



Sincere Thanks to All Who Worked with The Oil Drum

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This is a guest post by Kjell Aleklett, Professor of Physics at the Global Energy Systems Group of Uppsala University Sweden. and President of ASPO International.

At the end of August, The Oil Drum website will change from an active blog into a static archive for many extremely good articles on, primarily, the history and future of oil production. During the eight years that the website was active, its leadership did amazing work. The fact that so many influential bloggers have commented on its closure shows how influential The Oil Drum has been. I have just been contacted by a journalist from The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) who liked to discuss the many denials of Peak Oil and what the closing of The Oil Drum would mean for the Peak Oil movement. The reflections below are a part of my commentary to WSJ together with other thoughts on the future.

According to Google Trends the year 2005 was the year in which the search term "Peak Oil" was most frequently seen. It was in that year that The Oil Drum opened its doors for submissions and that was also the same year during which the www.peakoil.com website was established. Another important website at that time was Energy Bulletin, that has now transformed into Resilience, www.resilience.org. The first time that the term "Peak Oil" was used in the international press was in 2002 at the formation of ASPO, the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas. In 2003, ASPO opened the website www.peakoil.net. During 2004 there were plans to develop the peakoil.net website in the same direction that The Oil Drum subsequently developed but the great activity at The Oil Drum lessened the need.

In the communique announcing that The Oil Drum was to close and become an archive Rembrandt wrote, "Despite our best efforts to fill this gap (number of new articles) we have not been able to significantly improve the flow of high quality articles." This has been interpreted by some as a sign of crisis for "the Peak Oil theory" but as an academic researcher, I see it completely differently. In 2002 when we formed ASPO, Peak Oil was a novel research area about which a very great deal could be written. In Uppsala, we chose to publish our articles in scientific journals but others chose to publish their articles at The Oil Drum, for example. Today there are a very large number of articles describing significant facts regarding Peak Oil. This research area has matured and it has become progressively more difficult to find new, significant angles on peak oil to analyse. Currently we see that there are many people trying to assert that we do not need to worry about Peak Oil, but it is interesting to note that such assertions appear mainly in newspaper articles and on blogs and not in scientific journals that are subject to peer-review.

All the activity at The Oil Drum was generated by volunteers so it is not surprising that after eight years of work, the people who started the site decided to convert it to an archive and do something else with their free time. On behalf of ASPO International I would like to thank sincerely all who worked with The Oil Drum – the fact that the WSJ noticed The Oil Drum's transformation shows how enormously successful you have been. At the moment "fracking" is the term on everyone's lips in the way that "Peak Oil" was in 2004, but soon we will see that drop away as fracking's oil production does the same. Then, if not before, we will definitely see a fall in global oil production and it will be obvious to all that we have passed the peak of global

ASPO International will now take up the discussion whether we should expand activity at our website www.peakoil.net so that people who are interested can publish original articles there. At the same time we should not forget that there are many other websites that discuss Peak Oil and related questions. The fact that many people try to debunk Peak Oil makes it all the more important to illuminate the facts that are important for our future.



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