Editorial

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Getting your case ready for journal submission

You have finished writing your case and instructor's manual and have decided to pursue the publication of your case in an appropriate academic journal [1]. What's next in this journey? Hold off any temptation to send it in without completing the steps below. Your chances of publication substantially increase when you take these extra steps to prepare the case for submission! Here are the first three steps for getting your case (traditional or compact) ready for submission to *TCJ*.

Step 1: Test your case in the classroom. This step provides an important test of the effectiveness of the case as a teaching and learning tool. Plan to use the case in one of the classes identified as the target audience for the case. If you don't have a class available to "experiment on," consider asking a friend or a colleague to use your case in their classes. If you are teaching your case, consider asking a colleague to sit in on your class to take notes during the discussion. If this is not possible, consider recording the discussion (ask the students for permission to record first!). Notes or a recording will capture feedback that you should address in revising the case and instructor's manual. Use your phone to take a picture of any board work that has taken place during the discussion.

Teach the case using the teaching strategy you have described in the instructor's manual. You will learn whether your proposed teaching strategy works to achieve the learning objectives and whether the timing is adequate. Discussions seldom proceed in the logical fashion that we anticipate. Students will digress, struggle at times or become confused. Try to remember all the detours, awkward silences or requests for clarification (generally, it is best to make notes on these immediately after you finish the class, so you don't forget). Use notes or the recording to uncover any additions or explanations you may have made during the discussion. As educators, we often step in to help confused students by adding additional background information that might not have been contained in the case. After all, we conducted the research and have developed expertise in the case situation. When students look confused, we jump in to help. We want to incorporate these explanations and clarifications into the case so that adopting instructors can teach the case as well as we can. We will also want to note novel interpretations and creative solutions that students will propose to add to the discussion question answers in the IM.

The goal is to gauge student response to the case. Were students confused by anything in the case? Were they engaged in the case? Did the discussion proceed as you thought it would, or were there digressions where background information was supplied before the discussion moved forward? Did the students reach the key points that were necessary to achieve the learning objectives?

Ask the students to provide feedback on the case at the end of the class. Ask them to identify any sections or topics that were difficult or unclear. Review the case exhibits with them and ask if any other information would have been helpful. Ask them to point out misspellings or typos that should be corrected.

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Step 2: Revise the case and instructor's manual to incorporate feedback. Make any changes to the case that are necessary to incorporate feedback from the classroom test. Adjust the instructor's manual to incorporate anything you learned in teaching the case. Although it is not required, many adopting instructors appreciate any teaching tips you can share from your experience with the case in the classroom. These teaching tips might include things like icebreaker questions, video clips you used to introduce the case, summary slides that you used to debrief the case discussion and so forth. Add a statement to the Research Methodology section of the IM to indicate that the case has been classroom-tested (indicate the course and student level used in conducting the test). If the changes to either the case or instructor's manual are extensive, you may wish to classroom test the case again to see if the changes you have made addressed the problematic issues. To gain better insight into the effectiveness of your changes, ask a colleague to teach the case the second time. Revise the case and the instructor's manual to include any new feedback you receive.

Step 3: Present your case at a case conference. One of the best ways to tune up your case before submitting it to a journal is to present it at a case conference. There are many case conferences held in the United States (and abroad) on an annual basis. Exhibit 1 lists some of the most prominent ones. Most of these events feature a case writing roundtable format that can be invaluable to both new and experienced case writers hungering for validation and formative feedback.

Participants receive the cases and IMs of the five to six cases presented in the case writing roundtable. Each participant must read the cases and IMs to prepare written feedback (sometimes just marking up the case and the IM) to share with the case writer during the roundtable session. Typically, participants discuss each case in a 30–50-minute session led by the facilitator (usually an experienced case writer). The case writer is invited to briefly introduce the case in five minutes or less, focusing on what motivated them to write that particular case and the case's target audience (usually in terms of the courses and levels where it will be used). Case writers are also encouraged to indicate areas where the group's help would be appreciated. Participants are then invited to share their feedback and suggestions with the group. A scribe takes notes for the case writer so that they may focus on and respond to what is being said without worrying about capturing all the details. The facilitator will assist in moving the discussion along and keeping it constructive. If time remains, participants sometimes share suggestions for effectively teaching the case. At the end of the discussion, the case writer receives actionable feedback for revising and improving the case and IM before submitting it for publication.

