

An impressive number of more than 2300 people from 62 countries participated in this truly international in scope event, where the work of the world's foremost leaders in the field was presented. In 264 sessions, 1666 papers were presented, and 306 posters were displayed during specific sessions. The keynote speaker was Prof. Hiroshi Ishii (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA) and the title of his address was "Defy Gravity: The Art of Tangible Bits". Furthermore, during the opening session, for the third time in the history of the HCI International Conference series, fourteen awards were conferred. Twelve awards were conferred to the best papers in each affiliated conference / thematic area. Among these twelve best papers, one paper was selected as Best HCI International 2013 Conference paper. Finally, the Best Poster also received an award.



Becoming annual - HCI International 2014

The 16th International Conference on Human-Computer

Interaction will be held jointly with the affiliated Conferences in Creta Maris Resort and Convention Centre, Heraklion, Crete, Greece, 22 - 27 June 2014.

HCI International 2014 will also include two new affiliated conferences: the 1st International Conference on HCI in Business, and the 1st International Conference on Learning and Collaboration Technologies.

Please visit the conference website for the full list of the thematic areas,



Figure 1: Hiroshi Ishii, Keynote Speaker

including the topics for each thematic area.

The program will feature, among others: pre-conference half-day and full-day tutorials, parallel sessions, poster presentations, an opening session with a keynote address, and an exhibition.

The proceedings, including both papers and posters, will be published by Springer, and will be indexed by a number of services including EI and ISI CPCI-S.

Links:

HCI International 2013, <http://www.hcii2013.org/>
 HCI International 2014, <http://www.hcii2014.org/>
 HCI International Conference Series, <http://www.hci-international.org/>

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CLEF 2013 and Beyond: Evolution of the CLEF Initiative

by Nicola Ferro and Paolo Rosso

The CLEF Initiative is structured in two main parts: a series of Evaluation Labs, to conduct evaluation of information access systems and a peer-reviewed Conference on a broad range of issues on evaluation. The annual CLEF events have been partially supported by the EU FP7 PROMISE project (contract n. 258191) and by the ELIAS RNP network.

CLEF 2013: Information Access Evaluation meets Multilinguality, Multimodality, and Visualization

The annual meeting of the CLEF Initiative was hosted this year by the Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain, 23-26 September as a 4 days event, attended by more than 200 participants, in which conference presentations, laboratory meetings, workshops, and community sessions were smoothly interleaved to provide a continuous stream of discussions on the different facets of experimental evaluation.

22 papers were accepted for the Conference and published by Springer in their Lectures Notes for Computer Science (LNCS) series. Two keynote speakers highlighted important developments in the field of evaluation. Evangelos Kanoulas, Google Zurich, Switzerland, focused on how to model variance in topics, collections, system and measures when evaluating systems. Rada Mihalcea, University of Michigan, USA, presented several scenarios where multilinguality can be pivoted to improve natural language processing performances instead of being a barrier to be crossed.

Nine benchmarking activities ran as evaluation labs in CLEF 2013. The results were presented and discussed in Valencia in dedicated sessions:

- CHiC (Cultural Heritage in CLEF): investigating systematic and large-scale evaluation of cultural heritage digital libraries and information access systems;
- CLEFeHealth (new): aiming at developing processing methods and



Figure 2: HCI 2013 Award winners

resources to enrich difficult-to-understand health text as well as their evaluation setting;

- CLEF-IP: studying IR techniques in the patent domain;
- ImageCLEF: proposing experimental evaluation of image classification and retrieval, with a focus on the combination of textual and visual evidence;
- INEX: evaluating XML retrieval;
- PAN: uncovering plagiarism, authorship and social software misuse;
- QA4MRE: evaluating machine reading systems through question answering and reading comprehension tests;
- QALD-3 (Question Answering over Linked Data, new): a benchmarking activity on question answering over linked data;
- RepLab: evaluating reputation management technologies.

There was also an exploratory workshop CLEF-ER: a workshop on multilingual annotation of named entities and terminology resources acquisition.

CLEF 2014 and Beyond

During CLEF 2013 considerable steps were taken to further reshape and improve the overall organization of CLEF. In particular, it has been decided to establish a legal entity to support the organization of the CLEF initiative.

CLEF 2014 will be hosted by the University of Sheffield, UK, 15-19 September 2014 while CLEF 2015 will be hosted by the Institut de Recherche en Informatique de Toulouse (IRIT), France, in early September 2015.

Finally, bids for hosting CLEF 2016 are now open and will close on 7th April 2014. Proposals can be sent to the CLEF Steering Committee Chair at chair@clef-initiative.eu.

Links.

CLEF: <http://www.clef-initiative.eu/>
 CLEF 2013 Web site: <http://www.clef2013.org/>
 CLEF 2014 Web site: <http://clef2014.clef-initiative.eu/>
 PROMISE: <http://www.promise-noe.eu/>
 ELIAS: <http://www.elias-network.eu/>

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Jay Parikh, the Vice-President of Infrastructure Engineering at Facebook

VLDB 2013 Conference Supported by ERCIM

by Yannis Velegarakis

Very Large Data Bases (VLDB) is the premier annual international conference on database technologies, attracting more than 700 researchers, vendors, practitioners, application developers, and users from the top universities and the most important industrial players from the entire world. The conference features research talks, tutorials, demonstrations, and workshops, and covers current issues in data management, and database and information systems research. Data management and databases are among the main technological cornerstones of emerging applications of the twenty-first century.

This edition of VLDB took place in Riva del Garda (Italy) from 26-30 August 2013, and was organized by Prof. Themis Palpanas and Prof. Yannis Velegarakis, co-directors of the Data and Information Management group at the University of Trento. The conference attracted 730 participants from 40 countries - the highest number of participants in the last 27 years (and the second highest in the history of VLDB). The participants represented all the top international universities, as well as all the major international companies and industrial research labs, including

Google, Oracle, Facebook, IBM, Microsoft, SAP, Twitter, Yahoo!, NEC, Hewlett-Packard, Greenplum, HTC, and EMC2.

A central theme of this year's conference was Big Data and its related issues. The technical program included three keynote talks: the first by Jay Parikh, the Vice-President of Infrastructure Engineering at Facebook, on how to build data infrastructures for web-scale problems; the second by Sam Madden, professor at MIT and leader of the MIT big data group, on a collaborative data analytics platform for large-scale data; and the third by Cynthia Dwork from Microsoft Research, on the problem of performing large-scale data analytics whilst preserving privacy. It also included two panel discussions on the information hidden in big data, and on experiences from startup companies, as well as four demos, six tutorials, four industrial and 16 research sessions. The videos of the keynotes and panels are available on the VLDB 2013 web site, alongside all the papers presented at the conference. The papers are published by the VLDB endowment and will also be available on the VLDB web site and in the ACM Digital Library.

ERCIM's support of the conference played a significant role in its success, helping to attract high-profile speakers offering talks on state-of-the-art topics. Furthermore, the numerous ERCIM leaflets, articles and magazines that were supplied and distributed during the conference acted as excellent advertisements for European research.

More information:

<http://www.vldb.org/2013/>
<http://www.vldb.org/>