W06 – WBC ’06

6th International Workshop on Web Based Collaboration

WBC’06 Message from the Chair

In the last few years, the applicability and functionality of systems for collaboration support has expanded, leading to their growing application in cooperation, communication, and organizational processes. This expansion provides opportunities to study their social, business, and technical impacts. Usually an integration of novel emerging technologies with existing organizational practices is very challenging. The knowledge and practical skills gained from such experiences are a valuable resource for all those who plan to develop software tools to support team interaction.

At the same time we observe the growing influence of the World Wide Web. The WWW—by now the most popular service over the Internet—has evolved rapidly, from a simple, read-only data storage system, as it was a few years ago, to nowadays a universal, distributed platform for information exchange. New Web-based applications with freely distributed end users, data, servers, and clients operating worldwide are central topics of many research activities. Recently the WWW has also been perceived as an attractive base for a distributed computer system supporting collaborative work.

In parallel to the WWW evolution, we observe a growing impact of new technologies: agent systems, mobile computing, and ubiquitous computing. We can expect that these technologies will also exert a large influence on group/organizational structures and processes.

Web-based collaborative computing is an important computing paradigm to enable different parties to work together toward achieving a predefined, typically nontrivial goal. Besides the emerging technologies mentioned above, Web-based collaborative computing encompasses many other well-known important and mature technological areas, such as computer-supported cooperative work, workflow, computer assisted design, databases, and concurrent programming.

Speaking more technically, the Internet has recently brought about a revolutionary change in providing a unified transport infrastructure for collaborative networking. In particular, remote computers can now readily participate in a distributed computation, under the framework of Internet computing. With such a framework, users are able to seamlessly communicate and interact with each other across geographically separated locations.

As technologies continue to evolve and enrich, there is also a growing need to research and develop new classes of middleware and applications to leverage on the combined benefits of the Internet and the Web—to provide users and programmers with a highly interactive and robust collaborative computing environment. One can envision the Web-based collaborative computing paradigm becoming the de facto approach to collaborative computing in the near future.

All of the aforementioned emerging new issues are exciting in their own right, but their organizational and technological integration to support collaboration raises many interesting questions and is a challenging new research agenda.
WBC '06 attempts to integrate two themes of practice and research: the functional, organizational, and behavioral issues and the modeling or implementation issues associated with collaborative Web-based work. WBC '06 brings together practitioners and researchers from different domains working on the design, development, management, and deployment of Web-based systems supporting teamwork within organizations. Therefore, we were delighted to organize this workshop to bring together researchers in those enabling technologies toward collaborative Internet computing. Through active cooperation and exchange of ideas, we have anticipated that participants will bring out new research elements, and seek their application toward this interesting and exciting area.

We received many submissions directly addressing collaboration issues (strategies of human cooperation over the Web, computer platforms and architectures in support of remote cooperation, mediators, wrappers, and agents supporting cooperation, database support for collaborative activities), but also submissions addressing issues related to collaboration, such as interoperability infrastructures, dataweb technology, and database infrastructures for collaboration and electronic business, agents, and virtual marketplaces. The WBC '06 Program Committee selected nine papers grouped into three sessions.

I hope that the papers presented at the WBC '06 Workshop and published in the Workshop Proceedings will provide novel, interesting, and important contributions in the area of research and practice concerning collaborative systems development, and that they will be useful and inspiring for both workshop participants and readers of the Workshop Proceedings.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Workshop Program Committee members: Hamideh Afsarmanesh, Prasun Dewan, Opher Etzion, Andreas Henrich, Genevieve Jomier, Winfried Lamersdorf, Wang-Chien Lee, Maria Orlowska, Miguel Mira da Silva and Jianliang Xu for their reviewing work. Special thanks to Jarogniew Rykowski, the WBC '06 co-chair, and to the numerous people who have been involved in the organization of the DEXA 2006 Workshops.

Waldemar Wieczerzycki
WBC’06 Program Committee Co-Chair

Program Committee Co-Chairs
Waldemar Wieczerzycki, The Poznan University of Economics, Poznan, Poland
Jarogniew Rykowski, The Poznan University of Economics, Poznan, Poland

Program Committee
Hamideh Afsarmanesh, The University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
Prasun Dewan, The University of North Carolina, USA
Opher Etzion, IBM Research Laboratory in Haifa, Israel
Andreas Henrich, Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, Germany
Genevieve Jomier, Paris-Dauphine University, France
Winfried Lamersdorf, University of Hamburg, Germany
Wang-Chien Lee, Penn State University, USA
Maria E. Orlowska, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Miguel Mira da Silva, Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal
Tatjana Welzer, University of Maribor, Slovenia
Jianliang Xu, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong