Informer

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INFORMATION
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In This Issue

About Informer

Informer is the quarterly newsletter of the BCS Information Retrieval Specialist Group (IRSG). It is distributed free to all members. The IRSG is free to join via the BCS website (http://irsg.bcs.org/), which provides access to further IR articles, events and resources.

The British Computer Society (BCS) is the industry body for IT professionals. With members in over 100 countries around the world, the BCS is the leading professional and learned society in the field of computers and information systems.

Informer is best read in printed form. Please feel free to circulate this newsletter among your colleagues.

If you're a regular reader of Informer you'll no doubt have heard me go on about how the IRSG puts such an emphasis on its offline activity while the online presence remains largely unchanged since the day it started. Has the 'Web 2.0' phenomenon just passed us by? Where are the webinars, the social networks, the search and navigation tools and the interactive content which combine to create a compelling user experience?

At last, this looks set to change – the latest news from HQ is that the BCS is about to embark upon a series of initiatives to raise the profile of the organisation and transform our online presence. What this means for us is that at last we can benefit from the economies of scale of our parent organisation and build on a common platform to deliver a range of new and improved online services.

I think this is a great opportunity – personally, I'd like to see the IRSG make much greater use of the online channel to deliver a more engaging user experience at irsg.bcs.org, such as seamless search and navigation of our own information assets, community building through user-generated content, delivery of topical webinars from our own members and lots more. If you share this passion and would like to get involved, then drop us a line at: irsg@bcs.org.uk.

Meanwhile, the current issue of Informer brings us two further book reviews: Web Search: Multidisciplinary Perspectives reviewed by Epaminondas Kapetanios, and Digital Government reviewed by Tanja Svarre. Incidentally, a new set of titles will shortly be available for review, courtesy of our good friends at Springer. If you'd like to be among the first to choose, then keep an eye on the IRSG group on LinkedIn. Also in this issue is a review of the Information Interaction in Context conference, by Gyorgy Fazekas, and a

research update by Sérgio Nunes on "Sources of Temporal Web Evidence".

Finally, you may have already heard that plans are underway for Search Solutions 2009, to be held at BC HQ on October 1st. We won't be issuing a call for papers as such, but we're always open to new ideas for talks, demos and panels. If you'd like to get involved, then drop us a line at the address below.

Best regards,

Tony

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Conference Review:

Information Interaction in Context

by Gyorgy Fazekas

The Symposium on Information Interaction in Context (IIiX) was set out to investigate how contextual information - knowledge about a user, a set of documents, previous searches or details of a retrieval system - can be used to better understand information behaviour and thus improve interactive information systems. After a successful debut in Copenhagen two years ago, the second symposium was held in London, UK between 14th and 17th of October, 2008. The event, organised by the BCS and Queen Mary University of London took place in the BCS London office.

Doctoral forums and two half-day tutorials started off the symposium. Professor Peter Ingwersen from the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Denmark focused on the extension of laboratory research towards a framework for interactive IR studies, while Ayşe Göker (City University London) and her colleagues were talking about Mobile Information Interaction. Following the main programme, three parallel workshops were held in conjunction with IIiX concerning Corpus Profiling in IR and NLP, Adaptive Information Retrieval and finally Teaching and Learning IR.

The main conference, chaired by Mounia Lalmas (University of Glasgow) and Anastasios Tombros (Queen Mary, University of London), was opened by Mounia on 15th October. The invited speakers were Professor Stephen Robertson of Microsoft Research in Cambridge, UK and Dr. Ian Ruthven from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.

Stephen Robertson gave an intriguing talk about the progress of Information Retrieval over the last decades and its future directions. He emphasised how statistical approaches in laboratory experiments came to dominate the

field, placing less emphasis on semantics, Natural Language Processing (NLP) or Knowledge Representation. However the formulation of IR as experimental science contributed to its present day success - for example in search engines for the web -, it inherently limited the scope of research on hypothesis testing for system components. Therefore, some wider aspects of information retrieval that are more difficult to test in laboratory circumstances - such as interaction, cognition and task or user context - are often ignored. In Robertson's view, even if it's not yet clear how to incorporate these aspects in current research tradition, the community should seek for new ways in which a larger set of hypotheses are considered and break down some of the barriers existing between experimental and observational methods.

