

ICDE 2008 PC CHAIRS MESSAGE

The 2008 edition of the IEEE International Conference on Data Engineering has, once again, established a new record of submissions. In total, there were 615 research submissions, 47 industrial submissions, and 64 demo submissions for a total of 726. Such a constant increase in the number of submissions is a clear indication of the interest in the area and the health of the community. A community of researchers and practitioners that continues growing and producing important contributions. If we look back a few years, and focusing just on ICDE, the conference has experienced a spectacular increase in the number and the quality of the submissions. In the last several editions, ICDE has been the database conference that has attracted the largest number of submissions, a phenomenon that deserves close scrutiny as it is probably the result of important dynamics in the community and how the three major database conferences are perceived as international venues to present top research.

The downside of this success is that it is not easy to accommodate so many papers in the conventional format of a conference. In the future, conferences will have to be either longer or much denser to maintain acceptance ratios that do not fall to ridiculous levels. As several organizations such as the ACM have noted, too low acceptance rates lead to a random selection of papers that rewards incremental work and exclude real innovation. To avoid these problems and accommodate the increase in submissions, we have decided to try a new format for the conference program. A format that avoids both extending the duration of the conference and having too many parallel tracks.

Following custom at ICDE, the Research Program Committee was organized along tracks, with a vice-chair heading each track. There were 19 tracks, a significant increase over past editions that helped to spread the load across tracks and reviewers. The review and discussion process was carried out electronically and the final decisions made at a vice-chairs and PC chairs meeting that took place in Vienna during VLDB in the second half of September, 2007. We accepted papers in three categories. The first two categories correspond to full papers that got overall strong reviews and were considered to be timely, relevant, and novel. There are a total of 119 papers in these two categories, and these papers appear in the proceedings at full length (10 pages). To reduce the number of parallel tracks at the conference, the papers in the top category (“normal presentation”) were allocated the conventional 30 minutes presentation slot. These are the papers that got the highest review scores. There are 75 papers in this category. The remaining 44 papers were accepted as “short presentation” papers – each having a 15-minute slot for presentation -- and correspond to papers that were deemed to be of high quality, but, for a variety of reasons (such as being incremental work on a well-known area or the main contribution being an idea that could be concisely explained), the PC committee decided that they could be presented in less time. We further accepted 72 papers as posters; these are papers that appear in the proceedings summarized in 3 pages and that will be presented during the conference at special poster sessions organized to maximize the degree of interaction between the audience and the presenters.

The Industrial Track accepted 13 papers out of the 47 submissions received. Following the format of the Research Track, the Industrial Track chairs accepted 13 papers that appear in the proceedings at full length – 3 of these papers will have short presentations at the conference. In addition, the chairs accepted 4 Industrial papers for poster presentations. The Demonstrations Track accepted 23 papers out of the 64 submissions.

The Advanced Seminars Track received 10 submissions out of which 5 were selected. The Advanced Seminars chairs also solicited one on a topic they wanted to cover but didn't get any submission on. The seminars cover a wide range of timely topics of interest both to researchers and practitioners, including everything from important standards to ongoing important research to emerging new technologies & directions. The panels were carefully solicited by the Panels Chair to cover topics of great interest to discuss.

Last but not least, the General, Research and Industrial chairs invited three excellent and well-known researchers from academia to present keynotes on topics that they have pioneered and that have become increasingly important during recent years.

The success in terms of submissions, the excellent program, and the attractive venue for this edition attest to the hard work and efforts of many people towards making ICDE a top research venue. We would like to thank first all vice-chairs and the 232 reviewers – 192 research, 21 industry and 19 demo – without whom managing such a number of papers would have been impossible. They have borne the burden of the reviewing process and deserve credit for it. We would like to thank the organizers of VLDB 2007 in Vienna, who generously helped with the logistics of the PC meeting. We would also like to thank the Industrial, Demonstrations, Advanced Seminars and Panels Chairs for helping us round the program with their high quality tracks. Our gratitude to the General Chairs of ICDE 2008 – Malú Castellanos, Alex Buchmann, and Krithi Ramamritham – who at all points gave us their support and provided advice when needed. These proceedings would not be possible without the help of the proceedings editor, Spyros Voulgaris.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Microsoft CMT team for all their assistance in structuring CMT to handle the 22 tracks required to manage such a large number of paper submissions and reviews, and for producing many different custom reports that helped us manage the program more effectively.

Last but not least, we want to thank all the authors for submitting so many excellent papers to ICDE 2008.

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