
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR BALANCED MANUFACTURING SYSTEMS

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IFIP was founded in 1960 under the auspices of UNESCO, following the First World Computer Congress held in Paris the previous year. An umbrella organization for societies working in information processing, IFIP's aim is two-fold: to support information processing within its member countries and to encourage technology transfer to developing nations. As its mission statement clearly states,

IFIP's mission is to be the leading, truly international, apolitical organization which encourages and assists in the development, exploitation and application of information technology for the benefit of all people.

IFIP is a non-profitmaking organization, run almost solely by 2500 volunteers. It operates through a number of technical committees, which organize events and publications. IFIP's events range from an international congress to local seminars, but the most important are:

- The IFIP World Computer Congress, held every second year;
- Open conferences;
- Working conferences.

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As with the Congress, participation in the open conferences is open to all and papers may be invited or submitted. Again, submitted papers are stringently refereed.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR BALANCED MANUFACTURING SYSTEMS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPONSORS.....	ix
COMMITTEES.....	xi
PREFACE.....	xiii

KEYNOTE PAPERS 1

1	AGENT BASED MANUFACTURING <i>L. Monostori, J. Váncza, Soundar Kumara</i>	3
2	TOOL CONDITION MONITORING IN MACHINING – NEURAL NETWORKS <i>Mo A. Elbestawi, Mihaela Dumitrescu</i>	5
3	AGENT-BASED SUPPLY CHAIN PLANNING IN THE FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY <i>Sophie D'Amours, Jean-Marc Frayret, Alain Rousseau, Steve Harvey, Pascale Plamondon, Pascal Forget</i>	17

PART A: MULTI-AGENT AND HOLONIC SYSTEMS IN MANUFACTURING 27

4	AN AGENT-OS FOR AUTONOMOUS COOPERATIVE SYSTEMS <i>Francisco Maturana, Raymond Staron, Pavel Tichý, Pavel Vrba, Charles Rischar, Vladimír Mařík, Kenwood Hall</i>	29
5	A HOLONIC APPROACH TO DYNAMIC MANUFACTURING SCHEDULING <i>Paulo Leitão, Francisco Restivo</i>	37
6	TOWARD COLLABORATIVE SCHEDULING <i>Ana Almeida, Goreti Marreiros</i>	47
7	A FRAMEWORK OF AGENT-BASED SUPPLY CHAIN PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS SYSTEM <i>Guannan Qu, Zhiyi Fang, Chao Zhang</i>	57
8	AN AGENT-BASED SIMULATION OF A JIT MATERIAL HANDLING SYSTEM <i>Qi Hao, Weiming Shen</i>	67
9	UNCERTAIN TEMPORAL SUPPORT IN MULTIAGENT MEDICAL SERVICE <i>Kamil Matoušek, Zdeněk Kouba</i>	79
10	COLLABORATIVE EVENT MANAGEMENT IN SUPPLY CHAINS: AN AGENT-BASED APPROACH <i>Pascal Forget, Sophie D'Amours, Jean-Marc Frayret</i>	89
11	DESIGN PATTERNS FOR DISTRIBUTED CONTROL SYSTEM BENCHMARKING <i>Karthik Soundararajan, Robert W. Brennan</i>	99

12	INDUSTRIAL APPLICATION INTEGRATION USING AGENT-ENABLED SEMANTIC SOA: CAPNET CASE STUDY <i>Leonid Sheremetov, Miguel Contreras</i>	109
13	A MULTIAGENT BASED CONTROL SYSTEM APPLIED TO AN EDUCATIONAL SHOP FLOOR <i>José Barata, Gonçalo Cândido, Filipe Feijão</i>	119
PART B: NETWORKED ENTERPRISES.....		129
14	DISTRIBUTED WORK ENVIRONMENTS FOR COLLABORATIVE ENGINEERING <i>H.-H. Erbe, D. Müller</i>	131
15	MARKET OF RESOURCES AS AN ENABLER OF (INTER-) ORGANIZATIONAL RECONFIGURATION DYNAMICS <i>Maria Manuela Cunha, Goran D. Putnik</i>	141
16	BUSINESS NETWORKS IN SMALL TEXTILE ENTERPRISES: THE CASE OF NOVA FRIBURGO-BRASIL <i>Américo Azevedo, Luísa Faria</i> ,	149
17	BUSINESS PROCESS BASED INTEGRATION OF DYNAMIC COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZATIONS <i>Guillermo Jimenez, Manuel Ocampo, Nathalie Galeano, Arturo Molina</i>	157
18	MANAGING COMPLEXITY IN INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATIONS WITHIN TOOL & DIE INDUSTRY <i>Günther Schuh, Alexander Sauer, Sebastian Döring</i>	167
19	A MULTIAGENT-BASED COMPLEX SYSTEMS APPROACH FOR EFFICIENT PARTNERING IN VIRTUAL ENTERPRISE <i>Toshiya Kaihara</i>	175
20	DESIGN FOR PRODUCT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT <i>Wenlei Zhang, Yushun Fan</i>	183
21	TOWARDS A REFERENCE MODEL FOR COLLABORATIVE NETWORKED ORGANIZATIONS <i>Luis M. Camarinha-Matos, Hamideh Afsarmanesh</i>	193
22	AGENT-BASED INTELLIGENT MEDIA DISTRIBUTION IN ADVERTISEMENT <i>Raafat Aburukba, Hamada Ghenniwa, Weiming Shen</i>	203
23	A SERVICE COMPOSABILITY MODEL TO SUPPORT DYNAMIC COOPERATION OF CROSS-ENTERPRISE SERVICES <i>Jing-fan Tang</i>	213
24	ON FORMAL THEORIES AND FORMALISMS FOR VIRTUAL ENTERPRISES <i>Goran Putnik, Rui Sousa</i>	223
25	TOWARDS A DISTRIBUTED PROCESS EXECUTION PLATFORM FOR COLLABORATIVE NETWORKS <i>A. Luis Osório, Luis M. Camarinha-Matos</i>	233

