

## Open Forum - Call for Opinions

### The Role of Workshops in the Dissemination of Research Results

The Open Forum Column was introduced with the March 2008 issue as a forum for members of the broader data management community to present (meta-)ideas about non-technical issues and challenges of interest to the entire community. With this issue, we are taking the next (evolutionary) step for the column, namely opening the floor to comments and opinions from the entire community on a *specific topic*. The goal is simple: allow more members of the community to express their opinion about a particular topic and hopefully identify a consensus, whenever possible.

The first topic will be the “Role of Workshops in the Dissemination of Research Results”. In the past, it used to be that workshops were a venue for immediate feedback on new, not fully-developed ideas (and typically did not have official proceedings). Works presented in workshops typically materialized subsequently into full-fledged conference papers, which in turn were later published in an archival journal (with an addition of about 30% of new material from the conference version).

This system seems somewhat broken right now, as conferences seem to be adopting a strict double submission policy which considers duplicate the submission of a paper with an earlier workshop version of over four pages (most workshops have 6+ pages), even if the workshop did not have official proceedings. On the contrary, short papers accepted at conferences do not violate this rule, despite the significant overlap and the fact that most probably, virtually the same submission is generating two papers (a short paper at the first conference and a regular paper at the second conference).

Related to this question is, of course, the broader question of what kinds of topics are appropriate for workshops, whether it is good to have workshops running multiple years or have new workshops every year, etc.

If you have an opinion on the topic, I invite you to *share it with the data management community at large*, by submitting it to the Open Forum Column. The logistics are as follows:

- We will devote two issues to this topic:
  - June 2009 (**opinions due by July 5th**) and
  - September 2009 (**opinions due by August 1st**).
- To submit your opinion, you need an account on RECESS, the SIGMOD REcord Electronic Submission System, at <http://db.cs.pitt.edu/recess> You need to use your “work” email address to register; this email address will not be used for anything other than correspondence for your paper(s).
- Please submit your opinion under the “*Open Forum: the Role of Workshops*” column.
- By default, opinions will be published with attribution to the author. If you want your opinion to be published anonymously, please indicate it in the first line of the text.
- Your opinion is to be formatted in **plain text** and be less than 300 words. We will not accept doc/pdf submissions, given the complexity of aggregating them into a single document.
- The goal (and hope) is for all opinions to be published without editing. To achieve this, you must refrain from personal attacks (e.g., Dr. BadPCchair rejected my XYZ 2007 submission unfairly). Reporting on personal experiences is ok, if it is constructively used to support an argument, but please refer to the workshop/conference/journal without a year qualification, if possible. Finally, reporting on how other research communities are dealing with this issue is also acceptable.

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