

## Chair's Message

You should, by now, have received DiSC 2003; it was shipped with the last issue of SIGMOD Record. If you have not, please contact me so that we can arrange a shipment. We have made significant strides in producing DiSC regularly, and we are almost where we want to be. You will receive DiSC 2004 with the June issue of SIGMOD Record and, from now on, you should expect to receive each year's DiSC in the first half of that year. DiSC 2003 also marks the last issue produced under Aidong Zhang's editorship. She has done a lot over the last two years in putting it on a regular schedule, and she, along with her editorial board, deserves our thanks for all the hard work. DiSC 2004 will be produced under the editorship of Shahram Ghandeharizadeh. Shahram and the new editorial board (see this issue's cover) is already hard at work on DiSC 2004.

With DiSC 2004 we are also starting to use a new production method. As its content has grown, the production of DiSC has become a major activity that is hard to support with the ad hoc and home grown workflows and methods that we have been using. We are now starting to use a Web-based manuscript management system called DiSCGenesis. The system was developed by Montra LLC with significant input from SIGMOD (please see <http://sigmod.discgenesis.net/>). The system greatly assists the coordination of this complex activity undertaken by a large number of geographically distributed editors. Montra was very receptive to the technical input that we provided during the development of the system as well as being very accommodating to our financial restrictions. On behalf of SIGMOD, I would like to publicly acknowledge their assistance and understanding. It is with great pleasure that I also announce Microsoft's sponsorship of DiSC production starting with DiSC 2004. This will relieve some of the financial pressures that SIGMOD experiences in producing this highly regarded service to membership. I want to thank Microsoft for their generosity and Jim Gray for his role in making this happen. Above all, I want to thank Shahram for the tremendous amount of work he did in working with Montra on the initial design of DiSCGenesis and in securing Microsoft's sponsorship. Without his determined effort, we would not have either of those in place.

When we stopped shipping hard copy proceedings to members a few years ago, we heard many complaints. Unfortunately, the economics do not allow us to continue with this membership benefit — production and shipment of these proceedings cost us more than the membership fee. However, this year we have decided to introduce this benefit in a revised format — we will ship electronic version of the proceedings to members with the June issue of SIGMOD Record. This will be a replica of the hard copy proceedings and will not have all the bells and whistles that are included with the DiSC version of the proceedings, but it is at least a step in meeting the member requests.

This year will also see an increase in the membership fees. As long time members will note, we have not raised our membership fee since 1990 while our costs have increased. Right now, the *direct* cost of membership benefits is about \$24 while our membership is only \$20. Thus, we lose money with every member. This is not a healthy way to run an organization and the Executive has decided to bite the bullet and increase membership fees to an amount sufficient to meet our direct membership costs.

This year is the first time SIGMOD/PODS was held outside of North America. By the time you read this, the conference programs for both events will have been announced. I am certain that you will find that it meets the level of quality that we have come to expect of SIGMOD/PODS. Patrick Valduriez and his team has been working very hard with the organization, and I am certain that we will all enjoy the conference in Paris. I look forward to seeing you there.

M. Tamer Özsu  
January, 2004