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Editor's Notes

This issue contains several interesting submitted articles and reports which are followed by the regular invited sections -- Database Research Centers Reports, Database Research surveys, and Database Research Funding. I thank Amit Sheth and Hank Korth for overseeing the first two invited sections, and Marianne Winslett for writing the third section. You may have noticed that this issue is not as voluminous as the last two; well, we have exceeded the budgeted page count, and we have to get back to a slimmer version of the issue.

The submitted article section includes five articles. The article by J. Widom, on a denotational semantics for the Starburst production language, disputes the claim that database production rule languages cannot be given declarative semantics. The incorporation of a knowledge of time within database systems enhances the semantic capability and allows elaborate interrogation of data. An important part of it is the schema evolution capability. The article by J. F. Roddick presents SQL/SE, an SQL extension capable of handling schema evolution in relational database systems. The next article, by J. M. Pratt and M. Cohen, deals with the important subject of scientific databases. Adapting concepts from object-oriented and temporal databases, the proposed process-oriented scientific database model identifies two data object types and two types of relationships between data objects. The fourth article on semantic optimization by W. L. J. Kowarschick discusses a new kind of residues - the disjunctive residues that is useful in performing subformula elimination. The last article is a short note by H. W. Buff on how to grasp the best of both ER language and relation model.

The report section has two reports. The first report is a glossary of temporal database concepts compiled by C.S. Jensen, J. Clifford, S.K. Gadia, A. Segev, and R.T. Snodgrass. This glossary contains concepts specific to temporal databases that are well-defined, well understood, and widely used. It lists competing alternatives and discusses the pros and cons of these. The second report by B. Thuraisingham deals with the current status of R&D in trusted database management systems. Since the Air Force Summer Study in 1982, several R&D efforts in Trusted DBMSs have been initiated, including relational, object-oriented, distributed, and high-performance platforms. This paper provides a global view of R&D in this area.

The section on Database Research Centers presents a report by A.M. Tjoa and G. Vinek on database research activities at the University of Vienna which include conceptual and logical design, database security, internal data structure design, and implementation. The section on database surveys includes a review by D. Lomet of recent work in the area of multi-attribute access methods. The section on Database Research Funding by Marianne Winslett includes information about the following activities: the High Performance Computing and Communications Program at NSF, the intelligent systems at NASA, the 3-D visualization and multiple knowledge sources at DARPA, and two new small business solicitations.

This issue is concluded with calls for papers and participation including a summary of upcoming database conferences prepared by Felix Salter.

Arie Segev
July 1992
Chair's Message

The SIGMOD and PODS joint conference was held in San Diego, California, on June 2-5. It drew 400 attendees. I would like to thank Victor Vianu and Mike Stonebraker for the great job that they did as general chair and PC chair, respectively; and all other organizers for their work.

At the PODS business meeting, it was decided that the joint conference, tried on an experimental basis for two years, will continue indefinitely from 1993. It was also decided that for the next couple of years, the two conferences will have a 2-day overlap in order to allow attendees to attend as many sessions as possible. In my view, the joining of SIGMOD and PODS represents a major step towards bringing database theorists and database systems researchers together for the benefit of the entire database research community. I appreciate the PODS executive committee for their work in making this happen.

The 1993 SIGMOD/PODS joint conference will be held in Washington, D.C. on May 25-28. Larry Kerschberg and Peter Buneman will serve as general chair and PC chair, respectively. The 1994 conference will be held in Minneapolis on May 24-27. Salvatore March and Richard Snodgrass will be general chair and PC chair, respectively.

SIGMOD instituted an annual Awards program in 1992. The new SIGMOD Awards consist of an Innovations Award and a Contributions Award. Mike Stonebraker was the recipient of the Innovations Award for his technical contributions to the field. Maria Zemankova received the Contributions Award for her contributions to the field through substantially increased NSF funding for database research, which, among other things, provided the seed money for numerous workshops on important research topics. An Innovation Award is to be given to a (group of) researcher who made a significant research contribution in database management which has been applied to practice in significant ways. A Contributions Award is given to a (group of) persons who made a significant contribution to the field of database systems through research funding, education, professional services, etc. The new Awards program is administered by the SIGMOD Awards committee which I appointed. Hector Garcia-Molina, Dennis McLeod, and Peter Scheuermann have agreed to serve on the Awards committee. The deadline for nominations for the awards is March 1 each year.

On March 3, in Kansas City, ACM SIG Board held a viability review of several SIGs, including SIGMOD. Each SIG has to go through a viability review once every four years. I reported on the activities of SIGMOD during the past three years, including technical services and financial status. The SIG Board unanimously voted that SIGMOD is viable. In fact, my presentation was turned into an article by an ACM officer, and was just published in the July issue of ACM Membernet (a supplement to CACM).

ACM informed me that they have found that changing the current third-class mailing of SIGMOD RECORD to second-class mailing will save SIGMOD about $10,000. I found it difficult to understand, but I asked ACM to go ahead and start using second-class mailing from now on.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Won Kim
July 1992