

On the Criteria for Selecting the Site
of the Annual SIGMOD Conference

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So you say you want to plan on attending the 1983 A.C.M. SIGMOD Conference? Where would you like it to be? In the same general location as the National Computer Conference and at the same general time? A poll of the membership at the last conference indicated that very few people actually attend both. How about in some utilitarian place, such as Hoople, North Dakota (the hospitality of the University of Southern North Dakota is world renowned)? Or perhaps someplace a bit more exotic, like Honolulu, Hawaii (I don't know what your travel budget is like, but I'd have to ask my parents for a loan). I believe that it is time to formulate a consistent set of criterion for choosing the site of our conference. It is my belief that none of the above are the correct basis for selecting the conference location.

The following constitute my proposed criteria for choosing the location of the conference. First, and perhaps most important, is that there be a core group of enthusiastic, dedicated, and active local area database people to serve as the local arrangements committee. Without proper

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planning, there is simply no way to have a successful conference. To serve the membership (and to boost attendance and make money), the area chosen should harbor a group of people that are actively interested in database management, either as practitioners or as researchers. Further, the location should be accessible by the major airlines (Have you ever flown on Empire Airlines to Rome, N.Y.?). Finally, with all other things being equal, the exoticness of the location should be considered. This must be balanced by the exotic price tag associated with such places. It is for reasons such as this that New York is probably not an acceptable site for the conference.

Given these criterion, what are the acceptable sites for future SIGMOD conferences? First of all, let's see where we have been. Figure 1 lists the sites of all previous conferences from 1970 to date (this information was culled from the collective memory of my colleagues at CCA -- in 1970 I was still in junior high school). If we divide the country up into the four sections of (1) the East (E), (2) the Middle West (M), (3) the South (S), and (4) the West (W), the tally of locales is shown in figure 2.

Note that just as in the President's budget, the Middle West has gotten the short end of the stick. Also note that the criterion are met for all of the recent SIGMOD conferences.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Local Arrangements</u>
1982	Orlando, FL.	S	S. Su, Univ. of Fl.
1981	Ann Arbor, MI.	M	C. Dunn, Univ. of Mich.
1980	Los Angeles, CA.	W	B. Yormark, Interactive Systems
1979	Boston, MA.	E	M. Edelberg, Sperry Research
1978	Austin, TX.	S	C. Yurkanan, P.U.C. of Texas
1977	Toronto, Canada	E	D. Tsichritzis, Univ. of Toronto
1976	Washington, D.C.	E	A. Bandurski, Naval Ship Center
1975	San Jose, CA.	W	V. Lum, IBM Research
1974	Ann Arbor, MI.	M	J. Fry, Univ. of Mich.
1973	--no conference--		
1972	Denver, CO.	W	?
1971	San Diego, CA.	W	?
1970	Houston, TX.	S	J. Jump, Rice University

figure 1 - Locations of SIGMOD Conferences 1970 - 1982

E	M	W	S

3	2	4	3

figure 2 - Summary of Locations by Section

Several reasonable locations for future conferences are suggested by the above. Of course there is nothing that stops us from returning to a place in which the conference has already been held (Ann Arbor has set the precedent). These locations all have potential hosts; it is up to the locals to put forth a proposal to actually host a conference:

East

Philadelphia (major university and industry)
 New York (university and practitioners)

Middle

Minneapolis (state university and lots of local industry)
Chicago (practitioners)
St. Louis
Kansas City

South

New Orleans (universities)
Nashville (universities)
Atlanta (universities)
Dallas (universities and practitioners)

West

Seattle (practitioners)
Santa Fe (national physics lab)
Phoenix (industry)
San Francisco (universities, industry, practitioners)
Portland (industry)

As you can see, there are many potential places to hold the A.C.M. SIGMOD Conference for which there are interested local people and interesting surroundings. I believe that SIGMOD better serves its members by bringing the conference to them, rather than the other way around. Therefore, more thought should be given to the location of the conference in the future.