PART C: INTEGRATED DESIGN AND ASSEMBLY 241

- 26 AN INNOVATIVE MAINTENANCE SOLUTION FOR COMPLEX
MACHINERY: THE KOBAS PROJECT CASE
Américo Azevedo, Paula Silva, César Toscano, Joao Cardoso..... 243
- 27 REAL-TIME COLLABORATIVE DESIGN SYSTEM FOR PRODUCT
ASSEMBLY OVER THE INTERNET
Xiangxu Meng, Weiwei Liu, Yanning Xu 253
- 28 AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO A MULTI-ATTRIBUTE DECISION
PROBLEM THROUGH A CASE STUDY
Ashish Ganguli, Yong Zeng, Akif A. Bulgak 261
- 29 MAKING MANUFACTURING CHANGES LESS DISRUPTIVE:
AGENT-DRIVEN INTEGRATION
Joseph Neelamkavil, Weiming Shen, Qi Hao, Helen Xie 271
- 30 A VISION-BASED APPROACH OF BARE-HAND INTERFACE
DESIGN IN VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY
Xiaobu Yuan, Jiangnan Lu 281
- 31 ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE: A VIEW FROM INDUSTRIAL
SOCIOLOGY
Paula Urze, Tiago Machado..... 291
- 32 AN OBJECT BASED VIRTUAL REALITY SIMULATION TOOL FOR
DESIGN VALIDATION OF A NEW PARADIGM CLOTH
MANUFACTURING FACILITY
Fabio Bonsignorio, Rezia Molfino..... 301
- 33 ON THE RE-CONFIGURABILITY DESIGN OF PARALLEL MACHINE
TOOLS
Dan Zhang 309
- 34 EVOLVABLE ASSEMBLY SYSTEMS BASIC PRINCIPLES
Mauro Onori, José Barata, Regina Frei 317
- 35 A CELLULAR NEURAL NETWORK FOR DEFORMABLE OBJECT
MODELLING
Y. Zhong, B. Shirinzadeh, X. Yuan, G. Alici, J. Smith..... 329

PART D: MONITORING AND CONTROL..... 337

- 36 A LOAD BALANCING METHOD FOR DEDICATED
PHOTOLITHOGRAPHY MACHINE CONSTRAINT
Arthur Shr, Alan Liu, Peter P. Chen..... 339
- 37 ITERATIVE HEURISTICS FOR PERMUTATION FLOW SHOPS WITH
TOTAL FLOWTIME MINIMIZATION
Xiaoping Li, Qian Wang 349
- 38 PARAMETER ESTIMATION FOR TIME-VARYING SYSTEM BASED
ON COMBINATORIAL PSO
Weixing Lin, Peter X. Liu 357
- 39 REMOTE MONITORING AND CONTROL OF MANUFACTURING
SYSTEM
E. Villani, R.A. Castro, F.M. Marques, P.E. Miyagi 369

