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UF/IFAS EDIS NEWS

VOLUME 3 - ISSUE 1

About EDIS News

EDIS News is intended for an “inside-UF/IFAS” audience, particularly anybody with an interest in EDIS publishing: authors, potential authors, department chairs, and program leaders. Please share with anyone you think would be interested. Back issues are on the UF/IFAS Communications website (<http://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/edis.shtml>) under the “News Archive” tab at the bottom.



EDIS team news

Jim Bassett has decided to return to the cool conifer forests and plentiful coffee shops of Seattle, his natural environment. We are sorry to see him go but pleased to announce that newly minted University of Florida MFA Samantha Grenrock is joining our team as the new editor for EDIS Team 3. Samantha starts in May. EDIS Team 3 departments should please send submissions to EDISTeam3@ifas.ufl.edu. With the transition, we are moving Soil and Water Science from Team 2 to Team 3.

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EDIS dot IFAS dot OOFALLYDOO*

Say, what's the right mailbox? Team three? One? Or two?

- Q. I'm not sure I understand the thinking behind these new “EDIS team mailboxes” in Outlook, and I don't know which one is mine. Couldn't I just write my editor directly?
- A. We needed a way to make incoming jobs accessible to all editors so that if an editor leaves, the others can pick up the slack and prevent delays. Of course you can still communicate with your editor by writing to his or her personal Outlook mailbox. If you get an “out of office” auto-reply on something urgent, re-send to any team mailbox and we will get it. To learn which EDIS team is yours, check the handy EDIS FAQ page here, <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/faq/index.html#editors>, or see the back page of this newsletter. Please note: we can accept work only after it has been through departmental peer review. You or your peer-review coordinator should list the reviewers on the manuscript transmittal form for EDIS authors (available here: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/faq/docs/checklist_authors.pdf) along with your credentials as you'd like to see them in the footnote, then send us the form and jpg files for any figures.

Please send questions to skgilder@ufl.edu.

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Diana's (Structured) Data in a Blink



When people read EDIS publications, they (we hope) understand the meaning underlying the arrangement of characters and images on the page. But search engines and other applications have a rather more limited understanding. Human and machine readers alike rely heavily on the structure of the page to understand what it is about and to assess the relevance of the content to their search for knowledge.

It's easy to see that data organized in tables (or spreadsheets or relational databases) are structured. The structure is what makes it possible

for human users and machine algorithms to reliably make sense of the data. Although the “data” encoded in a written document are not fixed, we recognize structural elements (such as titles, levels of headings, figure and table captions, footnotes) by their style and their placement on the page. In web- and print-friendly formats, when documents are encoded with care for communicating the structure, the structure can be accurately identified by machines as well.

EDIS, IFAS Blogs, and Terminal 4 websites serve content generated from structured data stored in a database. EDIS publications and topic pages are stored as structured data and then transformed into HTML. Managing content this way allows for a collection with a uniform look and feel with content that can be easily managed. It also ensures that the structure of the document visible to human readers is easily identifiable by search engines.

Document structure helps earn a higher relevance rank in search results. Consider what a spider (a web-crawling automatic indexer) might infer about a potential search term from each of the following cases:

1. The term and the title of your article are identical.
2. The term appears in your sub-headings.
3. A figure caption in your article includes the term.
4. Multiple links from your article have anchor text including the term.

Any one of these suggests the page is relevant, and each additional case would just increase the certainty.

The take-home message here is that how you structure your publication and the words you use in those structural elements are critical for establishing relevancy for search algorithms—and for the eyeballs of human readers.



Meet your team

Susan Gildersleeve

Susan Gildersleeve is EDIS Team 1 editor. She has a BA in English from UF and an MFA from the University of Iowa, plus she has completed two modules of the **Florida Master Naturalist program**. Ms. Gildersleeve likes a variety of outdoor activities like floating in inner tubes, lying on the grass reading, and napping in hammocks. She is a member of **Rose Koenig's CSA** and struggles every week to eat all the delicious fresh produce.

Your newsletter, your news

If you have an idea for a story for the newsletter or an issue you'd like us to explore, please let us know. Questions about the EDIS collection, the EDIS publishing process, the EDIS website, or any EDIS publication? If you're wondering, others will be, too. We welcome your input to help us tailor the newsletter to suit your needs. Call Susan Gildersleeve at 352-294-3318 or Diana Hagan at 352-294-3315, or email skgilder@ufl.edu and dihagan@ufl.edu.

An EDIS Success Story, Part Two



The song of the EDIS wrangler: One department's simple and effective strategy for handling peer review

To get the complete story of the process one UF/IFAS department uses to get EDIS articles peer reviewed quickly, please see Part One of this story in the second issue of EDIS News, available here: <http://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdfs/edis/EDISNews-v2n2.pdf>.

In this issue, the end of a long trail.

Since we last saw our EDIS wrangler, all four of the reviewers he asked responded that they'd be happy to review the document, but the due date has passed and the wrangler has received peer-reviewed manuscripts from only two of them. The wrangler knows it's easier on the author to get all the reviewer comments at once, so he's holding on to the received reviews until he receives the others. He has just sent a quick, polite e-mail to remind the remaining two reviewers that the reviews are due. Now he must wait.

Our wrangler takes a sip of piping hot cowboy coffee from the tin cup he for some reason favors even though he can't use it in the office microwave and even though it loses heat quickly and even though everything he drinks out of it tastes like metal. He ruminates, stroking his handlebar mustache while gazing at his empty Outlook mailbox as

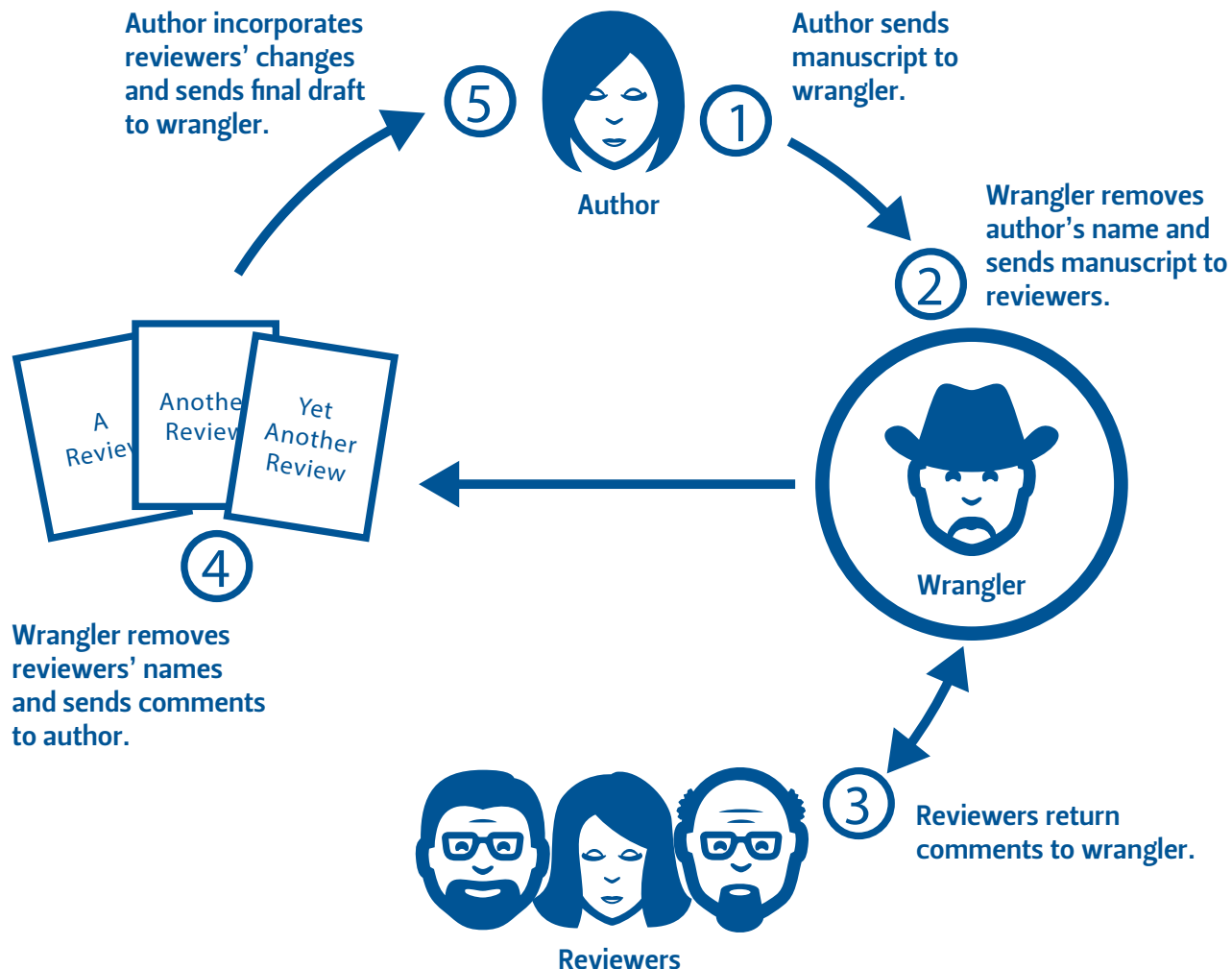
if it were the dying embers of a campfire he made out of three stunted mesquite twigs. He whistles Eddy Arnold's "Cattle Call" softly to himself until he hears the familiar pounding on the wall of his office that indicates the presence of restive coworkers not fond of the ditty. The wrangler ceases whistling and takes another sip of tinny, now-tepid cowboy coffee.

Suddenly the glad chime rings: an e-mail. No, two! At last both peer reviews have come in from the vast prairie that is everything else faculty have to do besides read EDIS manuscripts. The wrangler welcomes them into the fold and carefully removes the reviewers' names from the marked manuscripts before sending them to the author (this department has a blind peer review system). When the author returns the final draft, the wrangler checks to be sure that

the manuscript transmittal form for EDIS authors is there and complete and that there are jpg files for each figure, and then, with gladness in his heart, he types a quick "howdy!" to the EDIS editor and sends off the job. His task complete, the wrangler heads out into the parking lot and hops on Ol' Paint. It is difficult and dangerous to ride a fixed-gear bike under the best of conditions, let alone while wearing boots and spurs, but as we have seen, our wrangler feasts on challenge as if it were salt pork and sourdough biscuits.

"Does your department have an EDIS wrangler? One person to whom you send your EDIS materials to get them peer reviewed? Many departments do, especially those that publish frequently. Some have two or more—a staff person and one or more faculty who can answer peer review questions. In the future we may be able to acquire or develop software that could automate the wrangling for us, make blind peer review easier for the departments, and save everyone time."

SAMPLE BLIND PEER REVIEW PROCESS



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