

# IDEAS, The Pre-teen years

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## ABSTRACT

This paper provides a summary of the pre-teen years of IDEAS from 1997 through 2008. Many people have been involved in organizing the annual meeting. These include the program chairs, members of the program committee, local organizing committee, support staffs at the institutes that have hosted the meetings over the years and last but not least the thousands of authors who submitted their work to IDEAS. I would like to thank all these colleagues.

## CCS CONCEPTS

• **Computing methodologies** → **Distributed artificial intelligence**; • **Computer systems organization** → **Robotics autonomy**; • **General and reference** → *Surveys and overviews*; • **Security and privacy** → *Cryptanalysis and other attacks*; *Social aspects of security and privacy*; • **Networks** → *Wireless local area networks*; • **Hardware** → *Sensors and actuators*; *Wireless devices*;

## KEYWORDS

IDEAS, International Database Engineering & Applications Symposium

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

IDEAS was established in 1996 to address the need for a meeting where more practical aspects of databases could be addressed. As such, the focus of the IDEAS series of symposiums is to address the engineering and application aspects of databases. This series of symposiums has emerged as an unique and important forum to discuss experiences in applying databases to actual situations.

Over the past dozen years, these symposiums have provided an international forum for discussion of the problems of engineering database systems involving not only database technology but the related areas of information retrieval,

multimedia, human machine interface and communication. The goal of IDEAS is to foster closer interaction among the industrial, research and user communities and provide an excellent opportunity for them to meet, discuss concepts and methodologies, examine the current ones and develop new solutions and research directions. Along with the technical sessions, the symposium also features prominent invited speakers.

IDEAS series of symposiums are scheduled annually and have been held since 1997 in North America, Europe and Asia. It has attracted participants from governmental and non-governmental agencies, industries, and academia to exchange ideas and share experiences.

From the onset, IDEAS has invited quality papers describing original concepts and new findings on applied technological and theoretical aspects of database engineering and applications. IDEAS particularly welcomes submissions describing work on integrating new technologies into products and applications, on experiences with existing and novel techniques, and on the identification of unsolved challenges.

The focus of the program committee has been to be very selective and the program chairs ensured this by gathering an excellent program committee, and providing in depth reviews of papers submitted. All papers, over the last seven meetings, have been assigned to four reviewers. Since it was not always possible for reviewers to finish the reviews in time, they were encouraged to seek the help of external reviewers to help in the task.

The reviews were discussed; over the last seven meetings, thanks to the technology and the development of ConfSys[1], we have been able to provide blind reviews<sup>1</sup> and blind debates<sup>2</sup>. As a general chair, I have been able to see the importance of this double blind process. In the earlier days, with just emails, the more dominant reviewer tended to influence the others. With blind reviews and debates more open decisions are possible.

## 2 THE PROGRAM CHAIRS

Over the years, I had the good fortune to have the help of many colleagues to assist me in the program chairing tasks. They helped maintain the high standards that were the goals of IDEAS. The following is the list of these program co-chairs.  
Barry Eaglestone (Bradford)  
Baoluo Li (Academy of Medical Science)  
Christine Collet (Grenoble)  
Fulin Zhan (Shenzhen Centre for Medical Information)  
Gottfried Vossen (Muenster)

<sup>1</sup>The authors do not know the identity of the reviewers

<sup>2</sup>The reviewers do not know the identity of the other reviewers

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Gosta Grahne (Concordia)  
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 Jorge Bernardino (ISEC)  
 Ken Barker (Univ. of Calgary)  
 Kequin Rao (Ministry of Health, PRC)  
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 Mario A. Nascimento (Univ. of Alberta)  
 Michel Adiba (Grenoble)  
 Motomichi Toyama (Keio)  
 Osmar Zaiane (Univ. of Alberta)  
 S. K. Gupta (IIT, Delhi)  
 Wilfred Ng (HKUST)  
 Yasushi Kiyoki (Keio)

### 3 THE PROGRAM COMMITTEES

The standard of any academic conference is a shared responsibility between the program chair(s) and the program committee. The program committee is always called on to provide a review of many papers in a very short period of time. During the review and the following debate period, they are constantly reminded by the program chairs and the general chairs to finish the review on time and then participate in a debate for papers that seem to be controversial.

I would like to tip my hat to the following colleagues who helped to provide timely reviews. Many a time, they had only a few weeks to do the job and they were always generous with their time.

