Editor's Notes

The database field, like most areas of Computer Science, is going through a period of rapid change driven by the ascendancy of the Internet and the emergence of pervasive computing and communications infrastructure. The pace of innovation has greatly accelerated over the past few years and all indications are that this acceleration will continue. In such a dynamic environment it becomes necessary to continually re-evaluate the boundaries of a discipline in order to ensure that the work being done in that area remains relevant. As specialists in data management, we are particularly susceptible to being overwhelmed by the tsunami of Internet-related activity in both the commercial and academic spheres.

Recently, the VLDB announced a new effort aimed at "broadening" the field of data and database management by encouraging exploratory work in areas that might be considered outside of the traditional bounds of the SIGMOD/VLDB community. I wholeheartedly support this effort and along with the *SIGMOD Record* Editorial Board have also been trying to encourage this innovation and re-evaluation through the choice of material to present in our quarterly newsletter. This issue of the *Record* is a particularly good example of our efforts in these directions.

First, the issue contains four articles that present a uniquely database-oriented perspective on the Internet. Labrinidis and Roussopoulos describe their experiences with alternative approaches for presenting database content through a web server. Recent advances in XML are described in papers by Liefke and Suciu and Bonifati and Ceri. Finally, the paper by Paepcke, Garcia-Molina, Rodriguez-Mula, and Cho lays out the fundamentals of value-based search and browsing, which represent important alternative paradigms to traditional database query facilities.

Also of particular interest in this issue is the description of the new ACM-SIGMOD Digital Review edited by H.V. Jagadish, which exploits the connectivity and immediacy of the the Web to increase the flow of ideas an opinions in the database research community.

Of course, it is important during such a period of change that we do not lose sight of our past accomplishments and lessons learned. For this reason, we continue to present the "Influential Papers" section, where current innovators describe how previous classic and perhaps not-so classic work in the field has helped shape their research directions.

As always, we thank the authors for taking the time to prepare these excellent articles and encourage our readers to suggest further ways that we can improve the relevance and timeliness of the *SIGMOD Record*.

Michael Franklin
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