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and Development in Information Retrieval**

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Ricardo Baeza-Yates & Nivio Ziviani



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Preface from the General Co-Chairs

This conference is the realization of a dream that started several years ago: to have ACM SIGIR in South America. Despite initial doubts due to the geographical location, after several proposals we had the opportunity to show that we could host one of the best SIGIR meetings ever (and not only from a touristic point of view!). This was a challenging and tough goal, and we could not have done it without the help of many people that made it possible to held the 28th ACM SIGIR in Salvador, Brazil.

Salvador is unique for bringing together so much beauty, charm and magic attractions. People try to explain its magic by the rich cultural heritage, natural beauties, hospitality of its people, the artistic and cultural aspects that characterizes the city. We hope that during your stay in Salvador the participants can feel some of this mystery and beauty, returning home with many good memories of Salvador along with good ideas from the sessions.

The main program was in charge of Gary Marchionini, Alistair Moffat, and John Tait, whose good efforts helped ensure that this year's SIGIR had the largest number of paper submissions and acceptances ever, erasing the last year's previous record at Sheffield. In their preface, they acknowledge the others who put together the rest of the program: posters, demos, workshops, tutorials and the doctoral consortium. Everyone did a great job.

We would like to thank the organizational team: Murilo Silva Monteiro who was responsible for the web site, audiovisuals, network, among many other things. José Nagib Cotrim Árabe was the treasurer, Anna Sophia Candiotto Pereira, Joice Soares Araújo da Silva and Lizete Barreto Paula sorted out the registration process and volunteers, Paulo Carvalho took care of the publicity and Eduardo Luppi designed the visual identity. In Salvador, Juciara Melo helped us with contracts and the social program for the conference. Juliana Araújo and Vera Politano from the Convention Bureau of Salvador were of great help since the very beginning. The people from the Pestana Bahia Hotel were also of great help in all the process, in particular during the conference.

To date we have ten companies and organizations that provided support to the conference: Google, Microsoft Research, Yahoo! Search, IBM Research, UOL, Akwan Information Technologies, British Computer Society, CLEI, University of North Carolina and CYTED. To them and all the "inside contacts" that we approached for help, we are most grateful. In addition, we had the institutional support of the Brazilian Computer Society (SBC) and the Chilean Computer Science Society (SCCC). Finally, we have to thank our own institutions, the Department of Computer Science of the Federal University of Minas Gerais and the Foundation for Research Development (Fundep) at Belo Horizonte, Brazil; and the Center for Web Research of the Department of Computer Science of the Universtiy of Chile at Santiago.

Welcome to Salvador, Brazil, we hope you enjoy the conference, its contents, and also, its venue.

Ricardo Baeza-Yates

Nivio Ziviani

SIGIR '05 General Co-Chairs

June 2005

Preface from the Program Committee Co-Chairs

We are pleased to report that the 28th Annual International ACM-SIGIR Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval drew a record number of submissions, representing the work of IR researchers in more than 50 countries. There were 368 paper submissions, with 71 (19%) accepted for the conference; and 120 poster submissions, of which 53 (44%) were accepted. In addition, the conference schedule includes 7 tutorials, 7 workshops, 12 refereed demonstrations, a doctoral consortium, and 3 invited presentations. Taken together, these contributions represent the state of the art in information retrieval research, including theoretical models; novel techniques for text and multimedia retrieval in web and controlled collections; applications of IR techniques to summarization, question answering, and personal collections; formal evaluation methods; and empirical evaluations of human behavior in retrieval settings.

The selection of contributions for SIGIR is dependent on a thorough and equitable two-tier reviewing process. All reviewing in SIGIR is double-blind. The program committee consists of three chairs, two area coordinators for each of the thirteen areas of emphasis, and four ad hoc area coordinators (the conference and program chairs for next year). More than 200 first-tier reviewers were each assigned 3 to 7 papers by the PC chairs, according to the expressed expertise of the reviewers, and the topical categories authors gave their papers. Given the number of papers this year, most reviewers were assigned 7 papers, so that every paper received at least three first-tier reviews. The area coordinators then acted to resolve differences among reviews, and to produce a meta-review, based on the first-tier reviews and their own evaluation of the paper. Area coordinators were selected based on their expertise in the area, with geographic balance also taken into account. Most area coordinators were responsible for 15 or more papers, and in excess of 800 messages were logged during the two-week discussion period. The area coordinators attended the PC meeting and led the discussion on the papers for which they were responsible. Poster submissions were assessed by three reviewers each, and demonstration proposals by two reviewers. The workshops and tutorials were considered and discussed by the entire program committee.

The overall effort involved more than 1100 people as authors, reviewers, coordinators, and chairs. The volume of papers this year stressed the limits of everyone's time and we are grateful to the reviewers for their heroic efforts to get reviews in on time, and to the area coordinators for leading discussions, creating meta-reviews, and attending the PC meeting. The posters chairs, Diane Kelly, Mounia Lalmas, and Gonzalo Navarro, were especially effective in obtaining reviews and making recommendations; Doug Oard did a great job in coordinating the workshop evaluation process in advance of the PC meeting; Berthier Ribeiro-Neto organized a set of cutting-edge tutorials; and Javed Mostafa coordinated the innovative demonstrations. We also thank David Harper, who managed the doctoral consortium; Alan Smeaton, who chaired the best paper committee; and Justin Zobel, who coordinated the mentoring program. We are grateful to the keynote speakers Fernando Flores, Joao Portinari, and Amit Singhal, who agreed to share their ideas with the community; to the conference chairs, Ricardo Baeza-Yates and Nivio Ziviani, who encouraged and supported us throughout; and to the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-CH, which hosted the PC meeting. Finally, we acknowledge, and are inspired by, the many authors who submitted papers in spite of the intense competition, and who continue to participate in this vigorous research community.

Gary Marchionini

Alistair Moffat

John Tait

May 2005

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