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 Alok Choudhary (Northwestern University)  
 Andre Clouatre (University of Montreal)  
 Anne Doucet (Pierre et Marie Curie Univ. France)  
 Arturas Mazeika (Free University of Bozen)  
 Arun K Pujari (University of Hyderabad)  
 Asuman Dogac (Middle East Technical Univ., Turkey)  
 B G Prasad (East Point College of Engn. & Tech.)  
 Baikunth Nath (University of Melbourne)  
 Bala Iyer (IBM Santa Teresa Lab)  
 Baoluo Li (China's Academy of Medical Science)  
 Barbara Pernici (Politecnico di Milano, Italy)  
 Beng-Chin Ooi (NUS, Singapore)  
 Bettina Kemme (McGill University)  
 Bettina Kemme (McGill University, Canada)  
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 Catherine Berrut (Grenoble)  
 Christian Lang (IBM Research)

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 Domenico Sacca (Universit della Calabria)  
 Dominique Laurent (Universite de Cergy-Pontoise)  
 Edward W. Hammond (Duke University)  
 Elisa Bertino (University of Milano)  
 Eljas Soisalon-Soininen, (Helsinki Univ. of Technology)  
 Esther Pacitti (University of Nantes)  
 Fabien Courreges (Kingston University)  
 Fabio Casati (HP, USA)  
 Feng Ling (University of Twente)  
 Fereidoon Sadri (UNCG)  
 Frank Dehne (Griffith University)  
 François Llirbat (INRIA Rocquencourt)  
 François Rechenmann (INRIA Rhne-Alpes)  
 Frederick Lochovsky (HKUST)  
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 Hongjun Lu (HKUST)  
 Indrajit Ray (Colorado State University)  
 Isabel Cruz (WPI)  
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 Matteo Golfarelli (University of Bologna)  
 Mengchi Liu (Carleton University)  
 Michael H. Böhlen (Aalborg University)  
 Michel Adiba (Grenoble)  
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 Orlando Belo (Univ. of Minho)  
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 Ralf Hartmut Goeting (Fernuniversität Hagen, Germany)  
 Ravikanth Kothuri (Oracle)  
 Raymond Ng (UBC)  
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 Reynold Cheng (Hong Kong Polytechnic University)  
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 Sara Foresti (University of Milan)  
 Sergio Lifschitz (PUC-Rio, Brazil)  
 Sergio Viademonte (Univ. of Monash, Australia)  
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 Shri Kant (DRDO)  
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 Srinath Srinivasa (IIIT)  
 Stefan Conrad (Universität Duesseldorf)  
 Stu E Donald (BytePress)  
 Subbu Subramanian (IBM Almaden Res.)  
 Sumit Sarkar (University of Texas at Dallas)  
 Sylvia Osborn (UWO)  
 T V Vijay Kumar (JawaharLal Nehru University)  
 Teruhisa Hochin (Fukui Univ.)  
 Theo Haerder (Universität Kaiserslautern)  
 Tianhe Xu (Journal of China's Hospital Statistics)  
 Tim Merrett (McGill University)  
 Timos Sellis (NTU)  
 Todd Eavis (Concordia University)  
 Tok Wang Ling (NUS-Singapore)  
 Tore Risch (Uppsala University)

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 Zohra Bellahsene (Universite de Montpellier)

#### 4 INVITED SPEAKERS

IDEAS over the years has been fortunate to have some of the top names in our domain share their knowledge with the participants. They generously provided excellent opportunities for the participants to discuss their research and offered their insights for new avenues of research. IDEAS would like to acknowledge their participations.

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 Limsoon Wong (Singapore)  
 M. Tamer Özsu (Univ. Alberta)  
 Nick Koudas (AT&T Research)  
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 Raghu Ramakrishnan (Univ. of Wisconsin)  
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 Timos K. Sellis (NTU)  
 Tom Noseworthy (University of Calgary)  
 W. A. Gray (Cardiff)

#### 5 AUTHORS

The success of a conference depends on the contribution and participation of the authors. IDEAS has been fortunate to receive excellent papers over the years and the painstaking review process has allowed us to select the best of this set of very good submissions.

Without leaving anyone out, here is the list of authors who had their work published in the IDEAS proceedings.