Ian Ruthven focussed on the importance of the user interface in an elaborately illustrated presentation. An interaction model and the corresponding interface are both important components of an information system. However, in Ruthven's opinion, it is the interface that forms the primary impression of a user about the overall retrieval system. Therefore, it is not enough to provide a functionally complete and easy-to-use interface, but it has to be engaging and perhaps - considering persuasive and emotional designs - it may be used to encourage certain search behaviours and to present a more enjoyable experience. This can also be a move towards fulfilling the need for using more of the available contextual information, thus helping people in managing complex information problems.

More than twenty full and research in progress papers were accepted for presentation at IIiX'08. The papers were divided between eight sessions covering a wide range of topics including Interactive IR, Context Retrieval Models, Personalisation, Evaluation and Relevance, Museums and Archives in Context and Information Seeking. The hottest topics were Interactivity and Evaluation and Relevance. The quality and diversity of papers were outstanding: exploring both new ways of obtaining contextual information in information retrieval and new ways of using this information, as well as new areas of application. The high standard of contributions

presented a difficult choice for the committee in choosing an article for the Best Paper Award. The prize, sponsored by Yahoo Research, went to: "Comparing collaborative and independent search in a recall-oriented task" by Hideo Joho, David Hannah & Joemon M. Jose from the University of Glasgow, UK.

The programme was enriched by a panel discussion focusing on problems and challenges in Information Interaction. The panel: Nick Belkin (Rutgers University), Ayşe Göker, Diane Kelly (University of North Carolina), Stephen Robertson, Ian Ruthven, was chaired by Peter Ingwersen. Consistently with the hot topics, large emphasis was placed on evaluation and the relevance of context by the panellists. The difficulty of incorporating contextual knowledge in information systems with the dominance of statistical methods, the need for considering diverse information needs in mobile devices or ubiquitous computing and the need for more naturalistic settings for evaluation were mentioned among future challenges.

The symposium was accompanied by remarkable social events, including the reception (special thanks to Leif Azzopardi for his generosity in measuring the wine) and a lavishly organised banquet which was held in a function room stylishly set in a traditional engineering library of Westminster.

In conclusion, IIiX'08 demonstrated one more time the growing awareness and need for contextual information in information interaction. The symposium yielded outstanding contributions to the field in papers, speeches, tutorials, lively discussions with high participation and a great atmosphere.

György Fazekas is currently a PhD student at Queen Mary University of London, working at the Centre for Digital Music (C4DM), School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science. His main research interest includes the development of semantic audio technologies and their application to creative music production. Email:
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Book Review
Web Search: Multidisciplinary Perspectives

By Spink, Amanda; Zimmer, Michael (Eds.)

Reviewed by Epaminondas Kapetanios

Web search engines have become of paramount importance in our lives in the 21st century and one of the dominant technologies in modern digital life. Nevertheless, their social, cultural and economical weight exceeds in some cases the influence and power of traditional software companies such as those specializing in operating systems, e.g., *Microsoft, Sun, Apple* and alike. It is not a coincidence that *Google*, as the dominant search engine nowadays, decided to expand their product portfolio with a new browser (Chrome), or even with the design and operation of a network operating system. It is also not a coincidence that making Web searches is considered as the second most popular activity behind using e-mail and the target of many new companies and businesses.

Given also that it is not only the Web search engines dealing with entities on the Web, but also the user behaviour, which recently deserved scholar attention, the book *Web Search: Multidisciplinary Perspectives,* edited by Amanda Spink, Queensland University of Technology, and Michael Zimmerman, Yale Law School, has been published at the right time. The editorship is an intriguing mixture of an information scientist and her long experience in teaching and research on the informational dimensions of Web searching and a scholar of culture and communication who focuses on the political and ethical dimensions of new media and information technologies. It comprises a collection of article-style chapters, which are clustered into three main parts, apart from the introduction and conclusion.

