Welcome to ICDM 2008!

On behalf of the organizing committee, we would like to extend our warmest welcome to the participants of the 2008 International Conference on Data Mining in Pisa.

Pisa is a University town with less than 100,000 inhabitants and more than 50,000 students. One of the most appealing slogans used in the past for presenting the University to potential applicants was “University of Pisa: a campus as large as a city” to denote the close integration between the city and its university. Pisa has a long history in science and the names of Galileo Galilei and Fibonacci are there to highlight it. This attitude for science is still well alive nowadays. Pisa, besides the University and two postgraduate Universities –Scuola Superiore S.Anna and Scuola Normale Superiore- hosts the second largest campus of the National Research Council in Italy with more than 1100 permanent staff. The percentage of gross product of the area devoted to research is 3 times Italy’s average and compares favorably to the other European countries. If we look just at computer science and related fields, we may count more than 500 researchers with permanent positions. In the Pisa area there are countless software based companies and that number is ever increasing.

As the venue of ICDM 2008, we chose a building just in the center of the town in the hope of making you feel the breath of history blended with the thrill of scientific innovations presented in the conference. At the breaks you will be able to walk and look at the Palazzo della Carovana, seat of the Scuola Normale, at the “Torre della fame”, where Ugolino della Gherardesca were starved to death with his nephews, and, a few meters aside, the statue of Ulisse Dini, one of the great mathematicians of the Pisa school. The leaning tower is five minutes walking distance away.

The ICDM 2008 conference, with its excellent technical program and exciting social events, reflects the tireless effort of many individuals. We particularly express our gratitude to: Program Committee Chairs Fosca Giannotti and Dimitrios Gunopulos; Workshop Chairs Francesco Bonchi and Bettina Berendt; Tutorials Chairs Dino Pedreschi and Arno Siebes; Panels Chair Jean Francois Boulcalt; Award Chair Katharina Morik, Local Arrangements Chairs Chiara Renso; Publicity Chairs Maurizio Atzori and Yan-Nei Law; Finance Chair Dino Pedreschi; Sponsorship Chairs Antonio Gulli and Raffaele Perego; Exhibit and Demo Chairs Haixun Wang and Michail Vlachos; and especially the ICDM Steering Committee and Proceedings Chair Xindong Wu.

We owe special thanks to our sponsors: Yahoo! Research, Wind, Microsoft, Exeura, Software Products Italia, UniCoop Tirreno, Ask.com, Unesco Chair in Data Privacy, IBM, National Science Foundation, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Università di Pisa, Istituto di Scienze e Tecnologie dell’Informazione del CNR, Comune di Pisa, Provincia di Pisa, Provincia di Lucca.

Finally, we thank all researchers, practitioners, and students, who are working in the field of data mining for their various support and promotion of ICDM over the years. Without their efforts and interests, it would be impossible for us to have such a successful conference.

We wish you a productive conference, and hope you enjoy your time in Pisa and at ICDM 2008!

Franco Turini, Carlo Zaniolo, and Naren Ramakrishnan