
BUSINESS MEETING REPORT

ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting 2012: Secretary's Notes

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1 Opening Matters

The 2012 ACM SIGIR Annual Business Meeting took place on Wednesday August 15th 2012, at the SIGIR 2012 conference in Portland, Oregon, USA. The meeting opened shortly after noon and was led by James Allan.

The Executive Committee was introduced as: James Allan (Chair), Ian Ruthven (Vice-Chair), Andrew Trotman (Secretary), Ian Soboroff (Treasurer), and Elizabeth Liddy (Past-Chair). The role of the Executive Committee was outlined as were the member services including: SIGIR Forum, reduced conference registration fees for sponsored and in-cooperation conferences, access to the ACM Digital Library, and the SIGIR-IRList electronic newsletter. Non-members who attend the annual SIGIR conference normally become members at registration.

Thanks were then given to the many volunteers over the previous 12 months including: Djoerd Hiemstra (Information Director), Raman Chandrasekar, Diane Kelly (SIGIR Forum editors), Mark Smucker (SIGIR-IRList editor), Shlomo Geva (Awards Chair), and the conference liaisons: Charles Clarke (CIKM), Ricardo Baeza-Yates (WSDM), and Edie Rasmussen (JCDL).

2 Treasurer's Report

Ian Soboroff began by stating that the SIG is in a very strong financial position. Membership was up as a consequence of the 2011 conference – there are approximately 750 professional members. Membership dues have again not increased and remain at the 2005 level. Income from this is now a small proportion of the SIG income, about US\$35,000.

Finances were then reviewed starting with a graph showing 1997-2011. The annual net profit has continued to rise since 2009 leading to an increasing balance of (about) US\$1.2 Million. A net surplus of US\$64,000 is projected for 2012, including about US\$107,000 from the ACM digital library. Expenses included US\$93,000 to ACM for conference support services.

For another year the largest SIG expense has been student travel. In 2011 this was US\$78,000 and in 2012 it has risen to a planned US\$101,000. Methods of spending the surplus were suggested including spending more on travel, seeding grants, day-care at the SIGIR conference, and absorbing some conference costs.

A comment from the floor suggested increasing travel funds to other sponsored events. The chair outlined the complication of being a co-sponsor of an event and then being the sole provider of travel funds. This would result in SIGIR providing more than its share of financial support for the same

proportion of profits. This is equivalent to SIGIR handing funds directly to the other sponsors.

3 Business Items

Several volunteers stepped down and have been replaced. The SIG is grateful to Diane Kelly for her years of service to SIGIR Forum, she has been replaced by Fernando Diaz. The SIG is grateful to Mark Smucker for his years of service to the SIGIR-IRList, no replacement was announced. The SIG is grateful to Shlomo Geva for taking on the position of Awards Chair.

The current Executive Committee has just started the third year of its 3 year term, and is not permitted to be re-elected. Nominations are sought for the new committee. Regulations require that a nominations committee be appointed by September and this is underway¹. Nominations for the Executive Committee must be submitted to the ACM (by SIGIR) by December 3rd 2012². Elections are in the February-June timeframe and the new committee replaced the current committee at SIGIR 2013.

The new “friends of SIGIR” program was outlined. In this program small and regional events can apply to SIGIR for student travel support. In the 2012 year this is likely to be capped at \$5,000 per event. Interested events should submit information about their event, its relationship to SIGIR, the amount requested, and the criteria for distributing the funds to the Treasurer who administers the program.

Progress on the SIGIR Digital Museum was outlined. The museum now contains about 30 volumes amounting to 500 PDFs, or 7,500 pages.

SIGIR was a partial sponsor of the ACM Turing Centenary³ event held in San Francisco on June 15th – 16th 2012. It was represented by Keith van Rijsbergen who helped organize a panel on Turing (rather than his work). Several new ACM Fellows were announced at the event including long-time SIGIR supporter Amit Singhal. SIGIR congratulated him on this achievement.

4 Conferences

The meeting continued with presentations on ACM sponsored and in-cooperation events including SIGIR, CIKM, JCDL, WSDM, and ADCS.

4.1 SIGIR 2011 Report

The final numbers for SIGIR 2011 were: 543 full paper submissions (108 accepted, 19.9%); 274 short paper submissions (89 accepted, 32.5%), 8 workshops, 15 demonstrations, 11 tutorials (of which 3 were later cancelled).

There were 629 participants at the main conference (split about evenly between SIGIR members, non-members, and students); 226 tutorial attendees; and 193 workshop attendees. The Microsoft Research Asia visit was attended by 358 and the industrial tour was attended by 228.