These parts primarily reflect upon (a) social, cultural and philosophical perspectives, (b) political, legal and ethical perspectives, (c) information behaviour perspectives of Web search. All chapters have their own lists of references and they are cross-referenced as well. This wide range of multidisciplinary collection of researchers from the social sciences, media and cultural studies, law, information science and other related disciplines, as well as the range of multidisciplinary theories models and ideas about Web searching shed light into many aspects of the impact of Web search on individuals, social groups, modern and postmodern ways of knowing in public and private life.

To this extent, the book successfully tries to capture the very essence of social, cultural and legal implications of Web search engines. It also attempts to reflect the recent criticism and scrutiny of the Web search engines from a moral or ethical perspective, including concerns about bias, censorship, trust and privacy. Unlike many other volumes, this book does not provide and analysis of Web searching from computer science or other Web-related technological disciplines. It is rather focussed on non-technological perspectives.

However, despite the fact that I was reading the book in my life role as computer scientist, the book was, to a large extent, illuminating new dimensions on Web search. Though eventually disappointing for a readership of computer scientists expecting some technological solutions to the many open challenges, the book offers views and paradigms of Web search research from different disciplines.

In particular, the first main part (Part II) provides chapters, which discuss, for instance, an examination based in communication and political theory on how bias in search engines and Google, in particular, may threaten the utopian and democratic ideals, which are associated with the Web. Other chapters discuss how Web-based technologies serve women in their information seeking needs in terms of the social and cultural contexts as imposed by both, search tools and tasks, as well as ethical aspects in the role of search engines in the construction and distribution of knowledge.

The second main part (Part III), liability of search engines for copyright infringement is being discussed together with how search engine bias can be a beneficial consequence of an increasingly customized content for individual users. Further chapters express concerns how to deal with unplanned exposures to diverse viewpoints as well as with empowering what is called "organisational hubs of collective action" as well as about "visibility" of organisations on search engines. Concerns over commercialisation and consolidation of the search engine industry are drawn through detailed historical and economical analysis of Web search engines.

The third main part (Part IV) discusses explorations of Web searching from the information behaviour perspective. It explores the history of information retrieval research in order to propose a macro-model of information seeking on the Web & how this may fit within an integrative model of health information seeking. It also explores the question whether search engines act as facilitators of accessing expertise or influential gatekeepers. Finally, an attempt to measure levels of "literacy" of search engine design and practices as based on technical and conceptual understanding people may have about search engines, as well as to measure Web search performance quality conclude this part of the book.

In part V, the conclusion, the editors draw together some important lessons learned from the many various chapters and give a concluding overview of the key trends, theories and models, which emerge from the multidisciplinary perspectives, along with a range of new directions for further research.

Epaminondas received his Ph.D. degree at the Institute of Information Systems, Department of Computer Science, ETH-Zurich, Switzerland, where he designed and contributed in the implementation of an ontology driven query language (MDDQL) and search. Epaminondas has published more than 40 articles in peer reviewed journals and conferences. He is currently holding a position as a Senior Lecturer at the School of Electronics and Computer Science, University of Westminster, London, UK. E-mail:
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Book review:
Digital Government

By H. Chen et a (Eds.)
Reviewed by Tanja Svarre

The research area of digital government is complex with contributions from a number of different subject areas, e.g. management, computer science, political science, including public administration, and others. This becomes clear when going through the list of contributors to the book "Digital government". The authors come from a wide set of research areas such as information systems, management, law, political communication, general politics, library and information science, statistics - to name a few.

"Digital government" is part of the series "Integrated series in information systems". The series covers specific information systems, evaluation issues and management, but also more computer oriented subjects, e.g. programming and security. The focal point is on the application of IT to support e-government.

The 32 chapters of the book is organised into 3 sections. Section 1 covers foundations of digital government and public policy, section 2 covers research within information technology, and section 3 looks at specific case studies across systems and geography.

The first section represents the theoretical foundation of digital government, and consists of 10 chapters. With the eyes of an information retrieval specialist, this unit provides the reader a thorough introduction to basic advantages, problems, considerations, and issues to take into account when dealing with digital government. Different related concepts, e.g. e-governance, e-democracy, e-participation, protection of information privacy, web accessibility/usability and mobile legislators, and disciplines are discussed,

including whether digital government may be considered a new field of research. Further, the section also presents research reviews/status reports of specific subtopics, including discussions of the current state of art.

