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Foreword

The sixth international conference on Extending Data Base Technology, EDBT 98, took place in Valencia, Spain, between the 23rd and 27th of March 1998. Following a ten-year tradition of excellence, this sixth edition repeated the success of its predecessors: Venice in 1988, Venice again in 1990, Vienna in 1992, Cambridge in 1994, and Avignon in 1996. Firmly established as one of the leading forums in the database community, EDBT 98 has attracted 191 submissions worldwide. Of these, the Program Committee selected 32 papers which largely reflect the main trends in database research: data warehousing and the Internet, with a clear shift in focus from the database itself to the applications and uses of databases in complex environments. Databases seem, thus, to have reached a level of maturity which warrants their use as key building blocks of future information systems. Their functionality and characteristics are no longer the exclusive province of database researchers but a source of ideas, inspiration, and solutions to many in all areas of computer science. This edition of EDBT shows a thriving and fascinating world that, far from being in crisis, has become a crucial component of today's technological endeavors.

The program of the conference was organized around the scientific papers, with sessions ranging from similarity search and indexing to scientific databases, including, of course, the ubiquitous data warehousing, data mining, and Web databases. A keynote talk was given by Gerhard Weikum on issues of quality guarantees in information services. A panel, organized by Keith Jefferey with contributions by Stefano Ceri, Joachim Schmidt, Hans-Jörg Schek, and Andrea Servida, discussed the role of database technology in global information systems and its emphasis within the European Union's 5th Framework Programme for Research. The program was further augmented with six tutorials by F. Matthes (SAP R/3), S. Conrad and G. Saake (heterogeneous databases), F. Leymann (workflow management), C. Mohan (transaction processing), J. Chomicki and D. Toman (temporal databases), and S. Chaudhuri and U. Dayal (data warehousing and mining). In addition, for the first time in EDBT, the conference was complemented with two workshops: the Web and databases, and workflow management systems, organized by Paolo Atzeni and Omran Bukhres respectively.

A conference like EDBT requires the efforts of many people and it would take much more than the space available here to thank all of them. We appreciate the efforts of A. Olive in organizing the tutorials, O. Pastor for the workshops, K. Jefferey for the panel, A. de Miguel for the industrial sessions, and J.H. Canós for the demonstrations. We are also grateful to all the program committee members, and to all additional referees for their help and commitment. Special thanks also to the organization committee and the sponsors. Last but not least, we thank the publisher, Springer-Verlag, represented by Alfred Hofmann, for the smooth cooperation and for their efforts in making the contents of these proceedings available online.

Valencia/Zürich, March 1998

Hans-Jörg Schek, Felix Saltor,
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