Case writers (especially first-timers) receive the following benefits in bringing a case to a case writing workshop:

- *Peer-to-peer learning of case writing conventions and effective case pedagogy*. I acquired much of what I know about case writing through participation in case writing workshops. Experienced case writers often join the roundtable to share their expertise and interact with newcomers.
- *Actionable feedback designed to improve the case before submission to a journal.* A first-time case writer's chance of receiving a favorable review in the first round is far better after the case is revised following a workshop than it would be if submitted directly to the journal.
- *Energy and new ideas for effectively writing and teaching with cases*. I always come away from a case workshop eager to teach the cases we discussed and try out new

approaches shared at the roundtable. The discussion of the cases of others often triggers new ideas for structuring or developing my cases. At the end of the conference, I feel tired but recharged to do more.

- *Affirmation, affiliation and overwhelming support from case writers*. The case writing community is a small but welcoming group of colleagues, many of whom have known each other for twenty or more years. The group embraces all newcomers and does their best to help newbies along their journey to publication. After my first case workshop, I knew that the case writing community provided a fun, warm and friendly community of scholars that I wanted to join.

Of course, the value of presenting your case at a case conference only accrues if you make the revisions to the case and the instructor's manual based on the feedback from the roundtable. Reviewers and editors are often disappointed to see cases known to have been presented in a case roundtable containing the same errors and problems they did before the case conference. The case writing community is a small one. It is not uncommon for a conference reviewer or roundtable participant to be assigned as a reviewer of the same case during the journal review process. Take the time to make the revisions before submitting them to the journal.

Exhibit 1

Table E1 Conferences with case writing roundtable formats

Association	*Typical Meeting Dates & Locations*	*Website*
The CASE Association (CASE)	Annually in May in New England, US	www.caseweb.org
North American Case Research Association (NACRA)	Annually in October around the US and Canada	www.nacra.net
Society for Case Research (SCR)	Annually in July in the midwestern US	www.sfcr.org
Asociación Latinoamericana de Casos (ALAC)	Annually in May in Spain, Latin and South America	www.cic.tec.mx/alac/
Canada Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC)	Annually in May throughout Canada	www.asac.ca
Caribbean Case Researchers Association (CCRA)	New organization hosted first roundtable in May 2018	www.utechja-ccra.com
World Association for Case Method Research & Application (WACRA)	Annually in June/July in many global destinations. Fall workshops in November. Recent conferences in Peru, Austria, Netherlands, Finland	www.wacra.org
Southeast Case Research Association (SECRA)	Annually in February in the southeastern US	www.secra.org
Southwest Case Research Association (SWACRA)	Annually in March, usually in Texas	www.swcra.net
Western Casewriters Association (WCA)	Annually in March in California, Hawaii and other western destinations	www.westerncasewriters.org

Note: All of the associations welcome submissions from participants outside the designated region. Submission deadlines are typically 3–6 months before the conference date. Calls for conference submissions can be found on the association's website

Reviewers will appreciate a more polished case and IM. Your chances of receiving an "ACCEPT" decision increase significantly if you follow these three steps prior to submitting your case. The case writing community will welcome you with open arms!

