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System Configuration Management

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Preface

Configuration Management is the discipline of managing the evolution of families of systems. It involves supporting versioning, composition, and generation of all relevant configuration items, as well as controlling and supporting related team activities. It is central to any large engineering project and requires a significant amount of system support. These problems have been studied in parallel, in the *Software* domain and in the general product domain (*PDM*). With this year's conference we have attempted to create a forum for interaction between these two communities. As a consequence the abbreviation *SCM* now means *System Configuration Management.*

Earlier, seven SCMs were organized as workshops, but with a growing community of researchers and practitioners in the field the format has this year been changed to a regular conference. Despite this change, and a growing number of attendees we hope the meeting can maintain some of its character with lively discussions and its special flavor with participants from industry, academia, and tool vendors. Earlier SCMs were organized in conjunction with Software Engineering conferences. This year's shift to join a conference dedicated to object orientation hopefully creates a new blend of people with backgrounds in Software CM, PDM, and OO – areas which have interesting common problems.

Much of the currently growing interest in SCM can be traced to the CMU/SEI CMM model with its focus on 'repeatability' and SCM as a key process, as well as the availability of networks and the need for new distributed solutions their use demands. Papers in the parts on *Cooperative Systems and Web Based Applications* in particular illustrate this research trend. Several papers in the parts on *Experimental Systems and Formal Approaches* can also be read in this light. We are happy to see that almost half of the papers come from industry, including all the papers in the *Industrial Experience* part. And finally, the papers in the *PDM and SCM* part contains comparisons that will hopefully help people from both domains to understand the relation between the fields, as well as a paper that illustrates the relation between SCM, PDM and OO.

Having SCM-8 organized as an open conference (rather than a workshop with limited attendance as before), and in conjunction with ECOOP, where CM has not been a central issue, we expect an unusually high number of new participants. The conference therefore started with an invited *tutorial*, by Susan Dart, which was also open for ECOOP participants. You will find an extended abstract of this presentation at the end of the proceedings.

As the program chair, I would like to express my gratitude to all the authors who submitted papers, the program committee doing a wonderful job in reviewing and selecting the program. Also, I thank all the authors who bore with me in getting the papers in a suitable electronic format (with page numbers and running heads) which still is surprisingly tedious when different document processing systems are involved.

Lund, May 1998 Boris Magnusson, SCM-8 Program chair

Organization

SCM-8 was organized in connection with the European Conference on Object Oriented Programming, ECOOP'98, this year taking place in Brussels, Belgium. Relying on the local organization for ECOOP has saved us from having to deal with the local organization for which we are most grateful.

Conference chair: Annita Persson, Ericsson Microwave AB, Sweden
Program chair: Boris Magnusson, Lund Institute of Technology, Sweden

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Previus SCM Events

SCM-1 1988, Grassau, Germany
SCM-2 1990, Princeton, USA
SCM-3 1991, Trondheim, Norway
SCM-4 1993, Baltimore, USA
SCM-5 1995, Seattle. USA
SCM-6 1996, Berlin, Germany
SCM-7 1997, Boston, USA

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