The conference income was US\$508,000, and expenditure was US\$383,400. The ACM took an overhead of US\$61,600 which left a surplus of US\$63,000 returned to SIGIR. An income breakdown was given: US\$346,300 from registrations, US\$33,700 from tutorials, US\$29,700 from workshops, US\$2,700 from exhibitors and an additional US\$5,700 from miscellaneous sources. Sponsorship accounted for about US\$90,000.

¹ At the time of the SIGIR 2012 business meeting nominations for the nominations committee had nominally been nominated. At the time of writing this committee should be actively seeking a committee.

² Callan (CMU) consequently commencing committee chairing.

³ <http://turing100.acm.org>

The organizing committee was thanked, including: Ricardo Baeza-Yates, Tat-Seng Chua, Bruce Croft (Program Committee Chairs); Kevyn Collins-Thompson, Gary Geunbae Lee, Massimo Melucci (Poster and Demo Chairs); Yi Zhang (Tutorial Chair); Noriko Kando, Luo Si (Workshop Chairs); Paul Thomas, Maarten De Rijke (Doctoral Consortium Chairs); Susan Dumais (Best Paper Award Chair); David Carmel, Haifeng Wang (Industrial Track Chairs); Gareth Jones (Mentoring Chair); Xiaoming Li (Local Organization Chair); and Jimmy Huang (Sponsorship Chair)

The sponsors were again thanked including: Microsoft, Baidu, EMC², Google, Yahoo!, Ebay Research Labs, HP Labs, IBM Research, Yandex, CPIS, Université de Montréal; as were the exhibitors: Morgan & Claypool Publishers, Springer, and Now.

A statistical analysis on the weather suggested that it was significantly warmer than the average low, but not significantly warmer than the average high⁴.

4.2 SIGIR 2012 Interim Report

William (Bill) Hersh presented a preliminary report on the in-progress SIGIR 2012, held at the Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront (Portland, Oregon, USA).

As of 14th August there were: 204 SIGIR member registrations; 130 non-member registrations; 163 student registrations; and 46 complementary registrations (total 498⁵ of which 452 were paid). There had been 5 industry-track-only registrations; 239 tutorial registrations; and 156 workshop registrations.

Numbers from SIGIRs 2009-2012 were presented which suggest that tutorial registrations were in line with previous years⁶, but all other registrations were down. A national break-down saw the majority coming from USA, New Zealand has grown to 3⁷.

The conference organizers were thanked including: Jamie Callan, Yoelle Maarek, Mark Sanderson (Program Committee Chairs); Falk Scholer, Mark Smucker, Andrew Turpin (Poster and Demo Chairs); Doug Oard (Mentoring Chair); Javed Mostafa (Treasurer); Henning Muller (Tutorial Chair); Eugene Agichtein, Vanessa Murdock (Workshops Chair); Udo Kruschwitz, Su-Lin Wu (Industry Track Chairs); Marteen de Rijke, Mounia Lalmas (Doctoral Consortium Chairs); ChengXiang Zhai (Best Paper Chair); Elmer Bernstam (Publications Chair); Justin Fletcher (Local Arrangements Chair); Jayashree Kalpathy-Cramer (Publicity Chair); Aaron Cohen (Sponsorships Chair); Chris Weldon (Webmaster); and Kim Lepin (Local Logistics Chair).

In total 483 full papers were submitted from which 98 (20%) were accepted. Most papers came from USA (36), China (14), the UK (7), Spain (7) and the Netherlands (6). 208 posters were submitted from which 76 (36.5%) were accepted. 17 demos were accepted as were 4 workshops and 16 tutorials

⁴ The temperature was higher than the average high every day of the conference except 27th July. The Secretary, who lives in the southern hemisphere, enjoys the annual mid-winter break from the cold and damp and welcomes more SIGIRs in warm locations. The secretary also notes that in 2014 SIGIR will be held in the southern hemisphere (and therefore winter) but sufficiently north that it will again be a warm break in the middle of winter – and will even be so for those who live in the north of Europe.

⁵ This was updated at the closing ceremony to “over 500”

⁶ Numbers for previous years are painstakingly reported in the minutes of each business meeting (including this very minute)

⁷ Three, this is, not 2,187. In 2011 it was 2, and in 2010 it was 1. The secretary notes that the growth rate is therefore $1/(n-2009)$ where n is the current year (using the Gregorian calendar). The sum to infinity of this is 2, but it is not clear what this might mean.

(of which 7 were later canceled). Finally a topical breakdown of the papers was given – the “hot topics” for 2012 were “Queries and Query Analysis” along with “Retrieval Models and Ranking”⁸.

The sponsors were again thanked, including: Microsoft Research, Google, Baidu, Yahoo! Labs, Ebay Research Labs, IBM Research, Ask, Oracle, Yandex, Morgan & Claypool Publishers, Springer, Cambridge University Press, University of Oregon, Now, and the Oregon Health & Science University.