40	ARCHITECTURE OF A WEB-BASED POWER SCADA SYSTEM USING J2EE TECHNOLOGY <i>Qizhi Chen, Hamada Ghenniwa, Weiming Shen</i>	377
41	A WEB-BASED CSCW SYSTEM FOR REMOTE SUBSTATION FAULT DIAGNOSIS <i>Hongsheng Su, Jianwu Dang, Feng Zhao</i>	385
42	A SERVICE-ORIENTED FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATION OF SHOP FLOOR SCHEDULING AND CONTROL <i>Kewei Li, Chun Wang, Hamada Ghenniwa, Weiming Shen</i>	395
43	COMPUTATIONAL REPRESENTATION, HETEROGENEITY AND INTEGRATION OF PRODUCTION SYSTEM MODELS <i>Wilson M. Arata and Paulo E. Miyagi</i>	405
44	TIMED-EVENT-STATE-BASED DIAGNOSER FOR MANUFACTURING SYSTEMS <i>M. Sayed-Mouchaweh, A. Philippot, V. Carré-Ménétrier, B. Riera</i>	415
45	NFC TECHNOLOGIES IN MOBILE PHONES AND EMERGING APPLICATIONS <i>Diogo Remédios, Luís Sousa, Manuel Barata and Luís Osório</i>	425
46	INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE- AND SIMULATION-BASED FACILITY SUPERVISION AND CONTROL <i>Gerhard Schreck, Alexei Lisounkin, Jörg Krüger</i>	435
47	ON STABILITY ANALYSIS OF BEARING-ROTOR SYSTEM <i>Meng-su Li, Xu-chu Cai, Dan Zhang</i>	443
48	BATCH ROUNDNESS CHARACTERIZATION AND EVALUATION <i>Qimi Jiang, Hsi-Yung Feng</i>	453
49	A POINT CLOUD SIMPLIFICATION ALGORITHM FOR MECHANICAL PART INSPECTION <i>Hao Song, Hsi-Yung Feng</i>	461
50	DEGENERATION METHODS IN INTELLIGENT BUILDING CONTROL SYSTEM DESIGN <i>Julio Arakaki, Paulo Eigi Miyagi</i>	469
51	A NEW METHOD FOR THE HIERARCHICAL MODELING OF PRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS <i>Fabricio Junqueira, Paulo E. Miyagi</i>	479
52	MODELING AND ON-LINE MONITORING OF MACHINED SURFACE IN TURNING OPERATIONS <i>Avisekh Banerjee, Evgueni V. Bordatchev, Sounak Kumar Choudhury</i>	489
	AUTHOR INDEX	499

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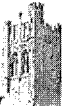


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PREFACE

The manufacturing sector has been facing major challenges as it undergoes revolutionary changes fuelled by new and sophisticated demands from customers, global competition, distribution of manufacturing and marketing activities, and technological advances. In order to address these challenges, manufacturing enterprises need to change the way they do business and adopt innovative technologies and solutions to increase their responsiveness and production efficiency. Information technology plays an essential role in this process.

Current manufacturing systems are collections of complex systems or subsystems operating in distributed collaborative environments involving software, hardware, humans, and organizations. It is crucial to keep a balance between the technical aspects of automation and the human and social facets when applying information technology in industrial applications, particularly with the rapid advancements in information and communication technologies and the wide deployment of automated manufacturing systems. However, in order to create appropriate frameworks for exploring the best synergies between humans and automated systems, there are still numerous issues in terms of processes characterization, modeling, and development of adequate support tools. BASYS conferences have been developed and organized to promote the development of balanced automation systems in an attempt to address these issues.

The first BASYS conference was successfully launched in Victoria, Brazil (1995), and then the following conferences were held in Lisbon, Portugal (1996), Prague, Czech Republic (1998), Berlin, Germany (2000), Cancun, Mexico (2002), and Vienna, Austria (2004).

BASYS'06 is the 7th edition in its series. It keeps the same objective and style of previous BASYS conferences. While keeping the three tracks the same as BASYS'04, BASYS'06 changes the fourth track (Track D) from "Machine Learning and Data Mining in Industry" to "Monitoring and Control", which currently has 17 accepted papers among the total of 49 regular papers. From another point of view, BASYS'06 has a smooth shift of the focus on the integration and balanced automation from the high levels (enterprise and virtual enterprise levels) to the low levels (shop floor and machine levels).

This book contains three invited keynote papers and forty-nine regular papers accepted for presentation at the conference.

Three keynote papers are presented by internationally recognized experts in the related fields:

- Prof. Soundar Kumara provides an overview of Agent-Based Manufacturing. An extended abstract is included in this book with a reference to a full survey paper co-authored by Monostori, Váncza, Kumara for CIRP - College

International pour la Recherche en Productique (The International Academy for Production Engineering).

- Prof. Mo A. Elbestawi presents a comprehensive review of tool monitoring systems, techniques, their components, and particularly the Multiple Principle Component fuzzy neural network for tool condition monitoring.
- Prof. Sophie D'Amours proposes an architecture integrating agent technology and operational research with the objective to enable the development of advanced planning systems for the forest products industry.

Forty-nine regular papers are organized in four main tracks:

- *Track A: Multi-Agent and Holonic Systems in Manufacturing*
- *Track B: Networked Enterprises*
- *Track C: Integrated Design and Assembly*
- *Track D: Monitoring and Control*

All together, the papers will make significant contributions to the literature of Intelligent Technology for Balanced Manufacturing Systems. However, it seems that significant efforts are still required to develop practical IT solutions for balanced manufacturing systems where humans and intelligent machines are in perfect harmony.

Special thanks to all the authors for their contributions to the book and to the BASYS'06 Program Committee members (particularly Program Committee Co-Chairs and Track Chairs) for their efforts in promoting the conference and reviewing / selecting submitted papers.

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