The second section covers a more practical approach to digital government, namely information technology research. The section contains reviews of research conducted within information technology, including presentations of technologies and their application. The subjects covered are historical aspects, aspects of knowledge organization (e.g. ontologies), sharing, integration, and compatibility of information and data, security, management of identities, geoinformation and urban models.

The third and final section provides case studies of digital government projects. The section offers chapters on applications within e-petitioning, access to government statistical information, infectious disease informatics, improvement of document and information retrieval by metadata, analysis of agency performance outcomes with use of a business-technology alignment model, government information resource Catalog system and Exchange system in selected Chinese cases, the Online Census project in statistics in New Zealand, and hybrid e-government projects as regards leveraging online and offline channels. Further, the section offers a description of best practice (based on the eEurope Awards for e-Government 2005), and an examination of adoption of IT in a small city in Puerto Rico. As appears from the combination of chapters, the scope is quite broad. Hence, the unit provides a well updated status within a number of selected areas.

Every chapter contains references, suggested readings, online resources and questions for discussion. In this manner, the book will be very useful for researchers and students within related research areas. In addition, practitioners will find the book very useful.

The second and third section presenting novel research and techniques within digital government provides the reader with a good and inspiring insight into the current state of

art. However, one could question the division of chapters into these two sections, since they appear very close related regarding their content. This might be due to the fact, that there obviously is a strong connection between research within information technology and the practical application of information technology in a number of case studies.

From an information retrieval specialist point of view, some chapters of the book utilizes specific methods well known within the IR theory and might therefore be considered particularly relevant and interesting. However, in order to get a more coherent picture of digital government, one might very well read the book cover to cover. On the other hand, the broad scope of the book also makes it a well qualified candidate for a handbook to approach, when one wants to be updated on specific e-government issues.

Tanja Svarre is a PhD candidate with the research programme Information Interaction and Information Architecture at the Aalborg Branch of the Royal School of Library and Information Science in Denmark. She holds a MSc in Library and Information Science. Her main research interests are primarily within e-government, methods for automatic indexing, and user studies.

Informer

Research Update:
Sources of Temporal Web Evidence

By Sérgio Nunes

Searching the web currently resembles the task of the first astronomers that only had access to the latest picture of a dynamic universe. This analogy, presented by Baeza-Yates et al. (2004), captures the current state of the art of web search. A web search system, or search engine, typically consists of four main components, a crawler, a document indexer, a query processor and a presentation interface. The crawler and indexer work offline to build an internal representation of a portion of the web prepared for fast access. The query processor and presentation interface only access this internal representation and work online in response to user queries. Web search engines users don't access the current state of the web but instead an image of what the crawler captured at a specific time.

Currently, there is no temporal context provided to users in standard web search engines. Results are treated and presented without distinction, despite being from a recently created web document or from an historic, stale document. This is even more surprising when we acknowledge the very dynamic nature of the web. Ntoulas et al. (2004) have analyzed the evolution of both content and link structure of web pages. Data was gathered from weekly crawls of 150 web sites selected from the top ranked sites at Google Directory. It was found that only 20% of web pages last one year and that, after a year, 50% of the content on the web is new.

One of the main deterrents for temporal web information retrieval research is the lack of adequate corpora. Existing corpora are typically static, not including any temporal information. To build a temporal corpus, it is necessary to identify and select the evidence (or features) that should be included in the corpus. We present a first approach in identifying and classifying sources of temporal information on the web.

Sources of temporal web evidence are organized in two groups, specifically *document-based evidence* and *web-based evidence*. The former encompasses all features extracted from a single web document, while the latter holds features that are obtained from the whole web. Alternatively, these features could be arranged according to their *temporal order*. First order features are those that are direct sources of temporal information (e.g. the Last-Modified value in HTTP response headers). Second order temporal features are obtained from the observation of standard (non-temporal) features through time (e.g. a document's size evolution).

