
Editorial Introduction

We are now reaching the end of my second year as Editor in Chief of this journal, and it is time for yet another checkpoint and round of thanks to all those people who give their time and effort to ensure the high quality of the published material.

My first thanks this year go to all authors who submit their best work to the journal. Without you, there would be no journal at all! The number of submissions has been fairly stable over the last 3 years, slightly increasing from a little less than 60 to over 64 this year.

The average time for the first decision for submitted papers has unfortunately also increased this year. My target was to stay below 4 months, but I have to confess that we are now over 5 months on average, mainly due to a few outliers—my apologies to the authors of these papers. Stopping this worrying trend is my main resolution for the forthcoming year. In that perspective, I think I can now announce the long-awaited electronic submission-and-review system, which will hopefully help us reduce the time-to-decision. I know that I am taking some risks here, because I am writing this editorial 3 months in advance, and the system is not completely installed yet. But I am confident that it is now on the right track, so confident that I will even give you the submission URL: `ecj.lri.fr`.

Even the best electronic system cannot do anything without the human agents of the reviewing system. For those newcomers to the field (and I am glad to say that, looking at the submitted papers, there is a constant flow of newcomers) I will briefly go through how the peer review process works. Each submitted paper is sent to an Associate Editor, who in turn sends it out to at least 3 independent reviewers¹, tentatively including one member of the Editorial Board (see the back cover). So let me now heartily thank the Associate Editors for the tremendous job they have been doing whole year round, all Editorial Board Members for their continuing support, and, of course, those anonymous reviewers whose names I am unveiling at the end of this issue². By the way, did you know that, according to Dr. C. Lee Giles, from CiteSeer, this famous “Dr. Anonymous” is the most acknowledged person in all CiteSeer documents?

But this round of thanks would not be complete without naming the two Managers who both give a lot of their time for the Journal, Nathalie Gaudechoux, the Production Manager, who is gathering the final versions and assembling them skillfully into a complete issue, and Lise Fontaine, the Edition Manager, who takes care of all your typos and non-Englishisms in a very professional and efficient way. Many thanks to both of you for being at the same time so efficient and . . . cheerful.

Marc Schoenauer, Editor
September 29, 2004

¹ Because the time of our reviewers is precious, myself or the Associate Editor sometimes filter out some papers that obviously don't meet the minimal criteria for publication in our journal.

² Once again, though hopefully for the last time, I might have forgotten some of you—please protest, and get a free personal acknowledgment in the next issue.