Table 1 Cases in this issue

Case title and target audience	*Authors*	*Synopsis*
MoveAhead: lessons in pragmatism for an idealistic social-entrepreneur *Target Audience:* Undergraduate Business Policy and Strategy, Small Business Management or Entrepreneurship courses	Sambhavi Lakshminarayanan, Simon Best and Evelyn Maggio	In 2011, Darnell started the 1.0 version of his nonprofit named "Grow Forward" to provide academic tutoring and physical fitness training to youth in Brooklyn. Despite the popularity and community benefits of this free program, it proved to be financially unsustainable. Darnell desperately wanted it to be viable nonprofit. He resolved this dilemma by launching a for-profit called "Maximum Result International" (MRI). Darnell planned that MRI would later be associated with, and partially fund, a 2.0 version of the nonprofit. The challenge was in ensuring that it did not succumb to the same fate as Grow Forward
Navigating the tides of an emerging global cannabis industry: the Aphria-Tilray merger decision *Target Audience:* Undergraduate and graduate strategy courses, International; business course, Cannibis industry-focused course	Majid Eghbali-Zarch, Jennifer Marlowe and Sandy Brennan	The cannabis industry in Canada started to form after the legalization of recreational cannabis in 2018 and edibles in 2019. As more countries were eying the Canadian experiment and contemplating legalization, many believed that the industry had great potentials globally for both medical and recreational products. Similar to any industry in its nascency, the cannabis industry structure was undefined and product definitions and categories were unclear. As a result, the firms in this industry had to deal with ambiguities, uncertainties and complexities that wouldn't exist in an otherwise established and mature industry. The strategic question, thus, for potential entrants is whether, when and how to enter the industry. The case, with its pedagogical focus, intends to provide grounds for analyzing a nascent industry and its attractiveness, as well as exploring the way an industry can provide a country with an edge compared to others. Finally, given the nature of industry, the case presents a learning opportunity for students to envision themselves in a decision making context with a high level of uncertainty, ambiguity, and complexity
The Bakery Shop (TBS) takes the heat: crisis management, social media and corporate reputation *Target Audience:* Undergraduate introductory business ethics course, upper-level corporate governance course	Ahmed Mohamed Abdel-Meguid	In 2015, The Bakery Shop (TBS), a growing Egyptian business specialized in premium baked goods, launched a new fusion dessert "The Croissant Om Ali". Triggered by social media the new product was an instant hit resulting in orders which exceeded TBS's initial projection. However, there was a sudden turn of events when some consumers began showing symptoms of food poisoning. Once again social media came into play with an aggressive customer backlash towards TBS. Its three founders had to devise an appropriate action plan to address the crisis and salvage TBS's tarnished image
Café Tato's strategic initiatives: business continuity in COVID-19 realities *Target Audience:* Undergraduate and graduate strategic management courses	Som Sekhar Bhattacharyya and Christo Fernandes	"Café Tato" was the most popular and the oldest tea cafés in Goa, India. It had a presence in Panjim and Margaon in Goa. On 24th of March, 2020 India went into an economic and physical lock down because of COVID-19 pandemic related crisis. One week down the line on 31st March 2020, Mr Pranav Dhuri (hereby referred as Pranav) one of the owners of 'Café Tato' was contemplating how to ensure business continuance once there was semi-normalcy restored. What would the initiatives that need to be undertaken was critical for success of Tato the legendary café in Goa was playing in the mind of Pranav
Stakeholder power play: Delta Airlines, voter rights and Georgia Senate Bill 202 *Target Audience:* Undergraduate business ethics or business in society courses	Stephanie Raible, Olugbenga Adeyinka, Sarah Holtzen and Megan Douglas	On March 26, 2021, the media was buzzing about Georgia Senate Bill 202 (S.B.202), which included voting regulations perceived to negatively target Black voters. As the head of the state's largest employer, Edward Bastian, CEO of Delta Airlines, found himself at the center of this heated political issue. While Bastian had initially shown support for the bill, the rise in opposing voices and pressure to boycott Delta presented increased pressure to think about their various stakeholders and potentially reevaluate their strategy. Should Bastian stay consistent with their initial support of S.B.202, speak out to oppose it, or remain silent?

(*continued*)

Table 1

Case title and target audience	*Authors*	*Synopsis*
Designing a social enterprise: the story of Conflictorium *Target Audience:* Undergraduate Entrepreneurship courses	Amrita Harshvardhan Bihani and Nimit Ashwinkumar Thaker	Conflictorium, situated in Ahmedabad since 2013, is a museum which acknowledges and discusses conflict through various art forms. Since its inception, the museum has fostered values like diversity, transparency and care reflecting in how it deals with its people and finances. Now, as the museum plans to reach out to new audiences it is confronted with a challenge to preserve its cherished values and still expand its activities
Avaneetha Textiles: empowering women through education *Target Audience:* Undergraduate Entrepreneurship courses	Satya Nandini Arjunan, Minu Zachariah and Mathew J. Manimala	Although women are capable of writing their own destiny regardless of what they are and where they come from, Kalpana Anand, the Executive Director of Avaneetha Textiles, believes that education plays an essential role in empowering women. Accordingly, she is on a mission to offer shop-floor jobs to young underprivileged women aspiring dropouts that provides them an opportunity to learn while they earn. Established in the year 2004 in Coimbatore, Avaneetha Textiles is currently being managed by two sisters Uma (Managing Director) and Kalpana. Although this business model supports around 900 young women, not all have made the most of it. Only 25% of their employees benefitted from the "learn-while-you-earn" program promoted by the company. Kalpana realized that such a conduct would hinder the achievement of empowering women. Therefore, the challenge before her was to motivate more women to enroll for different courses and thereby improve the quality of their life

In this issue

This issue includes seven cases (Table 1) focused on a wide variety of companies, locations and issues. Each case has a strong IM providing effective teaching strategies, theoretical linkages and complete answers and analysis to all discussion questions. *TCJ* IMs have been rigorously peer reviewed to ensure that adopting faculty can teach these cases as well as the authors. Enjoy!

Note

1. Excerpted from Morris, R. J. (forthcoming). Chapter 8: Publishing a Compact Case. In *The Ultimate Guide to Compact Cases: Case Research, Writing and Teaching* (1st ed.). Book chapter, Emerald Publishing.