Document-based temporal evidence is obtained by exploring the characteristics of single web documents. These characteristics
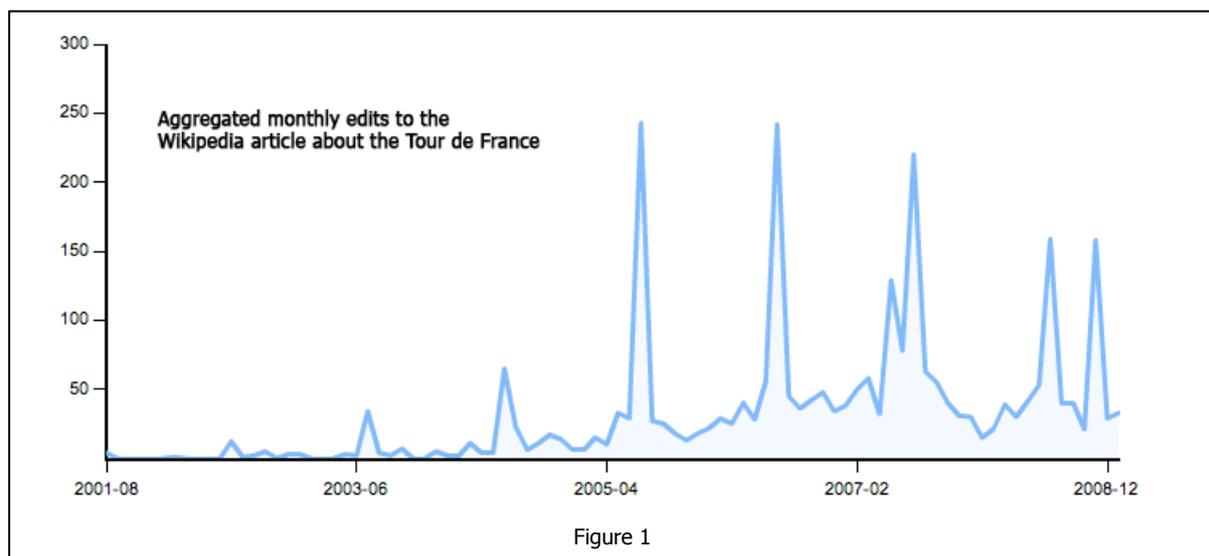

Figure 1

are limited in scope and, typically, are user-generated. Thus, they are subject to direct manipulation and might be engineered. See Figure 1 for an example of document-based temporal evidence. In this figure the temporal profile of the Wikipedia article on the Tour de France is shown (see WikiChanges). By observing this document through a temporal lens, the periodic nature of the document's topic is clearly evident. This information can be explored for document clustering, result ranking, or information extraction.

The second group of temporal web evidence is named *web-based evidence*. This name derives from the fact that the entire web is used as a source of information about each individual document. Google's PageRank uses random walks through the web graph to gather information about specific pages. In other words, multiple independent sources are combined to produce information about a particular web resource. One distinct advantage of this approach is that it is harder to influence or tinker.

Typically, and despite the fact that the web is a very dynamic environment, web search systems do not fully explore the temporal dimension in their algorithms. Archived web documents are mostly used as a source of historical information and not exploited for improving current web tasks or meeting user's current needs. As temporal corpora become available, a significant barrier will be removed and research on *temporal web information retrieval* will be promoted.

A detailed survey on how sources of temporal evidence have been used in IR can be found in Nunes (2007).

Sérgio Nunes is currently a PhD student at the Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto, Portugal. His work is focused on web information retrieval using temporal evidence, namely on how standard IR tasks can be improved using temporal information. His interests also include online media and information visualization.
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Forthcoming Events

Edited By Andy MacFarlane

AGM/Talks/One Day Events

Search Solutions 2009
The IRSG's annual practitioner focused event. BCS building, Covent Garden, London, 1st October 2009

Conferences/Workshops

5th International Evidence Based Library and Information Practice Conference (EBLIP5)
General library practice conference, of interest to members working in the area of libraries and search. Stockholm, Sweden, 29th June to 3rd July 2009.
http://blogs.kib.ki.se/eblip5/welcome.html

