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Advances in Information Retrieval Theory

Third International Conference, ICTIR 2011
Bertinoro, Italy, September 12-14, 2011
Proceedings

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Preface

These proceedings contain the refereed papers and posters presented at the Third International Conference on the Theory of Information Retrieval (ICTIR 2011), held in Bertinoro, Italy, during September 12–14, 2011.

This biennial international conference provides an opportunity for the presentation of the latest work describing theoretical advances in the field of information retrieval (IR). The first ICTIR was held in Budapest in October 2007, organized by Keith van Rijsbergen, Sándor Dominich, Sándor Darányi, and Ferenc Kiss. The second ICTIR was held in Cambridge, UK, in September 2009. It was organized by Leif Azzopardi, Gabriella Kazai, Stephen Robertson, Stefan Rüger, Milad Shokouhi, Dawei Song, and Emine Yilmaz.

ICTIR was brought about by the growing interest in the consecutive workshops run at ACM SIGIR each year from 2000 until 2005 on mathematical and formal methods in IR. This initiative was in large part down to the determination of Sándor Dominich and his passion for all things formal and mathematical. The foundation and the success of ICTIR is a direct result of his commitment and dedication to fostering research and development into the theoretical underpinnings of IR. Sadly, his untimely passing away in 2008 means that he is unable to witness how the theory of IR unfolds in the future. Nonetheless, his belief in the importance of theory and his spirit in advocating the development of formal methods in IR lives on through this conference series. We are glad to continue this initiative and bring ICTIR to Italy, a country with a long series of contributions to the theoretical advances of IR.

The papers accepted for publication and presentation at ICTIR 2011 were selected from a total of 65 submissions. Each submission was subject to a double-blind reviewing process by at least three Program Committee members and was ranked according to its scientific quality, originality, and contribution to the theory of IR. The Committee decided to accept 38 papers, of these 25 (38%) were accepted as full papers and 13 (20%) as short papers. Most of the submitted papers (66%) were about foundations of IR, the remaining submissions were about techniques or topics that refer to wider contexts. The Technical Program thus ranged from topics related to query expansion, co-occurrence analysis, user and interactive modelling, system performance prediction and comparison, probabilistic approaches for ranking and modelling IR to, ultimately, topics related to interdisciplinary approaches or applications.

The program also included two invited talks by ChengXiang Zhai and Keith van Rijsbergen. We would like to thank the invited speakers for their thought-provoking talks on axiomatic analysis and optimization and quantum information theory. We hope they inspired the young as well as the most senior researchers to continue in their steps.

We are grateful to the members of the Program Committee for their time and effort in providing timely and high-quality reviews and feedback to authors. We would also like to thank all the authors who submitted their work for consideration and all the participants and student volunteers for their contributions and help.

Finally, we would like to say special thanks to the following organizations and individuals who helped to make ICTIR 2011 a success:

- The Fondazione Ugo Bordoni for its support and help during the organization phases of the conference.
- The University of Lugano (USI) for providing conference website design and hosting. We especially thank Giacomo Inches and Cristian Bianchi for their work on designing the website.
- Almawave for the kind and generous sponsorship.
- Microsoft Research for their continuos sponsorship of the conference.
- Yahoo Research for sponsoring the Best Student Paper Award and the Student Travel Award.
- The editorial staff at Springer for their agreement and assistance in publishing the conference as part of the *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* (LNCS) series.
- EasyChair for the support during the reviewing stages of the submitted papers.

September 2011

Giambattista Amati
Fabio Crestani

Organization

ICTIR 2011 was jointly organized by the Fondazione Ugo Bordoni and the University of Lugano (Università della Svizzera Italiana). It was held at the University Residential Centre of Bertinoro in Italy.

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