

A Word from the Editor ...

Merchandising Your Case: Last Step in Publishing

Publication in refereed journal is a milestone in the case writing process, but it is not the end of the race. The *Case Research Journal* puts photomasters of your case in the hands of some 500 subscribing professors—more than a thousand, if readers pass their copies to colleagues—but in itself that doesn't guarantee wide circulation of the case to students. Mass use of our cases comes through publication in textbooks.

For some researchers, the editor's acceptance letter marks the achievement of the goal. Once that letter is in hand (or "in dossier"), the writer moves on. On campuses where the tenure/promotion system rewards only refereed journal articles, this may be rational behavior. The number of such narrow-minded campuses is declining, however, as AACSB standards give more recognition to individual schools' own mission definitions. And even at the most traditional survey-research oriented universities, as our founding editor Bill Boulton used to say, "It can't hurt to deliver a two-wheeler loaded with books to the Promotion and Tenure Committee and say, Here's part of my work."

For most of us as casewriters, there is a higher goal than building our dossiers. We would like to know that the work is useful in the field—that students are indeed learning something from it. That recognition comes with adoption of the case by textbook authors. There is a baser goal as well: permission fees collected by NACRA are now shared with case authors, giving them self-employment income and tax deductibility of case research expenses.

Most of us take a passive approach to textbook publication. We rely on the books, authors or editors to find us and beg permission to use our cases. This assumes that all appropriate book authors are perfectly informed about all available cases. It's like the "perfect market" theories of economics: ridiculous on the face of it. Even in the Strategy/Policy area, where the *GRJ* was born, not all book authors belong to NACRA or read the *Journal*. Those who do may not notice that a case labeled "marketing" or "entrepreneurship" or "OB" in the table of contents would be ideal for some application in a policy book.

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