Editorial Reflections and Planning for the Future

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Happy New Year, *IEEE Intelligent Systems* readers! Starting on 1 January 2013, I will be serving a two-year term as the editor in chief of *IS*. First, I would like to thank Professor Fei-Yue Wang, the past editor in chief, his editorial team, and the IEEE Computer Society editorial staff for the wonderful job they've done for this publication in the past four years. Judging from a variety of publication performance measures, including various rankings, citation numbers, and downloads, the magazine is generally in excellent shape. The emphasis on special issues covering timely topics in AI research and applications has paid off. Based on findings from a very recent readership survey, the community is largely happy about the content published. The magazine has maintained its high academic standards through its rigorous peer-review process, partly manifested through its low acceptance rate.

For myself, I've been a reader of and author for *IS* for close to 20 years. I've been privileged to serve on the editorial board for the past six years. I also worked as a department editor and guest-edited three special issues. In early 2011, I was appointed as the associate editor in chief in charge of special issues, departments, and special projects, and led the effort to revamp the departments. Several new department editors, many of them well-known AI researchers, were recruited to cover areas such as health, sustainability, education, security, e-government, and game theory, among others.

New Year's is the time for making plans. In this first editor-in-chief message, I would like to briefly discuss a couple of strategic areas *IS* will emphasize in the next couple of years, as well as planned activities.

Connection with Mainstream AI Communities

The magazine has been doing an excellent job publishing innovative applied AI work through special issues. However, as one of the top-ranked AI publications across the board, it could do a better job attracting more submissions from top AI research groups and leading-edge AI researchers. Partially because of this weakened tie with mainstream AI communities and the resulting misconceptions, many authors have the misguided perception that, as a magazine, *IS* would entertain incomplete, low-quality work. Although so far this hasn't hurt the magazine due to our rigorous peer-review process (the acceptance rate for submissions intended for regular issues has been below 10 percent for years), in the long run, the inability to attract steady streams of high-quality papers from mainstream researchers reporting on exceptionally innovative

ideas could have major negative consequences.

In the months to come, we will take the following actions, hoping to address this potential concern. First, the editorial statement will be carefully updated to articulate precisely what kinds of articles *IS* wants. The updated statement will emphasize technical innovations from both methodological and application standpoints, major new ideas, and technical quality. It will also discourage the kind of submissions that wouldn't pass the review process. Second, our editorial team will aim to strengthen connections with mainstream AI communities through deeper and more frequent collaboration with main AI professional societies such as AAAI, ECCAI, IFAAMAS, ICML, various ACM SIGs, and related IEEE societies, among others. The joint effort with AAAI to publicize the AI Hall of Fame initiative in 2011 was successful. More such activities will be undertaken. Third, we will explore the use of various social media tools to broaden the awareness and recognition of *IS* in various AI communities.

Connection with the AI Industry

AI has become ubiquitous, and intelligent systems have been widely applied in all walks of life and business. Despite the fact that *IS* focuses on practical AI, historically, our ties with industry have been weak. This presents a major challenge but also an opportunity. We certainly have no plan to steer *IS* away from its primary goal of serving the AI and intelligent systems research community. Yet, meaningful, deeper ties with the AI industry would complement our current strength and broaden the magazine's impact. As a first step, we just established a new department focusing on industry perspectives.

Professor Daniel O'Leary from the University of Southern California, a former *IS* editor in chief, has kindly agreed to serve as this department's founding editor. Other activities, including those to be developed on social media platforms, have been planned to better connect with the AI industry. I will report on these activities in the summer.

Web and Social Media Presence

I firmly believe that *IS* should be fully engaged in various online initiatives from the IEEE Computer Society Publications Board. With significant help and coordination from the staff, we plan to take on several initiatives, including interviews with leading AI researchers and practitioners, and round-tables with special issue editors. Multimedia materials produced will be posted on the magazine's website.

Being a contributing member of the *IS* editorial team for several years, I know its inner workings pretty well. I also know that maintaining its high standing in an increasingly competitive publication space won't be easy. I'm excited about and look forward to working closely with the *IS* advisory and editorial boards, staff, and the IEEE Computer Society Publications Board, to continue the success of *IS*.

Happy New Year again!▣

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