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Sartiani, Carlos Heuser, Carlos Marquardt, Carolin Letz, Carson Kai-Sang Leung, Chabane-Mourad Oussalah, Chang Sup Park, Changqing Chen, Chanjung Park, Chantal Reynaud, Charilaos Thomos, Chen Huajun, Chi-Hoon Lee, Chintan Sanghvi, China Ravishankar, Chirine Ghedira, Cho-kri Ben Necib, Chris Pavlovski, Christian Dantgen, Christian Jensen, Christian Lang, Christian Mathis, Christian S. Jensen, Christian Thomsen, Christie Ezeife, Christine Collet, Christophe Nicolle, Chuang Liu, Chung-hao Tan, Chunru Wan, Chunyue Wang, Clara Nippl, Clara Pizzuti, Claudia Roncancio, Claus A. Christensen, Clesio Saraiva dos Santos, Cong Zhou, Congjun Yang, Craig Feied, Cristina Dallera, Cristina Sirangelo, Cui Yu, Cyril Labbe, Cyrus Shahabi, D. A. Bell, D. Agrawal, D. Baker, D. E. Kovalcin, D. Guillon, D. Jutra, D. McGregor, D. N. Jutla, D. Rogulin, D. Sacca, D. Taniar, D. Tudhope, D. Ursino, D. Wood, Dan Vodislav, Daniel Klan, Daniel Oberle, Daniel P. Miranker, Danilo Montesi, Darcy Benoit, David Cueva, David Del Vecchio, David Lomet, David Maier, David Manset, David Skillicorn, David Skogan, David Spoonert, David W. Embley, David Wood, Dawn Jutla, Dennis Pedersen, Dennis Shasha, Dennis Wollersheim, Didier Guillon, Dieter Merkl, Dieter Pfoer, Dimitri Theodoratos, Dimitrios Katsaros, Dina Goldin, Dixie B. Baker, Djamal Benslimane, Dmitri Boulanger, Dmitry Rogulin, Domenico Rosaci, Domenico Ursino, provide Don P. Ragan, Donald. R. Schwarz, Dong (Haoyuan) Li, Dongsoo Han, Dorothy Curtis, Dragan Stojanovic, Duncan Ruiz, Dunren Che, E. Chang, E. Gulatee, Ehud Gudes, Eike Schallehn, Eike Schallehn, Eleftherios Tiakas, Elena Soutyrina, Elio Masciari, Elisa Bertino, Elizabeth Chang, Elizabeth Lam, Elizabeth O'Neil, Eljas Soisalon-Soininen, Elke A. Rundensteiner, Emmanuel Barillot, Emmanuel Waller, Eric Leclercq, Eric Louie, Eric Tobias Henn, Eric Viara, Erlend Tøsebro, Ernst-August Stehr, provide Ester Zumpano, Eugenio Cesario, Eun-Sun Cho, Evgeniya Altareva, Eyas El-Qawasmeh, F Zhang, F. Estrella, F. Estrella, F. Saltor, F. Umimsky, Fabiano Silva, Fabio Costa, Fabio Porto, Fabio Jose Coutinho Silva, Fabrizio Angiulli, Fadila Bentayeb, Farshad Fotouhi, Fatima Farag, Feihong Hsu, Felipe Silveira, Fereidoon Sadri, Fernando Uminsky, Ferrari Alves, Filippo Furfaro, Florida Estrella, Francesco Folino, Francois Barbancon, Frank Binkowski, Frank Dehne, Frank Ramsak, Frank Wietek, Fu Lin Zhang, Fu Tao, Fumiuyuki Tanemo, provide Félix Saltor, G. Färber, G. N. Paulley, G. Saake, Gagan Agrawal, Ganesh Ramesh, Ge Yu, Genoveva Vargas Solar, Georg Färber, George Becker, George Mihaila, George Pallis, Gerhard Skagestein, Ghassan Beydoun, Giorgio Ghelli, Giorgio Terracina, Giovanni Conforti, Giovanni Quattrone, Gisele Busichia, Giuseppe M. L. Sarné, Giuseppe Manco, Gösta Grahne, Gottfried Vossen, Guenther Specht, Guntram Flach, Guoren Wang, Gustavo Alonso, Guy Vaysseix, Gytis Karciauskas, H. Gunzel, H. Kim, H. Mackay, provide H. Yu, H.-Y. Wang, Hai-Xin Lu, Haifeng Yu, Haijin YU, Haiwei Ye, Hanady Abdulsalam, Hans-Jorg Schek, Hao Sheng, Hao Wang, Haofeng Zhou, Harald Kosch, HeeSam Kim, Heiko Schuldt, Heinz

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## 6 THE REVIEW PROCESS

When we started IDEAS, the submission process was based on hard copy and required the authors to send four copies of their paper by mail. Most of the time, the authors ended up using courier service to make the deadlines. In the early years, due to the cost and time involved in mailing, the number of reviewers per paper was three and the average reviews per paper was just higher than two. There was the occasional paper which had only one review which meant that the program chairs had to find a colleague to quickly evaluate the paper, sometimes in just days. Note: IDEAS

allows all members of the program committee to participate in submitting papers as authors or co:authors.<sup>3</sup>

As the Internet grew and better Web based technology emerged, we started developing ConfSys, our home grown conference management system.

With ConfSys, we were able to move almost all the functions of managing the administrative tasks on the web. This also made it possible for us to increase the number of reviews per paper from 3 to 4. Currently, each paper is sent to four reviewers and the average number of reviews per paper is over 3.5.

