



International Compumag Society



From the President

A New Year and a new conference! First let me wish everyone a Happy New Year for 2022 and all success with your research projects.

Secondly, we just completed the first totally on-line version of the Compumag conference. While this event has been happening more or less every 2 years since 1976, this was the first time it has been totally on line. When we moved it from its original date in the summer of 2021, all of us believed that the pandemic would be well and truly over by January 2022 and we would be able to visit Cancun for a great conference and a winter break. Well – by September, it dawned on all of us that this would probably not happen and the ICS Board made the decision to go on-line. This did not leave the organizers with much time – a mere 16 weeks or so to move from in-person to on-line. Marco and his team responded amazingly to the challenge. Within a month they had reviewed several possible platforms and provided a recommendation to the Board – which was accepted. Then the real work began. While it may, on the face of it, seem to be something relatively simple to implement – after all, there are no rooms to organize, no people to deal with, everything can be prepared up front, etc. – it soon became clear that preparing an on-line version is an incredible amount of work. From the issue of designing a timetable that might be more or less acceptable to people in different time zones around the world to ensuring that everyone provided backup versions of their presentations, both oral and poster, well before the conference so that any internet failure would not be catastrophic; from designing systems for social gatherings to being able to walk around a virtual poster room; everything had to be in place and working when the curtain went up on the Monday morning. In the event, it all worked almost perfectly. The oral presentations were well attended and some papers had quite lively discussions. Maybe the best part of the conference was the poster sessions – Marco and his team aided by Jan Sykulski put a lot of effort into trying to make the poster sessions work. The combination of short videos describing the papers and the ability to interact through a video conference with the presenter made this feel almost more interactive than at an in-person event. Finally, although many people seemed to miss the networking tables, those that did notice them found them really useful for arranging meetings with other delegates during the conference. Overall, while not as good as actually being at the planned event in Cancun, this conference was excellent! Well done Marco, Coni, Jan and the team in Mexico!

Of course, we have not yet lost a conference in Cancun – Marco has negotiated for the conference to be held there in 2027 – so book your place now!

On other issues for the Society in 2022, I would really like to encourage more interactions amongst members. Computational electromagnetics is growing in importance daily as the world moves towards electrification as a way through the global warming crisis and, as we saw in the range of papers at the conference, there are a large number of challenges ranging from improved numerical systems and reduced order models, to the applications of machine learning to enhance the design processes and the implementation of full multi-physics simulations. One of the roles of the Society will be to encourage the formation of “Special Interest Groups” in some of these areas with online webinars held every few months.

So – until the next Compumag in Kyoto in 2023, I wish everyone all the best in the world of computational electromagnetics.

David Lowther