

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

ICDE 2018

The IEEE International Conference on Data Engineering will be held in April 14-19, 2018 in Paris, France. This is the flagship conference of the Computer Society's Technical Committee on Data Engineering. It is a great conference, at a great location. What could possibly be better than April in Paris at ICDE! I am attending and hope to see you there.

The Current Issue

In the olden days (the past millenium), the notion that data management could scale across the globe was considered far-fetched. There were no known application scenarios in which it arose. And further, it was widely considered to be a technological pipe dream. The current issue then serves as a reminder of how rapidly our world is changing, and how rapidly our technology capabilities are growing. Social networks, travel services, and e-commerce are simply the tip of the iceberg (the iceberg being perhaps a bit smaller due to global warming) of a growing number of global-scale applications, including machine learning, which was not even considered an application in the previous millenium.

In addition to the number of global-scale applications growing, our technology to deal with them is advancing by "leaps and bounds". Not only can we scale out our data management infrastructure, but we can enforce strong invariants on the data being managed. The critical consistency requirement here is frequently atomic transactions. Transactions at global scale were nowhere in sight before the year 2000 but are now supported by several web scale vendors.

This is where the current issue of the Bulletin comes in. Tim Kraska has assembled an issue that captures some of the exciting research activity on global-scale data management. This area has become a "hot topic" for both researchers and practitioners. It has become part of our online "life", though usually behind the scenes, as so much of data management is. But being a technical member of our data management community means it is essential that you understand this technology. I can strongly recommend this issue to you. It is a real "eye opener" into some of the critical directions our community is and will be exploring. I want to thank Tim for exposing this hugely important technology to us.

David Lomet
Microsoft Corporation