

NEGOTIATION SUPPORT SYSTEMS MINITRACK

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Negotiation Support Systems (NSS) are designed to assist negotiators in reaching mutually satisfactory decisions by providing a means of communication and through analysis of available information. The purpose of this minitrack is to provide a forum for interchange of ideas, research results, development activities, and applications among academicians and practitioners in the NSS field. Since 1991, this minitrack has gathered a respectable collection of papers in this young but promising area of research. Collectively, the selected papers in this minitrack continue to offer innovative and thought-provoking research in computer-supported mediation.

The focus of this year NSS minitrack is to explore the role of negotiation support in the knowledge-based and technology-driven economy. The paper by Hanappi and Hanappi-Egger revisits the well-known prisoner's dilemma problem in the context of electronic markets. Their model and experiment suggest that trade outside of market equilibria might be necessary given the dynamics and diversity of e-markets.

Trust has been recognized as a critical element for e-market to function successfully. In the next two papers, Wu and Sun propose two models for bidding. The first one uses price as the trading mechanism, and the second one is based on capacity bidding. Using various experiments on myopic and non-myopic bidding, the authors claim that intelligent artificial agents were viable in automated marketplace. Artificial agents could discover optimal bidding and contracting strategies in search for market equilibria. Wei et al. attempt to raise the level of sophistication of electronic markets to another level. Using multi-agent technology create autonomy each market participant, they test their negotiation support system on a problem of cost allocation for cross-border transmission of electricity. The findings of their study show that it is, indeed, feasible to conceptualize semi-automated electronic market with some intelligent behavior.

Collective memory remains an integral component for an organizational or inter-organizational negotiation support system. Paul presents another attempt to embed organizational memory in negotiation processes. He proposes a revised set of propositions to assess the impact of negotiation memory management system on negotiation outcomes. Also, from an organizational computing perspective, Ramesh and Mohan address the necessity of seamlessly integrating group decision and negotiation support tools into work productivity tools. Interestingly, the papers by Paul and Ramesh and Mohan suggest that the vision of building a seamless computing platform to support organizational decision making is still alive and well among a number of information technology researchers.