Message from the Program Chairs

Traditionally, information systems have consisted of databases and files storing (large) amounts of data, applications programs performing useful update or reporting tasks, and user interfaces for data entry or retrieval. Construction of such systems required analysis of an organizational setting, design of databases and applications programs, and implementation that depended on database and programming technologies. Moreover, such constructions were generally tailored to the features and needs of the customer organization, resulting in development projects that have been notorious for their underestimated costs, delivery dates, and reported failures.

This picture is changing rapidly, partly because the software industry is maturing and making greater use of off-the-shelf components and generic solutions, and partly because of the onslaught of the information revolution. These changes have resulted in a new set of demands for information services that are integrated, open in their architecture, and global in their scope. Application domains which are driving the need for new information services include manufacturing, electronic commerce and banking, training, education, and environmental management, to mention just a few.

Building the next generation of information systems that meet these demands poses a series of technological challenges. First of all, tools and products must emerge that can bring together incompatible information sources and software. Software must operate across heterogeneous computing platforms working in much the same way across global and public networks as it does within a local network. Access to such widely distributed resources is currently not only hampered by the presence of propriety or legacy systems, but also by the rapid expansion of information networks which accommodate a wide range of users with a broad range of needs and backgrounds. These users must be helped by new technologies and tools to locate, retrieve, abstract, correlate, combine, and process data, in order to solve a variety of complex tasks. Another major challenge in building next-generation information systems is to develop technologies that permit continuous enhancement and evolution of current massive investments in information sources and systems. Such technologies must offer an appropriate infrastructure within which not only development but also evolution of distributed information systems would be made possible. This infrastructure must support the conversion of large numbers of independent multi-vendor databases, knowledge bases, and application software into dynamic and highly connected cooperative components, running over distributed information networks, and addressing a variety of highly complex applications. All these are challenges for the next generation of information systems. Systems that meet these challenges have been called cooperative information systems, and they are the topic of this conference.

The concept of cooperative information systems has already been the subject of considerable attention and research since the early '90s, and has seen the launch of an international journal, the on-going CoopIS conference series, an international foundation, an edited volume [2], and a variety of workshops (see, e.g., [1]).

The conference program was put together by three (cooperating) program committees for the Americas, Asia, and Europe, respectively. More than 75 program committee members from dozens of countries around the world participated in the technical evaluation of 138 submissions. Of those, 40 were accepted, making this the most successful CoopIS conference yet in terms of the number of submissions, the number of accepted papers, and the number of participating scientists who put the conference program together. We wish to acknowledge the generous and whole-hearted support we received from members of our respective program committees, the general co-chairs Frederick Lochovsky and James Geller, as well as other conference organizers. Many thanks to all!

John Mylopoulos, PC co-chair, Americas
Arne Sslvberg, PC co-chair, Europe, Middle East, & Africa
Kyu-Young Whang, PC co-chair, Asia & Pacific Rim