The Twentieth ACM Conference on Hypertext and Hypermedia (Hypertext 2009)
Of interest to members working in areas such as browsing for IR. Torino, Italy, 29th June to 1st July 2009. http://www.ht2009.org

26th British National Conferences on Databases (BNCOD 2009)
A general database conference of interest to members including themes on XML and text retrieval. Birmingham, U.K., 7th to 9th July 2009.
http://events.cs.bham.ac.uk/bncod09/

ACM International Conference on Image and Video Retrieval (CIVR 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of image or video search. Santorini Island, Greece, 8th to 10th July 2009. http://www.civr2009.org

The 3rd International Conference on Knowledge Generation, Communication and Management (KGCM 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of Knowledge Management and IR. Orlando, Florida, USA, 10th to 13th July 2009.
http://www.2009iiisconferences.org/kgcm

8th International Conference on Mathematical Knowledge Management (MKM 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of Knowledge Management and IR in the domain of mathematics. Grand Bend, Ontario, Canada, 10th to 12th July 2009
http://www.orcca.on.ca/conferences/cicm09/mkm09/

21st International Joint Conference on AI (IJCAI'09)
A general AI conference with many themes of interest to members including a workshop on User-contributed knowledge, of interest to members working in the area of user models and IR. Pasadena, California, 11th to 17th July 2009. http://ijcai-09.org/index.html, Workshop: http://lit.csci.unt.edu/~wikiai09

The 2009 Multi Conference in Computer Science, Information Technology and Control systems and Computational Science and Computer Engineering (MULTICONF-09) - Special session on Information Retrieval
An AI focused conference with a special session on IR. Orlando, FL, USA, 13th to 16th July 2009. http://www.PromoteResearch.org

The 2009 World Congress in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, and Applied Computing (WORLDCOMP'09)
A group of around 22 conferences with various themes on IR including the semantic web and knowledge engineering. Las Vegas, USA, 13th to 16th July 2009.
http://www.world-academy-of-science.org

32nd Annual International ACM SIGIR
The big IR conference, with all themes on the subject of interest to members. Boston, MA, U.S.A, 19th – 23rd July 2009. http://sigir2009.org/

9th Industrial Conference on Data Mining (ICDM 2009)
A data mining conference of interest to members working in the area of text mining. Leipzig, Germany, 20th to 22nd July, 2009. http://www.data-mining-forum.de/

6th International Conference on Machine Learning and Data Mining (MLDM 2009)
A data mining conference of interest to members working in the area of text mining. Leipzig, Germany, 23rd to 25th July, 2009. http://www.mldm.de

6th Sound and Music Computing Conference
Of interest to members working in the area of music retrieval. There is also a music computing summer school just before this conference (see below) Casa da Música, Porto, Portugal, 23rd to 25th July 2009. http://smc2009.smcnetwork.org/

Tenth International Conference on Document Analysis and Recognition (ICDAR'2009)
A number of themes in this conference of interest including document databases and digital libraries. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain, 26th to 29th July 2009 http://www.cvc.uab.es/icdar2009/

Joint Conference of the 47th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics And the 4th International Joint Conference on Natural Language Processing of the Asian Federation of Natural Language Processing
Of interest to members working in the area of NLP and IR. Includes a workshop on Workshop on text and citation analysis for scholarly digital libraries. Singapore, 2nd to 7th August 2009. http://www.acl-ijcnlp-2009.org

The Second International Conference on the Applications of Digital Information and Web Technologies (ICADIWT 2009)
Of interest to members working in applied areas of IR. London Met Business School, United Kingdom, August 4-6, 2009 http://www.dirf.org/diwt2009/

7th Triennial Conference of European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music (ESCOM 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of music retrieval, particularly on the user side of things. Jyväskylä, Finland, 12th to 16th August 2009. https://www.abstrakti.fi/escom2009

The International Computer Music Conference (ICMC 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of music search. Montreal, Canada, 16th to 21st August 2009. http://www.icmc2009.org/papers

The Fifth International Conference on Advanced Data Mining and Applications (ADMA 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of text mining. Beijing, China, 17th to 19th August 2009, http://www.adma2009.org

