

Editorial: A Message from the New Editor-in-Chief

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MOBILE computing stands poised to make fundamental societal changes in the way we communicate, live our lives, and work. By now, there is no doubt that mobile devices will form the dominant mode of Internet access for every human being on the planet. The number of Internet-connected mobile devices is likely to outstrip the number of fixed devices very soon, if it has not already. As such, the centrality of mobile computing in the computer systems, communications, and networking landscape is assured.

I am very honored to be taking over as the Editor-in-Chief of the *IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing (TMC)* at such a momentous time in the evolution of the field. I am deeply grateful to the *TMC* steering committee for giving me this opportunity to shepherd the community's premier publication venue for the next three years. I take the reins of this publication at a time when its primacy and its reputation for quality has been carefully nurtured by its illustrious past Editors-in-Chief, Tom La Porta, Nitin Vaidya, and Mani Srivastava. By carefully balancing reviewer workload and publication frequency, and holding a strong line on the quality of the publications as well as the turn-around time, Tom, Nitin, and Mani have handed down to us a journal which is ranked third among Computer Society Transactions in terms of impact factor, and among the top 10 across all IEEE journals in information systems and telecommunications.

What lies ahead? *TMC* turns 10 in 2011! As this anniversary approaches, it is worth examining the challenges we face, and the opportunities that lie before us. By now it is clear that *TMC* is well poised to provide an exciting forum for impactful research contributions that greatly change society at large. At the same time, the relevance of journals has been in question for a while now, in an age where highly-selective conferences provide competing venues for high-quality work. Our collective challenge is restoring the primacy of the journal publication and maintaining the vibrancy of the Transactions, so it can serve both an archival role that will inform research in the years to come, and as a vehicle for disseminating exciting ongoing research that spurs wonderful innovation.

One way we can achieve this is to evolve with the times to reach as broad a readership as possible. Especially for *TMC*, whose readership is presumably at the cutting edge of electronic media consumption, it is worth considering the possibility of various forms of online journal delivery, moving us away from print. This is not a choice that is as easy as it seems: the decades-old print delivery mechanisms are deeply ingrained in various academic processes such as citation indices and tenure. Furthermore, a move to electronic delivery can impact quality in the absence of a natural "bound" that print provides. On balance, however, the time seems to be ripe for *TMC* to take a leap into an online format, so that you, the reader, can have its archival content at your fingertips, at all times!

A second way to achieve *TMC*'s promise is to broaden its base to be inclusive of all areas of mobile computing. Despite what its title suggests, *TMC* focuses less on mobile computing and more on communications and networking. If recent issues are representative, over 70 percent of the published papers deal with wireless communication and networking. Mobile computing is clearly a much broader research area, and future innovation will come from operating systems, applications, and energy management issues. There really isn't another premier society journal that deals broadly with mobile computing, and *TMC* has an opportunity to expand to fill that role. My predecessor, Mani Srivastava, has started steering *TMC* towards exploiting this opportunity, and I intend to continue in this direction.

None of this will be possible without the active participation of all of the constituencies that participate in the Transactions: its contributors, its reviewers, its subscribers, and the IEEE Computer Society's publishing staff. My predecessors and I are very grateful for your support, and I look forward to working with you all in the future.

Ramesh Govindan
Editor-in-Chief