Table 1 gives the percent of papers accepted over the pre-teen years for IDEAS with the number of reviews per paper. One notes that we tend to get more submissions when the meeting is held in a larger city and hence the lower acceptance rate!

## 7 IMPACT OF IDEAS

There are a number of sites which rank, using some sort of black magic, the various conferences in Computer Science and Software Engineering. Some of these sites are mirrors and to the best of my knowledge, they are rarely if ever updated. These site suggest that if one does not agree with their ratings, one can ignore them. However, the problem is that some research funding organizations and most management encourage the use of such sites.

Another measure used by these funding agencies and university administrators to “rank” a publication and its “impact” is the number of its citations. However the use of such measures for ranking authors and papers as well as conferences and journals is considered to be highly questionable. These citation numbers are flawed due to myriads of factors; the biggest ones being the time span and the reach of the citing engine. Many citations are secondary and this distinction is not evident in the count. As a reviewer of papers and thesis, I have come up with what I call after-the-fact-citations. Such practice means that citation count error rate is fairly high and there is a stampede effect due to the fact that some authors may include “more” prestigious citations to raise the “publication-ability” of their papers. The very acceptance of these imperfect numbers has also led to what I sense a trend in the “marketing” of articles by the authors and journals by publishers to increase the citation count! I also see that the market for citation increase merchant as a growth area.

Another problem is the evident incompleteness of these systems. A case in point is DBLife. I visited the site in July 2008 and found it to be a work in progress which should not have been available to the community. The site claims that it is in Alpha stage, with very little functionality; no feature for correcting errors and no disclaimer that it is incomplete

<sup>3</sup>IDEAS allows program committee to submit papers. Since the program chairs are sometimes required to review papers they are part of the program committee and hence could be a co-author of a submitted paper. When a program co:chair is involved as co:author in a submitted paper, the review process for that paper becomes manual and is headed by the other Program co:chair. The decision for such paper is entrusted to this co:chair.

**Table 1: IDEAS Review process and acceptance rate**

YEAR	Location	Avg. Number of Reviews/Paper	Percent of full papers accepted
IDEAS1997[3]	Montreal	2.1	39
IDEAS1998[4]	Cardiff	2.2	35
IDEAS1999[5]	Montreal	2.5	37
IDEAS2000[6]	Yokohama	2.7	40
IDEAS2001[7]	Grenoble	2.6	34
IDEAS2002[8]	Edmonton	2.5	49
IDEAS2003[9]	Hong Kong	3.1	27
IDEAS2004[10]	Coimbra	3.5	25
IDEAS2004DH[11]	Beijing	2.2	24
IDEAS2005[12]	Montreal	3.5	20
IDEAS2006[13]	Delhi	3.5	16
IDEAS2007[14]	Banff	3.7	35
IDEAS2008[15]	Coimbra	3.7	25
Overall		2.7	28

and unreliable! What is disturbing is that this site is already used by some referees to evaluate candidates and their work!

Measures such as impact factors are not infallible measures of the quality of a paper, conference or journal. The number of citations to a paper published in a conference does not necessarily measure the conference’s “quality” since the factor of the number of such meetings in a given domain is being overlooked. Counting the frequency of citations of a paper while disregarding where the citation is made renders the number of citations a measure of popularity at best.

Recently, a parliamentary committee in the U.K. stressed that in evaluation of an academic article, the evaluator is obliged to assess the quality of the content of individual articles, not the reputation of the forum in which it is published. Unfortunately, an indolent evaluator, may be content to key in a few words in one of the search engines or impact factor sites and make a judgment. Funding research organizations, wanting to placate elected officials use the impact factor as a measure of the success of their grants.

In addition, the citation count does not take into account the actual usage of an article by people who have no reason to make a citation. Thus impact factor has completely ignored the reason we write: that someone is going to read our writing and gain some insight from it. It is for that reason that a system such as CINDI<sup>4</sup>[2] does not measure citation but the number of downloads of documents in its collection.

IDEAS over its pre-teen years has served many members of the global DB community. Thousands of authors have submitted their work for evaluation; even though we accepted only a fraction of these, the feedback given to authors would be valuable. IDEAS continues to have the most stringent review process: no other conference submits each paper to four reviewers!

<sup>4</sup> CINDI is a work in progress and the results are not necessarily reliable or complete.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

Establishing a new series of conferences was not easy; nor has it been easy to continue. One of the reason IDEAS was set up was to allow new researchers who are not recognized by “prestigious” conferences a chance. We have strived to find quality while trying to keep afloat. I think we have succeeded so far and attracted not only excellent papers but also some of the top names as invited speakers to our annual events.

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