

EMBnet AGM 2016: *EMBnet.journal* Editorial Assistant Activity Report

Antonio Santovito

Introduction

“Bioinformatics without borders.” Those three words guided all my work during the first year of collaboration with EMBnet and *EMBnet.journal* (ENJ)¹. How to help the journal reach a larger audience? How to improve EMBnet’s communication and Public Relations (PR) activities? These have been the questions I’ve tried to answer, managing the tasks assigned to me and proposing new initiatives and useful tools. The first part of my work as Editorial Assistant (EA) was based on three key concepts: restyling, restoring and relaunching. During the first months, I created some multimedia support for incoming events, and tackled content recovery of ENJ, owing to a severe hack to the journal server.

Restyling

With the support of the ENJ Executive Editorial Board (EEB), Domenica D’Elia and I created a new version of the EMBnet leaflet and a short EMBnet presentation, using the restyled design agreed with the EEB, to be used for all EMBnet dissemination materials. Then we adapted this general presentation to be shown during the upcoming “NETTAB 2015 Workshop and the Integrative Bioinformatics Symposium”, held as a joint event in Bari (IT) in October 2015. Afterwards, with the approval of EMBnet’s Executive Board (EB), we started to create and collect comments for a new ENJ logo (shown in Figure 1). It was great teamwork, and everybody contributed with his/her suggestions for improvements. The result of our brainstorming was shared with all EMBnet members, receiving good feedback and approval.



Figure 1. The new ENJ logo.

Once the new logo was approved, the next step was restyling the ENJ website and of the layouts of the different types of journal article (Figure 2). Once again, the teamwork made the difference, and the new year started with a fresh and more appealing design.



Figure 2. The new ENJ printed layout.

Restoring

While we were working on the restyling, we still had a huge issue to solve: most ENJ articles were gone, following the hack, and it became necessary to consider how to make everything accessible and safe again. Lubos Klucar had a very important role in this phase. He taught me how to manage the *Open Journal Systems*², the Content Management System (CMS) of the ENJ website, and worked with me to recover all the missing contents and to restore them online. It was hard work, which we solved with the help of members of the EEB, who shared with us their personal article backups. When everything was back online, we applied the new website design and started working on new contents. As Lubos suggested, the Layout Editor role was assigned to me, owing to my work on the new layout restyle.

Relaunching

At the beginning of 2016, ENJ was back online, and everything was ready for the relaunch. We worked on a general call for papers, which was shared with the EEB for comments and suggestions, mainly relating to the type of target audience to whom to address the call.

Meanwhile, I started working with Axel Thieffry, Chair of the Publicity & Public Relations Special Interest Group (P&PR SIG), to manage EMBnet’s LinkedIn group and website contents. A new social media dissemination strategy was also proposed to the EB, to improve the

Article history

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¹ <http://journal.embnet.org/>

² <https://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs/>

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visibility of ENJ articles on EMBnet's official social media accounts, sharing articles, relevant news about events and job opportunities every day. After six months, the results showed, among others, an increase of 70% Facebook fans and 150% Twitter followers, only using organic and non-sponsored posts.

Starting from May 2016, I also dealt with management of EMBnet's website, by editing and creating contents, as required by the Operational Board. In November, I volunteered to restyle EMBnet.org. The main goal of the project was to change the CMS, migrating everything from Drupal to Wordpress, a safer and more powerful CMS, with better customisation possibilities and an easier back-end system for creating, updating and managing content. The new website will be released in February 2017, once we have access to the new server. It will have a more modern design, in line with the new ENJ look, and will conform to the latest Web-design standards.

It will also be responsive and accessible from mobile devices. It is a very complex project, because of the need to migrate the current contents to the new CMS, and for the complexity of the different custom-content taxonomies, as well as the e-commerce module for EMBnet membership. This is my personal gift to EMBnet, as a sign of gratitude for allowing me to have this magnificent job experience, which I hope will continue in the future.

Acknowledgements

This is where my report ends, hoping I've listed the most important points, being brief and, above all, not boring. This year has been very important for me, for the type of human and professional experiences I had. I met wonderful and willing people that helped me with their opinions, suggestions and tips. It has been an unforgettable experience and I thank everyone in EMBnet for the opportunity to work with such an important global scientific network. I hope my little contribution helps you to go forward to a successful 2017. It has been an honour to work with you.