On behalf of the Organizing, Program, and Steering Committees of the IEEE Computer Society’s 12th Symposium on Modeling, Analysis, and Simulation of Computer and Telecommunication Systems (MASCOTS), it is an honor to welcome you to MASCOTS 2004 in Volendam, The Netherlands, a very popular fishing town close to Amsterdam. It will be fun!

Not only has it been a pleasure to help organize and host the 2004 MASCOTS symposium, but I have also had the honor of being involved with MASCOTS since its inception 12 years ago. During this time, MASCOTS has clearly established itself as a well-respected, high-quality, international scientific conference series—and it continues to grow. It only recently dawned on me, though, that MASCOTS has been away from North America only twice now, and that I was fortunate enough to have been involved both times. In 1997, I had the pleasure of serving as program chair for the 5th MASCOTS, under the leadership of Gabriel Silberman; this was 7 years ago, in Israel. That year, MASCOTS achieved full symposium status. This year—our second time away from North America—it is fitting that MASCOTS take place in Europe, because MASCOTS truly benefits from a significant international participation. Thus, it has been a distinct privilege to help organize MASCOTS within the European Union and to have achieved such high levels of international participation. May the trend continue and grow.

We have organized an impressive scientific and educational program, coupled with what we hope will be some entertaining social events, during which new friendships will be made, old ones renewed, and current ones strengthened. None of this would have been possible without the devoted, able assistance of many volunteers; I thank them all. First, I want to thank Pete Harrison, Harry Wijshoff, and Zary Segall for their outstanding work as program co-chairs during what turned out to be a very hectic and demanding reviewing period; their vacations all suffered from the higher-than-expected workload. I also extend extensive thanks to our three international publicity chairs: Helen Karatza from Europe, Kazuki Joe from Japan, and David Finkel from North America. Ethan Miller bailed us all out, many times, with his devoted assistance and support of the online submissions site. Kallol Bagchi, the original inspiration behind MASCOTS, served ably as finance chair, and Ram Huggahalli of Intel was our tutorials and workshops chair. And finally, Joost Broekens served diligently as local arrangements chair while also performing many other valuable tasks. I cannot thank them all enough. Pete, Joost, Helen, and Ethan—I especially owe you, big time!

The steering committee plays an important role in the continuity of this symposium series, and I also thank them for their continued efforts. Many thanks too to Randall Bilof and Thomas Baldwin with the IEEE Computer Society Press; without them, you wouldn’t be reading this. Hans Roest graciously provided the historical photo for the front cover design (see molens.homestead.com).

Last but not least, to all the authors—those whose papers were accepted, as well as those whose papers we were not able to include—we owe a special debt of gratitude. Without their work, this meeting would not exist. To those unable to participate this year, we hope to see you next year, in Atlanta, Georgia.

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