About the Bulletin

Work is progressing on converting issues from 1998 onward to a new web page format for accessing individual papers. I would urge you to check out past issues in addition to the current issue to take note of the progress. While more remains to be done, all pages now have a standard, well formatted header. Going forward, this should also (*eventually*) reduce the work I need to do to generate an issue, as pages on both the Computer Society site and the Microsoft site are now identical.

Please do take a look at the web pages providing access to individual papers, and report any problems to me. Thank you.

I am considering dropping some versions of past issues from the web site. Before doing so, I wanted to give you advance notice so that you could provide input to this process. In particular, I plan to drop all the "draft" postscript versions from the web site. I may go on to drop "final" postscript versions as well. That would leave only the PDF version. Essentially everyone has access to a PDF reader, and PDF, being compressed, downloads faster. Again, please provide input to this process, especially if you would like to continue accessing postscript versions.

The Current Issue

The "search" area continues to be of intense interest, both as a technical challenge and as a competitive arena. There is strong recognition that not everyone is interested in the same topic when a collection of key words are entered for search. There is much to be gained in making sure that other meanings are considered, and in many cases, that appropriate pages are also returned as results.

It is not only the case that diversity of result increases the likelihood of a web surfer finding the information desired. It is also true that search providers, when recognizing this diversity, increase the likelihood of placing adds of interest to the web surfer. This translates into more profit, and drives what seens to me to be the virtuous cycle of improved technology helping users and also rewarding commercial ventures that provide it.

In this fast moving field, today's research leads quickly to tomorrow's search offering. Vassilis Tsotras and Marios Hadjieleftheriou have succeeded in bringing together research from both academic and industrial researchers in this wide ranging snapshot of the current state of search and its diverse answers. As I have said before, this is something that the Bulletin strives to do, providing a view of a field that is difficult to find in the more traditional venues. I want to thank both Vassilis and Marios for their hard work and success with this issue. I am sure you will find reading it to be valuable.

Self-managing Database Systems Workshop

I want to draw your attention to the report on the 4th workshop on "self managing database systems". The Technical Committee on Data Engineering has one sub-committee, and it is on self-managing database system. This sub-group organizes an annual workshop held in conjunction with the ICDE conference. This is an active group, and reading the workshop report is a good way to stay up-to-date on this important area.