

Editorial

What's in a Number?

Keith L. Hohn

Department of Chemical Engineering, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, USA;
E-Mail: hohn@ksu.edu; Tel.: +1-785-532-4315; Fax: +1-785-532-7372

Received: 29 June 2015 / Accepted: 30 June 2015 / Published: 17 July 2015

People like to distill complicated phenomenon into easily digestible numbers. Whether it's a top ten list of the best movies of all time, the shooting percentage of our basketball team's star, or a student's score on an exam, we like to quantify phenomenon that is unquantifiable. We like the comfort of a number which we can use as the basis for our decisions. This is an imperfect process, as underlying human behavior can, ultimately, not be boiled down to a single number. But we try anyway.

Academics is no exception. Number of publications, article citations, impact factors, h-indices: all of these attempt to quantify the intellectual impacts of a scholar. These are imperfect measures to be sure, but they do provide a number that can be used to judge how important an article or journal is in its field.

I discuss all of this because of the recent milestone for *Catalysts*: the receipt of its first impact factor. According to the 2014 Journal Citation Reports/Science Edition published by Thomson Reuters, the first Impact Factor for *Catalysts* is 2.0. The impact factor is found by a simple calculation of the number of times articles published in 2012 and 2013 in *Catalysts* are cited in indexed journals in 2014, divided by the number of articles published in the journal in 2012 and 2013. It provides authors and prospective authors some guidance of how visible their article will be if published in a specific journal. As such, this is an important number for a relatively new journal like *Catalysts*.

An impact factor of 2.0 is an excellent start for a journal like ours. This places *Catalysts* 77th out of 139 in the category "Chemistry and Physics". Scholars can now be sure that their submissions to *Catalysts* will be recognized and cited by their peers. It is my hope that receipt of this impact factor will start a cascade of progress for the journal: respected catalytic scientists will see the impact factor and know that *Catalysts* is a respected journal for them to publish in, and will submit their outstanding new work. In turn, the excellent new papers will attract more attention and result in more citations. This will raise the impact factor of the journal, encouraging more and better submissions, which will in turn lead to more citations. And the cycle will continue...

I want to express my sincere thanks to all of those who have contributed to *Catalysts* as it has grown over the past three years: editorial board members, guest editors, and contributors. Thank you for choosing to contribute to *Catalysts*. The accomplishment of a first impact factor is a result of your work.

I encourage you to continue to publish your work in *Catalysts* so that it can be a truly outstanding venue for cutting-edge research in catalysis.

© 2015 by the authors; licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).