Report on the 13th Brazilian Symposium on Database Systems (SBBD'98)

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The Brazilian Symposium on Database Systems (SBBD) is a traditional conference in Brazil, and is sponsored by the Brazilian Computer Society. SBBD's technical program contemplates the following activities: presentation of peer reviewed full technical papers, invited talks, tutorials (either invited and selected from submissions), discussion panels and presentation of tools.

SBBD's thirteenth edition (SBBD'98) was hosted by the Informatics Department of the State University of Maring and by the Institute of Computing of the State University of Campinas. The Symposium was held in the city of Maring, which is located in the upper southern part of the country, and is known to be one the most green cities in Brazil.

For the past four years, it has been the tradition of the Database and Software Engineering communities in Brazil to hold their conferences together, in order to increase the cooperation among researchers in these two fields. Thus, SBBD'98 was held together with the 12th Brazilian Software Engineering Symposium (SBES'98) which went from October 13 to 16, so that the entire week (October 12-16) was taken by both symposia. In addition, the overall event was enriched with several other (shorter) events, such as the I Brazilian Exhibition of Academic and Commercial Software, III Workshop on Software Engineering Theses, IV Workshop on Software Quality, I Workshop on Requirements Engineering, and I Workshop on Human Factors in Computing Systems. Each of these events publishes its own proceedings.

There were nearly 200 people registered for SBBD'98 alone, and over 450 people in all events. Over the years, there has been a marked increase in the percentage of student participation (both graduate and undergraduate level), currently around half the total attendance for the week.

SBBD'98 and SBES'98 are organized so as to maximize participation. There is always one day which is common to both events (SBBD'98's last day and SBES's first day). In 1998, for the first time, this overlap day was reserved for an "international track" presentation. In this track all papers were both submitted and presented in English. The idea behind this was to foster international participation in both events; traditionally, a high percentage of the papers published in these symposia are written (and presented) in Portuguese, which impairs a more intense technical exchange with researches outside Latin America. It is our impression that this track accomplished its goal, though moderately – which is acceptable for an initial experience.

The 13-member program committee of SBBD'98 selected 25 papers from a set of 74 submissions – 60 of which from Brazil itself. From the accepted papers, nearly 20% were from outside Brazil. The committee was helped by over 60 external reviewers, most from Brazil. The selected papers spanned several topics, e.g., distributed database design, temporal databases, GIS, fuzzy databases, information retrieval, OODBs, data mining and data warehouses, to name a few.

Up to 1996, SBBD featured only a few invited 3 to 6 hour tutorials and one-hour lectures. Starting as of the 1997 edition, a Call for Tutorials has been issued in parallel to the Call for Papers. This year's response amounted to 12 submissions, 8 of which from abroad and 4 from Brazilian researchers. From these, 3 were selected and an additional one was invited. The set of tutorials was the following:

- Managing Multimedia Information in a Database Environment, by Prof. William I. Grosky (Wayne State University, USA);
- Data Mining, by Prof. Alex A. Freitas (CEFET-PR, Brazil);
- Extended Transaction Models, by Prof. Omran Bukhres (Purdue University, USA); and
- Spatial Databases (invited), by Prof. Ralf H. Güting (Fernuniversität Hagen, Germany).

Unfortunely, Prof. Bukhres' tutorial could not be presented due to personal problems. Prof. Güting was also responsible for an invited lecture, "Representing and Querying Moving Objects in Databases".

For the first time ever, the Symposium promoted a Best Paper Award competition, whose prize included its publication on SIGMOD Record. This award was named after Prof. José Mauro Volkmer Castilho, a pioneer in database research in Brazil, who died in 1998 after a protracted disease. The Program Committee selected for this award the paper by Márcio Farias de Souza and Marcus Costa Sampaio, both from the Federal University of Paraíba at Campina Grande (in the the northeastern part of Brazil). The paper, "Efficient Materialization and Use of Views in Datawarehouses", originally written in Portuguese, has an abridged version published in this very issue of the SIGMOD Record. In addition to the Best Paper Award, another award was given to the best (database software) tool presented at the Symposium. The awardees were Renato C. Mauro and Marta Mattoso, both from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, who presented "The GOA Object Manager and its tools" (`http://www.cos.ufrj.br/~goa`).

Further information about the Symposium, including paper titles, author names and information about Maringá can be found at the Symposium's home page at `http://www.din.uem.br/~sbbd98/`

The 14th SBBD will be held – together with the 13th Software Engineering Conference – in Florianópolis, an island in the south of Brazil, from October 11 to 13, 1999. Preliminary information will be made available at `http://www.inf.ufsc.br/sbbd` or can be obtained from the General Chair, Berthier Ribeiro Neto (`berthier@dcc.ufmg.br`).

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