4.3 SIGIR 2013⁹

Páraic Sheridan & Garth Jones presented SIGIR 2013 to be held between 28th July and 1st August at the 400-year old Trinity College Dublin, Ireland with plenary sessions at The Mansion House, the welcome reception at the Guinness Brewery and the banquet at Croke Park Stadium.

The organizing committee was outlined as: Gareth Jones, Páraic Sheridan (General Chairs); and Maarten de Rijke, Diane Kelly, Tetsuya Sakai (Program Committee Chairs).

Abstracts are due 21st January with full papers due 28th January. Workshop proposals are due 4th February. Posters and demos are due 18th February. Workshop notifications will occur on 11th March, the same day the Doctoral Consortium papers are due. All other acceptances will occur on 15th April.

4.4 SIGIR 2014

The 37th Annual ACM SIGIR Conference will be held between 6th July and 11th July 2014 at Australia’s Gold Coast. Shlomo Geva presented details on the location including climate, environs, accommodation, and attractions. He also presented details on access including flight times from 7 previous SIGIR conferences.

Andrew Trotman outlined the organizers including: Shlomo Geva, Andrew Trotman (General Chairs); Alistair Moffat (Treasurer); Jimmy Huang (Sponsorship Chair); Peter Bruza, Charlie Clarke, Kal Järvelin (Program Committee Chairs); Vanessa Murdock, Gabriella Pasi, Andrew Turpin (Poster Chairs); Paul Thomas (Demos Chair); Falk Scholer (Tutorials Chair); Jaap Kamps, Gabriella Kazai (Workshops Chairs); David Hawking, Isabelle Moulinier (Industry Track Chairs); Laurianne Sitbon (Local Arrangements); Laurianne Sitbon (Publications Chair); and Richi Nayak, Jinglan Zhang (Publicity & Webmasters)¹⁰.

4.5 SIGIR 2015

Ricardo Baeza-Yates outlined Santiago de Chile, the successful bid for SIGIR 2015¹¹. It will be organized by Yahoo! Labs Santiago; University of Santiago, Chile; University of Chile; University Federico Santa Maria; Catholic University of Chile. Indicative travel times (and costs) from several important international locations were given¹². Indicative accommodation prices were given, ranging from US\$10 to US\$350. The banquet will be at: Castillo Hidalgo. The venue was then presented as Conference center of Catholic University of Chile¹³. Tourist attractions were outlined as: Valparaiso, Atacama Desert, Easter Island, and Patagonia.

⁸ The Secretary notes that together these could be described as “queries, query analysis, retrieval, and ranking” which is reasonable, short, and succinct definition of Information Retrieval!

⁹ As a scientist one should be sceptical of predictions of the future. However, in the experience of the Secretary, there does appear to be a track record of SIGIR hitting its deadlines.

¹⁰ Subsequently Mounia Lalmas has been added as the Awards Chair.

¹¹ Much to the secretary’s disappointment, there appeared to be opposition to a SIGIR-Antarctica, perhaps due to a lack of a suitable venue.

¹² Including 11:30 hours non-stop from Auckland at a cost of US\$2,192.

¹³ Baeza-Yates clearly has the priorities correct: how to get there, where to stay, the banquet, the conference, then tourism

4.6 SIGIR 2016 Informal Call for Bids

James Allan called for bids for SIGIR 2016 (to be located in the Europe-Africa region); formal bids are due 15th September 2012. Fabrizio Silvestri discussed the possibility of a bid from Italy. There was an informal suggestion of Spain and that Ricardo Baeza-Yates could be the chair – this was met with laughter from him.

4.7 Sponsored and In-Cooperation Conferences

James Allan presented details on the SIGIR sponsored and in-cooperation conferences.

JCDL 2012 was held at the George Washington University in Washington DC. 285 attended and the conference produced a surplus of US\$25,000. JCDL 2013 will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA in July 2013. JCDL 2014 is examining the possibility of combining with Theory and Practice of Digital Libraries (TPDL).

CIKM was then outlined to the audience (the annual SIGIR & SIGWEB sponsored conference specializing in: information retrieval, database systems, knowledge management).

CIKM 2011 (Glasgow) saw 918 paper submissions and 134 accepted (15%), and another 93 as short papers, and another 98 as posters (a total acceptance rate of 35%). There were 220 poster submissions of which 66 were accepted. There were 10 tutorials, 15 workshops, a panel on Social and Collaborative Search, and an industry day. The event was attended by 700. EMC², Google, and CrossRefNews were thanked for providing travel funds.

