Trade Press News

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A few years ago, I made the transition from academic to industrial researcher. As part of this change, I made a conscious decision to shift the focus of my work towards more practical matters, and I found myself more involved in technology transfer issues. I was expecting the usual difficulties in transferring information to development groups, but one problem I did not anticipate was that sometimes I was pushing supposedly new ideas that were already available from standard commercial sources.

This seemed incredible to me. After all, I was familiar with the existing literature, and I had never seen the particular concepts in print, either in journals or conference proceeding. It was then that I began to turn to the trade press to broaden my perspective. As my work moved closer to areas that are commercially "hot" the need to keep track of the trade publications grew even more.

Apparently I was not the only researcher that found the trade publications useful in my work. Won Kim, the current SIGMOD chair, also feels that a substantial portion of the SIGMOD RECORD readership would benefit from increased awareness of articles published outside the usual research-oriented channels. As part of his effort to bridge the gap between trade and research publications, Won has recently asked me to become Associate Editor for Trade Press News.

It is my intention to help establish a better link between the trade press and SIGMOD RECORD readers. There are many ways to achieve this goal. For example, I will try to obtain permission to reprint particularly useful articles appearing in trade publications (either the complete article or a suitable abridgement). Also, I will provide periodic pointers to articles that we cannot reproduce, and present representative Table of Contents so that interested readers may subscribe to trade magazines on their own. Finally, I will solicit contributions from trade press writers.

To make this section a success I am going to need your help. For example, I am particularly interested in learning about articles in specialized publications that may not be widely distributed, such as user group newsletters. And if any of you has found a particular publication useful in your work, I would appreciate hearing about it, since chances are it will be useful to others. And of course, I will welcome any suggestions to improve this section,