

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

About the Bulletin

This June's issue is the start of the editorial tenure of four new editors. I am both proud and humbled by my continued success in recruiting top notch technical people when I invite them to be Bulletin editors. This success is, indeed, the "secret sauce" responsible for the Bulletin's continued success.

With the above as prelude, I am proud to announce that the new Bulletin editors are, in alphabetical order, Philippe Bonnet of ITU Copenhagen, Joseph Gonzalez of UC Berkeley, Guoliang Li of Tsinghua University, and Alexandra Meliou of UMASS Amherst. Their contact information appears on the inside cover of this issue. This talented team will be bringing you Bulletin issues over the next two years.

The Current Issue

There is a bias among some in the research community to focus on solvable problems. You create a program or system and it either solves the problem or it does not. Meanwhile, in the real user community, technical people struggle at tasks that have to be done where it is either impractically difficult or impossible to provide a technical approach that simply solves "the problem".

Data integration is such a problem. It is important because there are 10's, 100's, even 1000's of data sources that all too frequently need to be "integrated" in some way to solve a real world problem. This problem is sufficiently hard and costly that incremental improvements can be very important. For example, reducing the amount of human involvement in the data integration activity can produce important cost savings and even lead to better results.

Data integration is the subject of the current issue. A quick look at the table of contents will show you that data integration has become a "first class" problem for our field. Authors come from universities, large companies, former start-ups, etc., with the divisions between these homes in flux. This illustrates the excitement in the area. Guoliang Li has reached out to these communities in his effort to give you this survey of the field. The issue is a snapshot in time of this challenging area, where the state of the art is improving continually. I want to thank Guoliang for a very successful issue on an important topic.

ICDE 2019

The current issue includes an ICDE 2019 call for papers on page 116. ICDE is a premier database conference and the flagship conference of the Technical Committee on Data Engineering. This year's submission deadlines are earlier than in the past, and there is a two round submission process. The intent is to provide authors earlier feedback and a better opportunity to publish their work earlier in the year. ICDE 2019 is in Macau, which has, via adjacency to Hong Kong, great air connections to the rest of the world. I hope to see you there.

David Lomet
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