

# Transforming Access to the *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning*

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*The Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning has been consciously adapting to the emerging publication trends among business periodicals for the past several years. Since 2006, efforts to improve the visibility of and access to JFCP have included expanding the number and type of indexing services that house the journal, promoting the journal's open access status, and changing the publication's title to align it with other major periodicals. Although these efforts are ongoing, the Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning continues to seek out new ways of enhancing access to its scholarship and reaching a wider audience of scholars, researchers, students, and financial practitioners.*

*Key Words: indexing databases, journal trends, journal visibility, open access journals*

Tempest (2005) wrote that in this digital age of research, many “fields take a new direction and the journals in the field need to adapt accordingly” (p. 57). The *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning (JFCP)* has been consciously adapting to the new directions of many business publications since 2006, when the journal’s editor and a member of the editorial board began a project to “increase the visibility and use” of the publication (Kelsey, 2007, p. 18). Over the past 4 years, efforts to increase the impact of *JFCP* included broadening the number and type of locations that index the journal, promoting the journal’s open access status, and improving the journal’s presentation.

*JFCP*’s transformation began with an indexing project that was documented in Kelsey’s 2007 article. Kelsey, serving as a *JFCP* editorial board member in addition to his role as an academic librarian, argued that “faculty and students almost exclusively use electronic indexes to conduct literature searches for articles relevant to their academic research” and that a scholarly publication’s inclusion in numerous indexing databases would considerably improve the impact of, as well as the access to, that publication (Kelsey, p. 18). Research indicating that the number of indexing services covering a journal correlates signifi-

cantly with a journal’s total citations, visibility, and library holdings augments Kelsey’s claim, providing the impetus for *JFCP* to persistently seek out indexes and databases that would provide new access points to the journal’s scholarship (Kelsey).

Since the beginning of the indexing project, *JFCP* has been successfully placed within 18 prominent indexing databases, including *ABI/Inform*, *Academic Search Complete*, *Current Abstracts*, *Business Source Complete*, *Business Source Corporate*, *TOC Premier EconLit*, *Journal of Economic Literature*, *PsycINFO*, *Social Services Abstracts*, *Business Education Index*, *Wilson Business Full Text*, *J-Gate*, *Directory of Open Access Journals*, *Open Science Directory*, *PAIS International*, *ProQuest/ProQuest Central*, *Lexis Nexis*, and *ERIC*. As the indexing project is ongoing, *JFCP* is still being considered for inclusion in *Web of Science* and *Scopus*. On average, each of the journals included in Kelsey’s research sample were covered by 20 indexing services, a number that he indicated would be a “reasonable” goal for *JFCP* (Kelsey, p. 22). Depending on the outcome of its outstanding applications, *JFCP* appears to be on the brink of attaining its indexing goal and maximizing access to its scholarship.

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In addition to increasing its inclusion in indexing services managed by various vendors, *JFCP* has explored the potential of open access (OA) publishing. Full-text articles, although available on the AFCPE website (<http://www.afcpe.org/publications/journal-articles.php>), are also available via a large number of OA platforms. Recent research reveals that across disciplines OA journals reach a wider audience than scholarship restricted by subscriptions and high fees. Eight years ago, *Nature* published a paper that described the clear correlation between an article's cites and the probability that it is a freely available, online article (Lawrence, 2001). Since 2001, research has consistently indicated that OA publications have many benefits; the major benefit being the unrestricted, free access that the OA platform provides for any potential readers or researchers. *JFCP*, as an OA journal, has begun to take advantage of these benefits by participating in the large OA directories and networks such as *Open Science Directory*, *J-Gate*, *Directory of Open Access Journals*, *Google Scholar*, and *Social Sciences Research Network*.

*JFCP* took another step to adapt to the changing directions of business scholarship when the title changed in 2009. The change in the name of a journal can have the effect of increasing the journal's prestige and visibility. Journal names that sound more authoritative or appear in search lists alongside other high-profile publications tend to benefit from those appearances and associations. When visibility is enhanced for a journal, its accessibility is also improved. According to *Journal Citation Reports (JCR) Social Sciences Edition 2008*, the most prominent journals in the subject area of *Business/Finance* favored titles that began with "Journal of," as 20 of the 48 journals held this moniker. A journal's reputation and identity is evidenced in its name (Candon, 2009). Moreover, indexing and linking actions are directly and particularly affected by journal changes. Findability can be made easier, but there is a time element involved in getting appropriate updates and corrections in databases and in associated linking algorithms. In changing the name of *JFCP*, both short-term and long-term implications were considered and carefully accounted for in the process, and the journal name change was not substantial with respect to its established identity. The single sustaining detail of a journal's identity and presentation is its name, and this is highly significant to its community of users, potential users, and the databases in which it is indexed.

The *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning* maximizes its potential to reach and impact researchers, scholars, and students by transforming itself to adapt to the changing nature of research in the 21st century. Efforts to increase *JFCP*'s access points and potential for discovery are ongoing and will continue to help the scholarship published in this journal reach as wide an audience as possible.

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