Lecture Notes in Computer Science 4877

Commenced Publication in 1973
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Digital Libraries: Research and Development

First International DELOS Conference
Pisa, Italy, February 13-14, 2007
Revised Selected Papers

Springer

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2007940368

CR Subject Classification (1998): H.2, H.4, H.3, H.2.4, H.5

LNCS Sublibrary: SL 3 – Information Systems and Application, incl. Internet/Web and HCI

ISSN 0302-9743
ISBN-10 3-540-77087-9 Springer Berlin Heidelberg New York
ISBN-13 978-3-540-77087-9 Springer Berlin Heidelberg New York

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© Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg 2007
Printed in Germany

Typesetting: Camera-ready by author, data conversion by Scientific Publishing Services, Chennai, India
Printed on acid-free paper SPIN: 12199099 06/3180 5 4 3 2 1 0

Preface

Digital libraries represent the meeting point of a large number of technical areas within the field of informatics, i.e., information retrieval, document management, information systems, the Web, image processing, artificial intelligence, human – computer interaction, mass-storage systems, and others. Moreover, digital libraries draw upon other disciplines beyond informatics, such as library sciences, museum sciences, archives, sociology, psychology, etc. However, they constitute a relatively young scientific field, whose life spans roughly the last 15 years. During these years the DELOS Network of Excellence on Digital Libraries (`http://www.delos.info`) has represented a constant presence aiming to contribute to the consolidation of the field.

The activities of DELOS started many years ago, with the "DELOS Working Group" at the end of the 1990s, and the DELOS Thematic Network, under the Fifth Framework Program, from 2001 to 2003. Since the beginning, the main objective of DELOS has been to advance the state of the art in the field of digital libraries by coordinating the efforts of the major European research teams conducting activities in the major fields of interest.

Every year DELOS organizes the All-Tasks meeting, the annual appointment of the DELOS community where the scientific results achieved during the previous year are presented. Instead of the usual status reports from the various DELOS Tasks, in 2006 it was decided to issue a Call for Papers, soliciting papers reporting the scientific achievements of the DELOS members during 2006, and to organize a conference. The first DELOS conference was held during February 13–14, 2007, at the Grand Hotel Continental in Tirrenia, Pisa, Italy.

The conference represented a good coverage of the 27 research tasks in DELOS, with 38 papers being presented. In addition, two invited papers: "Semantic Digital Libraries" (John Mylopoulos, University of Toronto) and "Digital Libraries: From Proposals to Projects to Systems to Theory to Curricula" (Edward Fox, Virginia Tech) completed the program. The conference was open to the larger digital library community and not just to the DELOS partners. About 120 people attended , half of whom were not from DELOS partners. We believe that this is an indication of the increased interest in digital libraries, and the recognition that the DELOS research activities have played and are playing an important role in the European digital library scene.

This volume includes extended and revised versions of the papers presented at the DELOS Conference. We believe that it should be of interest to a broad audience potentially interested in the digital library research area. It has been structured into 10 sections, corresponding to the different sessions in which the

conference was structured, which in turn correspond to the major areas of research where DELOS has focussed its attention recently.

October 2007

Costantino Thanos
Francesca Borri
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