have support from the public sector

Discussion

- **International institutional backing was effectively achieved by coverage in WoS**
  - Before acquiring an IF out journal was almost invisible internationally
  - After acquiring and IF interest dramatically boosted

Discussion

- Perception of ComSIS as an "easy" place to publish
  - Publication in a journal with an IF included in criteria for academic advancement
  - Increased volume of submissions, but mostly inappropriate
  - Challenges for editorial staff
    - Handle increased volume of submissions
    - Not to greatly increase number of published articles

Conclusion

- Although a journal may be based in a DTC and lack strong institutional support, it can be internationally recognized and sustainable
- Key factors:
  - Suitable business model that incorporates OA
  - Coverage in WoS
  - Preparedness to handle increased workload and retain a rigorous acceptance criterion
- Schroter et al. (2005) note that perceived journal quality is most important – in our view this is achievable in a DTC with an appropriate journal management strategy, great effort, and enthusiasm

Thank You

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www.comsis.org