Editor's Introduction

Welcome to the proceedings of the 2004 European Conference on Web Services (ECOWS 2004). ECOWS is one of the leading international conferences focusing on Web services. ECOWS 2004 was a forum for researchers and practitioners from academia and industry to exchange information regarding advances in the state of the art and practice of Web services, identify emerging research topics, and define the future directions of Web services computing. ECOWS 2004 had a special interest in papers that contribute to the convergence of Web services, Grid computing, e-business and autonomic computing, and papers that apply techniques from one area to another. This conference was called the International Conference on Web Services Europe in 2003. ECOWS 2004 was a sister event of the International Conference on Web Services 2004 (ICWS 2004), which attracted more than 250 registered participants in San Diego, USA.

Web services are characterized by network-based application components and a service-oriented architecture using standard interface description languages and uniform communication protocols. Industrial application domains for Web services include business-to-business integration, business process integration and management, content management, e-sourcing, composite Web services creation, design collaboration for computer engineering, multimedia communication, digital TV, and interactive Web solutions. Recently, Grid computing has also started to leverage Web services to define standard interfaces for business Grid services and generic reusable Grid resources.

The program of ECOWS 2004 featured a variety of papers on topics ranging from Web services and dynamic business process composition to Web services and process management, Web services discovery, Web services security, Web services-based applications for e-commerce, Web services-based Grid computing, and Web services solutions.

It is with great sorrow that we received the sad news of the sudden and untimely passing of Prof. Mario Jeckle, just before completing the paper review process. It was Mario who invited me to be the co-founder of ECOWS (aka ICWS-Europe) to help promote Web services research in Europe. I was very impressed by his enthusiasm. Together with all the organizing committee members and participants, we express our heartfelt condolences and our deepest sympathy to his family.

Finally, many people worked very hard to make the conference possible. I would like to thank all who helped to make ECOWS 2004 a success. The Program Committee members and referees all deserve credit for the excellent final program that resulted from the diligent review of the submissions. On behalf of the ECOWS 2004 Organizing Committee, I hope that all attendees enjoyed their stays in Erfurt and exchanged new ideas and explored the direction of Web services research and engineering.

Yorktown Heights, NY, USA   Dr. Liang-Jie (LJ) Zhang
July 2004

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