IFLA World Library and Information Congress and 75th IFLA Conference and Council
General library and information science conference of interest to members working in such areas as knowledge organisation and IR. Milan, Italy, 23rd to 27th August 2009. http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla75/index.htm

Using Search Engine Technology for Information Management (USETIM 2009)
Of interest to members working on search in information management situations (part of VLDB 2009). Lyon, France, 24th August 2009. http://www.vldb2009.org/

16th International Symposium on String Processing and Information Retrieval (SPIRE 2009)
A string processing conference with a theme on IR. Saariselka, Finland, 25th to 27th August 2009 http://www.cs.uta.fi/spire09/

The International Workshop on Social Networks Mining and Analysis for Business Applications (SNMABA2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of social search. Vancouver, Canada , 29th to 31st August 2009
http://im.nuk.edu.tw/~iting/SNMABA2009/

20th International Conference on Database and Expert Systems Applications (DEXA 2009)
A general database conference with themes on IR. Linz, Austria, 31st August to 4th September 2009.
http://www.dexa.org/dexa2009

The Fifth International Conference on Knowledge Capture (K-CAP 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of knowledge organisation and/or management and IR. Redondo Beach, CA, USA, 2nd to 5th September 2009. http://kcap09.stanford.edu

9th International Conference on Knowledge Management and Knowledge Technologies (I-KNOW' 09)
Of interest to members working in the area of knowledge organisation and/or management and IR. messecongress|graz, Austria, 2nd to 4th September 2009, http://i-know.tugraz.at/

The 16th Francophone Classification Society (SFC) meeting
Of interest to members working in the area of knowledge organisation and/or management and IR. Grenoble, France, 2nd to 4th September 2009 http://sfc-2009-grenoble.imag.fr/english/index-en.php

Workshop on Systems and Frameworks for Computational Morphology (sfcm 2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of NLP and IR. University of Zurich, Switzerland, 4th September 2009 http://sfcm2009.org/

The 25th Annual Conference of the Spanish Society for Natural Language Processing (SEPLN'09)
Spanish focused conference on NLP issues, of interest to members who use that technology to solve IR problems. Palacio Miramar, Donostia - San Sebastian, 8th to 10th September 2009.
http://ixa2.si.ehu.es/sepln2009/

2nd International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval (ICTIR'09)
Of interest to members working on the more theoretical aspects of IR in such areas a logical and probabilistic models. Cambridge, UK, 10th to 12th September 2009.
http://kmi.open.ac.uk/events/ictir09/

IEEE/WIC/ACM . International Joint Conference on WI / IAT (WI-IAT 2009)
A general AI conference of interest to members working in the area of AI and search. University of Milano Bicocca, Milano Italy, 15th to 18th September 2009. http://www.wi-iat09.disco.unimib.it

Workshop "Information Retrieval 2009" (LWA-WIR 2009)
The annual workshop of the German Computer Society. Darmstadt University of Technology, Germany, 21st to 23rd September 2009
http://lwa09.informatik.tu-darmstadt.de/bin/view/IR/WebHome

13th European Conference on Digital Libraries (ECDL2009)
Of interest to members working in the area of Digital Libraries. Corfu, Greece, 27th September to 2nd October 2009. http://www.ecdl2009.eu/

Summer Schools

2009 Summer School in Sound and Music Computing & SID Training School on Interactions with Environmental Sounds
Of interest to members wishing to know more about applying technologies for music search. The theme is Interacting with Sounds of Porto. It will take place just before the 6th Sound and Music Computing Conference (see above) Casa da Música, , Porto, Portugal, 18th to 21st July 2009
http://www.smcnetwork.org/summerschool/porto2009

Summer School in Multimedia Semantics (SSMS 2009)
This workshop is focused on Managing and Modeling of Multimedia and User Generated Content in Web 3.0, and will be of interest members working in the area of multimedia IR. Casa da Música, , Porto, Portugal, 18th to 21st July 2009
http://www.smcnetwork.org/summerschool/porto2009

