

The Valuable Part of Your Paper Called Supporting Information

Increasingly, articles published in *Analytical Chemistry* contain Supporting Information (SI) sections; over one-half already do. SI offers extra space to the author beyond that (seven pages) allowed in the primary research article (PRA). Authors who submit PRAs of excessive length are generally required by the journal to shorten them, and a large fraction of the time the change is a movement of information to the SI section. Many authors recognize the length guidelines for PRAs and construct a SI before submission, which is of course preferable because it is generally better organized.

This Editorial is to call authors' attention to organizational aspects of the SI, since when well organized, SI becomes a more valuable source of information for the readers (and it's free to them). Valuable equals Organized. Also, like the PRA, SI is subject to peer review, and the quality of review advice for the author is improved if the reviewer finds the SI more accessible.

The Author Instructions regarding SI organization state: "*Analytical Chemistry* especially encourages authors to include figures or data in SI that are similar to those in the manuscript so that the manuscript is not repetitive, yet all information is preserved. Such figures should be cross-referenced between the two documents; in particular, authors are encouraged to reference SI figures and tables (Figure S-2, Table S-1, etc.) in the primary article to ensure that the reader is aware of their presence." I especially promote this cross-referencing; authors lose part of the SI benefit when the reader is not "led" to connections between SI and the PRA.

The Author Instructions say further, about organization: "The first page of SI should be a cover page (labeled page S-1) that lists the authors' names and affiliations, the title of the primary article, and an abstract that describes the nature of the materials therein and/or a table of contents. Then, as needed, SI should include any further discussion germane to the primary research article or novel SI material, such as video clips or other imagery; any expanded description of experimental procedures; any supplementary experimental or theoretical results, given as figures or tables with legends and captions that contain the same level of detail as those in the primary research manuscript and that convey the significance of the result; and supplementary references for either the primary article or the SI. The material should be provided in a form suitable for immediate reproduction, because no galley proof will be provided." (The SI material is not edited by ACS and is posted to the Web as it is received.)

Further from the Author Instructions: The SI "material can include additional examples of experimental and theoretical figures that are similar in form to figures in the article, novel algorithms, extensive tabular data (e.g., numerical values for the data in important figures in the manuscript and databases in comparative or theoretical studies of detailed kinetics or proteomics data), extensive figures connected with computational modeling, analytical and spectral characterization data for new compounds, and extensive instrument and circuit diagrams." Many authors already make exquisite use of these opportunities.

Some other points on producing the best SI: 1) SI should be submitted in an electronic file that is separate from the primary research manuscript. 2) All Supporting Information available as PDF files should be contained in one PDF file. 3) Please, please Do Not Upload Figures And Tables That Are To Be Published In The Article Into The Supporting Information File, And Vice Versa! 4) All page, figure, and table numbers in SI must be preceded by "S-". 5) Figure and table captions must provide full details, just as in the PRA. 6) Text and labels on figures should be of the same easily readable quality as that in the primary manuscript.

Authors, the readers of *Analytical Chemistry*, and I and the other Editors and ACS staff thank you for the continued high quality of your submissions—both the science and its organization!



Published: July 11, 2011