

What comes next?

Writing the editorial for this last issue of 2009 means looking back on the year and thinking about what was really remarkable. For 2009 this is an easy job: the topic that governed most of the year's headlines was the financial crisis. Many of our partners in industry were hit dramatically. Their revenue dropped by 20 to 40%, the profits almost vanished or even turned to losses.

Now, at the end of the year, current figures suggest that we are through the worst. Coherent announced for the last quarter, ending on October 3rd, a 50% surge in orders compared to the number received in the preceding quarter. Also other companies have stated that they are seeing more orders coming in again. So it seems that the worst has been reached and a recovery is becoming visible.

The big question is what comes next. After incredible support on the part of governments, the banking system appears stable again. At least for me it remains open as to whether the main causes for the crisis have been removed. The photonics industry is sighing and hoping for a sustainable growth. Still, nobody expects a fast rise and, after all, nobody dares to make a forecast further than three months ahead.

Of course, there are some markets that are less affected by the current crisis. Healthcare might be one of those. Yet, it takes a long time before a new product is established here. The article by Michael Kaschke and his colleagues on OCT (p. 24) traces the OCT development from the lab right up to a product that becomes the gold standard for the ophthalmologist. It took about 20 years to get there! It took time to improve the technology, to gather the medical evidence and to finally convince the doctors. Here we see, that the development of a truly unique product (-line) may take longer than the economic cycles.

With Optik & Photonik, we are also governed by these economic cycles, as we depend on the budgets of our industrial partners. I am very grateful to mention in this respect that most of them have stayed with us so far without any large cuts. This encourages us to continue the development of the journal.

And one important step along this path is the strengthening of our editorial team. I have great pleasure in announcing that Dr. Katja Paff has joined our team and will take over editorial responsibility for Optik & Photonik. Katja studied (laser-) physics in Hamburg and spent more than two years at LLNL in Livermore, CA. Thereafter she joined the group of Andreas Tünnermann in Jena.

At Wiley, she will work in a team with Francisco Velasco, who in future will concentrate more on the sister journal, Laser Technik Journal. Francisco has done an excellent job for O&P, his ideas and his experience will be a vital asset for the further development of the journal. So we will start the next year with a stronger team and I wish Katja all the best for her new project.



Dr. Andreas Thoss
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andreas Thoss". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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