998-00-249 **A J Hildebrand*** (`ajh@uiuc.edu`), Department of Mathematics, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801. *Efficient processing of journal submissions.* Preliminary report.

The traditional way of processing manuscripts submitted to a journal requires the author to submit two or three hard copies to an editor of the journal. The editor would then acknowledge the paper, notify the Editor-in-Chief of the submission, send the paper to a referee, and carry out any necessary follow-up correspondence with author and referee. This process is time consuming, costly, and fraught with pitfalls, as its reliability depends largely on the individual editors' organizational skills and their willingness and ability to handle the routine chores involved in a timely manner. While some publishers have moved towards an electronic-based submission process, many journals still operate under the traditional system.

In this talk, I will describe a system of centralized, electronic processing of manuscript submissions that was recently put in place at the Illinois Journal of Mathematics. By largely eliminating paper-based correspondence in favor of email correspondence and automating many of the routine chores associated with processing of papers, the new system has resulted in significant savings in costs and staff time, a more reliable and more timely processing of papers, and a substantially reduced burden on editors. (Received February 29, 2004)