



## FIZnews

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# Prof. Dr. Bernd Wegner passed away on January 18, 2024 at the age of 81

**Former editor-in-chief successfully led the Zentralblatt der Mathematik  
for 37 years**

FIZ Karlsruhe mourns the loss of Prof. Dr. Bernd Wegner, who set the course for a modern mathematics information service during his tenure as Editor-in-Chief of the Zentralblatt der Mathematik.

In 1974, Bernd Wegner took over the position of editor-in-chief of the Zentralblatt der Mathematik, the forerunner of today's information service zbMATH Open. The initial situation in divided Berlin was difficult due to the political situation. Editorial work was carried out in two editorial offices in East and West Berlin under the editorship of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR and the Heidelberg Academy. In 1977, the Academy of Sciences of the GDR ended this cooperation and the West Berlin editorial team had to take over all the work within a short time. Reviewers from the GDR were also banned from working on the Zentralblatt in future, meaning that their expertise had to be replaced. Despite these adversities, Bernd Wegner developed pioneering ideas for the technical development of the service during his time in office, e.g. the texts were recorded on magnetic tapes, which were then used to produce the printed edition of the Zentralblatt der Mathematik. Prof. Wegner's outstanding successes include the establishment of an efficient editorial office in Berlin, the development of the Zentralblatt into THE European information infrastructure service for mathematics, and the major tasks in the course of numerous digitization projects, in particular ERAM, the digitization of the Jahrbuch über die Fortschritte der Mathematik.



In 1979, the West German government founded the Fachinformationszentrum Energie, Physik, Mathematik (today's FIZ Karlsruhe - Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure in Karlsruhe). The Berlin office of the Zentralblatt was incorporated as a subsidiary and from then on belonged to FIZ Karlsruhe. The services of the Zentralblatt were continuously modernized under the aegis of Prof. Wegner. The first version of the database as an offline version on CD-ROM called CompactMATH was published in 1990. Soon after, TeX was introduced for the typesetting of complex mathematical formulas. The transition of the Zentralblatt to a service accessible via the Internet was completed in 1996; the database was given the name MATH and was later renamed zbMATH.

During his time as editor-in-chief, Prof. Dr. Bernd Wegner provided many important impulses and was instrumental in shaping the Zentralblatt der Mathematik. He accompanied the transition to the zbMATH web service and turned it into an outstanding product. After 37 years, he handed over the helm to his successor Prof. Gert-Martin Greuel in 2011.

FIZ Karlsruhe is very grateful to Prof. Dr. Bernd Wegner for his pioneering work as editor-in-chief, without which zbMATH Open would not have its excellent reputation today.

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