CIKM 2012 (Maui, 29th October – 2nd November), is being chaired by Xue-wen Chen with program chairs: Guy Lebanon (IR), Mohammed Zaki (KM), Haixun Wang (DB). There were 1088 full paper submissions of which 146 (13%) were accepted and 157 (14%) were accepted as short papers. There were 229 poster submissions of which 71 were accepted. Of these 56 were Information Retrieval papers and 64 were Information Retrieval short papers. Sponsors Microsoft, Ebay Research Labs, Yahoo! Labs, IBM Research, Yandex, and Adobe were thanked.

CIKM 2013 will be held in San Francisco, California, USA, and chaired by Arun Iyengar and Qi He. The organizing committee was outlined as Jian Pei, Wolfgang Nejdl, Rajeev Rastogi (Program Committee Chairs), Jiawei Han (Awards Chair), and Brian Johnson (Industry Day Chair). The event will be sponsored by IBM Research, Ebay Research Labs, Facebook, Amazon.com, and ACM SIGIR and ACM SIGWEB.

CIKM 2014 (and beyond) proposals-to-host should be submitted to David Grossman.

WSDM 2012 saw 334 attendees (an increase of 43% on the 234 seen in 2011 (222 seen in 2010)); the split was 43% academic, 57% industry. 75 papers were accepted (20.7%); 30 were presented as full papers (20 minute talks) and 45 were accepted as “spotlights” (4 minute talks).

WSDM 2013 will be held in Rome, Italy, February 4th – 8th. The organizing committee was outlined as: Stefano Leonardi, Alessandro Panconesi (General Chairs); Paolo Ferragina, Aristides Gionis (Program Committee Chairs); Sebastiano Vigna (Workshop Chair); Paolo Boldi (Tutorial Chair, and Data Challenge Chair); Ricardo Baeza-Yates, Fabrizio Silvestri (Doctoral Consortium Chairs); and Aris Anagnostopoulos, Luca Becchetti, Flavio Chierichetti (Local Organization Chairs). Sigh-seeing possibilities were outlined.

In-cooperation events did include and will include: RecSys 2011, AIRS 2011, ECIR 2012, UMAP 2012, IiX 2012, ECIR 2013.

ADCS (the Australian Document Computing Symposium) is expected to become an in-cooperation

event in 2013. Due to an inexplicable ACM regulation, events that have been accepted into the ACM Digital Library are not permitted to apply for in-cooperation status even if supported by a SIG. The ADCS organizers were careful to ensure their papers would appear in the digital library before seeking sponsorship and support (the natural course of action). Unfortunately this excluded SIGIR from directly supporting the event – despite support from the SIGIR Executive Committee. ADCS 2012 is expected to be the first SIGIR-friendly event, and ADCS 2013 is expected to be a full in-cooperation event.

ADCS 2012 will be held December 5th– 6th at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. It is being supported by Google, NICTA, the University of Otago, and most probably SIGIR¹⁴. Papers will appear in the ACM digital library.

5 Discussion

James Allan chaired a discussion on a broad collection issues. Discussion from the floor is summarized below¹⁵.

Several suggestions on how to spend the SIGIR surplus were raised. Once again it was suggested that a “test of time” award be created. The awards chair (Shlomo Geva) will look into this further. The possibility of creating travel grants for those coming from developing countries was suggested¹⁶. There was no direct opposition, however the utilization of such a fund was questioned. An alternative suggestion was to run the SIGIR conference in such a location and to attract local students (Cairo and Cape Town were suggested). Again the possibility of day care at the SIGIR conference was raised.

Open access journal publishing was again raised. SIGIR Forum is already open access, but does not publish primary research. ACM TOIS is not open access and not run by the SIG.

The ongoing issues with the SIGIR conference banquet were also discussed. In short, it is expensive, noisy, does not increase cross fertilization of ideas, and is no longer a highlight of SIGIR. Several suggestions were made including making it optional (the consequence of which would be student (and some academic) exclusion by their institute). Baeza-Yates suggest it be turned into a dance¹⁷. SIGIR 2014 is considering replacing the banquet with a second poster session – a show of hands lent strong support to doing so.

Again the suggestion of ensuring that the SIGIR sponsored and in-cooperation events were spread around the globe rather than clumped was raised. The problem is that each conference has an organizing committee who chooses where the next conference will be held without consultation with the other conferences – and so it is possible for, for example, CIKM and SIGIR to be geographically near each other some years while also being far from some Information Retrieval hubs (such as Europe). SIGIR does not, currently, believe it is in a position to impose geographic requirements on these conferences.

6 Conclusion

James Allan concluded the meeting with thanks at 1:56pm.

¹⁴ Subsequently, Bing and Funnelback have joined as sponsors.

¹⁵ In an effort to avoid unnecessary formality, and to increase readability, the topics of discussion are not duly attributed. Please accept this as a necessary compromise.

¹⁶ The Donald B. Crouch Travel Grant (due to a donation made by the Singhal Family Charitable Fund) provides travel support for students.

¹⁷ The Secretary presumes this was humour
