Editor's Notes

The centerpiece of this issue of the *SIGMOD Record* is a special section on Management of Semi-structured Data that has been edited by Dan Suciu of AT&T Labs. The rapid proliferation of the WWW has forced database practitioners to face up to the fact that we do not hold an exclusive patent on data access and management. The work presented in this special section addresses the interaction of database technology with the wide variety of data repositories that are accessible over the Internet. The section consists of five papers from the Semi-structured Data workshop that was held in conjunction with SIGMOD '97 this past May. The papers were chosen by the workshop program committee and shepherded through the revision process by Dan. I thank Dan, the PC, and, especially, the authors for their efforts in putting together this timely and thought provoking special section.

Also included in this issue are reports from three other recent workshops. These reports summarize the papers and discussions from the workshops and provide pointers to additional information for interested readers. I have actively solicited such reports as I believe they provide a valuable resource by identifying topics of emerging importance and summarizing the current state-of-the-art in specific areas. Also, as many workshops have strict limits on attendance, these reports benefit the contributors and organizers by increasing the visibility of the work. If you are organizing a workshop that is of interest to the SIGMOD community, I encourage you to contact me or Ling Liu to discuss preparing a report or perhaps even a special section based on your workshop.

This issue marks the introduction of a new regular column entitled "Industry Perspectives". One of the key roles of SIGMOD, in general, and the *Record*, in particular, is to facilitate communication among the industrial and academic database communities. Len Seligman of MITRE has signed on as Associate Editor of this column, which combines our "Industry News" and "Trade Press" columns and includes some new initiatives as Len describes in his introduction to the new column. For this issue, Len has obtained an excellent paper by Jim Gray and Goetz Graefe, which updates the classic "Five Minute Rule" paper by Gray and Franco Putzulo that appeared ten years ago in SIGMOD '87. I call on our industrial members to work with Len to help him continue to meet the high standards that he has set for this column. I'd also like to thank Rafael Alonso for his help with the "Trade Press" column, which established the precedent of having a regular column focused on industry trends.

The issue is rounded out by "Systems and Prototypes" and "Research Centers" contributions obtained through the hard work of Praveen Seshadri and Amit Sheth (and the authors of course!). José Blakeley has labored mightily to find people to write good survey articles. Such articles take a great deal of time and thought; if you have already done much of the ground work on a topic of interest to SIGMOD (say, by preparing a thesis proposal or a tutorial for a database conference) contact José to discuss how you might amortize this work by preparing a research survey article.

Michael Franklin
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