Preface

The success encountered by the Web has shown that tightly coupled software systems are only good for niche markets, whereas loosely coupled software systems can be more flexible, more adaptive and often more appropriate in practice. Loose coupling makes it easier for a given system to interact with other systems, possibly legacy systems that share very little with it.

Web services are at the crossroads of distributed computing and loosely coupled systems. When applications adopt service-oriented architectures, they can evolve during their lifespan more easily and adapt better to changing or unpredictable environments. When properly implemented, services can be discovered and invoked dynamically using non-proprietary mechanisms, while each service can still be implemented in a black-box manner. This is important from a business perspective since customers no longer need to “choose their side”.

Each service can be implemented using any technology, independently from the others. What matters is that everybody agrees on the integration technology, and there is a consensus about this in today’s middleware market: customers want to use Web technologies. Despite these promises, however, service integrators, developers, and providers need to create methods, tools and techniques to support cost-effective development and the use of dependable services and service-oriented applications.

The IEEE European Conference on Web Services (ECOWS) is the premier conference for both researchers and practitioners to exchange the latest advances in the state of the art and practices of Web Services. The main objectives of this conference are to facilitate the exchange between researchers and practitioners and to foster future collaborations in Europe and beyond.

The Fifth European Conference on Web Services was held from November 26-28, 2007 in Halle, Germany after the previous conferences were held in Erfurt, Germany (2003, 2004), Växjö, Sweden (2005), and Zurich, Switzerland (2006). The main conference consisted of two parallel research tracks presenting novel research results and a business track presenting how Web Services are being deployed in an industrial setting.

For the research track, we received 82 submissions. All of these submissions were rigorously peer reviewed by at least three PC members. We finally accepted 25 full research papers, giving an acceptance rate of 30%. We are convinced that these papers are of high quality and offer interesting and stimulating insights into web services research.

Once again, ECOWS proved to be not only a European, but a truly international conference: Not only did ECOWS 2007 have authors from 14 European countries; among the accepted papers were papers from Asia, Australia, and the Americas.

However, not only the geographic distribution of ECOWS papers is remarkable. The wide topic area covered is quite impressive: The submissions show that the trends evident at last year’s ECOWS are still there: the composition of web services and the semantic web continue to play an important role in the research. Additionally, infrastructures for web services, their architecture and deployment are increasingly gaining attention.

For the business track we were able to attract notable speakers from industry and hear some experience reports chosen from papers submitted to the business track.

The ECOWS 2007 main conference was accompanied by a workshop and a seminar. The workshop enabled the discussion of Emerging Web Service Technologies. The seminar on Building Service-Oriented Architectures with Web Services allowed participants to get up to speed with service-oriented architectures and their usage in industry settings.

At this point, we would like to thank the many people that have helped to make this conference a success: First of all, there are all the authors that submitted papers. Without them, there would be no conference.
Second, there are our PC members, who have spent a lot of time and effort to provide detailed and constructive reviews. Without them, there would be no high quality, interesting and inspiring conference. Their continuing support is an important element for the successful development of the ECOWS conference that has been in evidence over the last few years.

Third, there are the industry chairs and all the people from industry that made room in their busy schedule to attend ECOWS and to share insights from the practice with the attendees. Without them, ECOWS would not be the healthy mixture of academia and practice it is today.

Fourth, there are the workshop chairs and the organizers of the workshop. ECOWS would lack a forum for intense discussions and presentations of cutting-edge results without their contributions.

Last, but not least, there are all the people involved in the local organization. Without them, ECOWS 2007 would not have been as pleasurable a conference as it was.

We hope that you find the papers in this volume as interesting as we did and that they will inspire your work and convince you to attend and submit to future ECOWS conferences.

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