European Summer School in Information Retrieval (ESSIR 2009)
A Bi-Annual summer School on IR. Will also contain satellite events including FDIA 2009 and a panel on Information Retrieval Evaluation. University of Padua, Italy, August 31 - September 4, 2009.
http://essir2009.dei.unipd.it/

3rd Russian Summer School in Information Retrieval (RuSSIR 2009)
A summer school co-located with ROMIP meeting and Russian Conference on Digital Libraries 2009 Petrozavodsk, Russia, 11th to 16th September 2009. http://romip.ru/russir2009/eng/index.html

Industry News:

AUTONOMY INTERWOVEN USHERS IN ERA OF MEANING BASED MARKETING

On April 14th Autonomy Corporation plc, a global leader in infrastructure software for the enterprise, unveiled the company's vision for transforming how businesses understand and interact with their customers, resulting in dramatic improvements in business results. By combining Autonomy's IDOL's unique ability to understand the meaning behind all forms of information with Interwoven's market-leading solutions for optimizing online business performance, Autonomy Interwoven will arm businesses with an entirely new and more effective approach for engaging and interacting with customers.

Today's marketer confronts a host of new challenges that render current systems and approaches obsolete. Over 80% of the world's data is unstructured, coming in the form of social media, blogs, twitter posts, instant messaging, e-mails, documents, videos and rich media. Businesses suffer from low online conversions and high abandonment rates, declining loyalty, and an inability to react to feedback and customer sentiment. Finally, marketers are forced to deal with a grab bag of non-integrated tools that attempt to solve the problem by manually tagging this ocean of unstructured content, and that fail to connect and act on information across an enterprise.

"Autonomy Interwoven will help marketers succeed in the modern era by delivering a new approach, called Meaning Based Marketing," said Anthony Bettencourt, CEO of Autonomy Interwoven. "Autonomy provides an order of magnitude increase in the amount and types of information that can be leveraged, as well as the ability to interpret the meaning and act on that information. These next-generation solutions will transform how organizations manage customer interaction and multi-channel marketing, enabling both the business and the customer to reach a far greater desired outcome."

"As a customer of both Autonomy's IDOL server and Autonomy Interwoven's web content management solutions, we are excited about the new opportunities for interactive marketers that will emerge from the combination of these technologies," said Renee Rodgers, Senior Director Interactive at Avaya. "The ability to listen, understand, and act on the sentiment behind unstructured information, like social media, blogs, and video, will enable Avaya to engage with our customers and the market in a new and powerful manner."

Built upon Autonomy's Intelligent Data Operating Layer (IDOL) and leveraging Interwoven's broad portfolio of marketing optimization solutions, Autonomy Interwoven now provides hundreds of new capabilities that will power the future of Meaning Based Marketing. IDOL has a fundamental ability to extract meaning from all forms of text, rich media, video, and audio, and includes over 500 functions that help marketers improve the experience for their customers.

Pre-built Interwoven TeamSite components built on the IDOL platform are now available to rapidly add dynamic functions to a website, including auto categorization, clustering, and automated hyperlinking with no custom development or integration required. Several capabilities leveraging IDOL and Autonomy's Interwoven's web solutions are available now, including social media sentiment analysis, eCommerce guided navigation and product recommendations, and web content archiving.

Please visit http://www.interwoven.com/index_web_sol.jsp to find out more.

Featured Job: Research Engineer

Can you build **Recommendation Engines**?

Ideally, you will have a natural entrepreneurial spirit. You will drive research, design and implement the company's core product and content recommendation algorithms.

You will have a real passion for the Internet and **strong mathematical** and software engineering skills. You should be comfortable working in a dynamic, fast-paced environment and have the ability to implement and test new ideas rapidly.

Duties and Technical Knowledge required:

-   Research, design and implementation of recommendation engine technology.
-   Background in **AI** and **Machine Learning** or **Search and Information retrieval**.
-   Understanding / experience of optimisation **algorithms** used by leading **recommendation engines.**
-   Strong software engineering skills with a bias towards practical and timely implementation.
-   Able to communicate complex concepts in simple effective ways to key stakeholders
-   **A good undergraduate degree in relevant subject (a PhD in Mathematics or Computer Science a plus)**.

For further details contact: RMW Consulting Ltd

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