# OTM 2004 General Co-chairs' Message

The General Chairs of OnTheMove 2004, Larnaca, Cyprus, are once more proud to observe that the conference series we started in Irvine, California in 2002, and continued in Catania, Sicily last year, has turned out to be a concept that attracts a representative selection of today's research in distributed, heterogeneous yet collaborative systems, of which the Internet and the WWW are its prime examples.

Indeed, as such large, complex and networked intelligent information systems become the focus and norm for computing, it is clear that one needs to address and discuss in a single forum the implied software and system issues as well as methodological, theoretical and application issues. This is why the OnTheMove (OTM) Federated Conferences series covers an increasingly wide yet closely knit range of topics such as data and Web semantics, distributed objects, Web services, databases, workflows, cooperation, ubiquity, interoperability, and mobility. OnTheMove wants to be a primary scientific forum where these aspects for the development of internet- and intranet-based systems in organizations and for e-business are addressed in a quality-controlled fundamental way. This third, 2004 edition of the OTM Federated Conferences event therefore again provided an opportunity for researchers and practitioners to understand and publish these developments within their respective as well as within their broader contexts.

OTM first of all co-locates three related, complementary and successful main conference series: DOA (Distributed Objects and Applications), covering the relevant infrastructure-enabling technologies, ODBASE (Ontologies, DataBases and Applications of SEmantics) covering Web semantics, XML databases and ontologies, and CoopIS (Cooperative Information Systems) covering the application of these technologies in an enterprise context through, for example, workflow systems and knowledge management. Each of these three conferences treats its specific topics within a framework of (a) theory, (b) conceptual design and development, and (c) applications, in particular case studies and industrial solutions.

Following and expanding the example set in 2003, we solicited and selected quality workshop proposals to complement the more "archival" nature of the main conferences, with research results in a number of selected and more "avant garde" areas related to the general topic of distributed computing. For instance, the so-called Semantic Web has given rise to several novel research areas combining linguistics, information systems technology, and artificial intelligence, such as the modeling of (legal) regulatory systems and the ubiquitous nature of their usage. We were glad to see that in 2004 several of the Catania workshops re-emerged with a second edition (notably WoRM and JTRES), and that four other workshops could be hosted and successfully organized by their respective proposers: GADA, MOIS, WOSE, and INTEROP. We trust that their audiences mutually productively and happily mingled with those of the main conferences.

A special mention for 2004 is in order for the new Doctoral Symposium Workshop where three young postdoc researchers organized an original setup and formula to bring PhD students together and allow them to submit their research proposals for selection. A limited number of the submissions and their approaches were independently evaluated by a panel of senior experts at the conference, and presented by the students in front of a wider audience. These students also got free access to all other parts of the OTM program, and only paid a heavily discounted fee for the Doctoral Symposium itself. (In fact their attendance was largely sponsored by the other participants!) If evaluated as successful, it is the intention of the General Chairs to expand this model in future editions of the OTM conferences and so draw in an audience of young researchers to the OnTheMove forum.

All three main conferences and the associated workshops share the distributed aspects of modern computing systems, and the resulting application-pull created by the Internet and the so-called Semantic Web. For DOA 2004, the primary emphasis stayed on the distributed object infrastructure; for ODBASE 2004, it was the knowledge bases and methods required for enabling the use of formal semantics; and for CoopIS 2004 the main topic was the interaction of such technologies and methods with management issues, such as occurs in networked organizations. These subject areas naturally overlap and many submissions in fact also treat envisaged mutual impacts among them. As for the earlier editions, the organizers wanted to stimulate this cross-pollination with a shared program of famous keynote speakers: this year we got no less than Roberto Cencioni of the EC, Umesh Dayal of HP Labs, Hans Gellersen of Lancaster University, and Nicola Guarino of the Italian CNR! As before we encouraged multiple-event attendance by providing authors with free access to other conferences or workshops of their choice.

We received a total of 350 submissions for the three conferences and approximately 170 in total for the workshops. Not only can we therefore again claim success in attracting a representative volume of scientific papers, but such a harvest allowed the program committees of course to compose a high-quality cross-section of worldwide research in the areas covered. In spite of the large number of submissions, the Program Chairs of each of the three main conferences decided to accept only approximately the same number of papers for presentation and publication as in 2002 and 2003 (i.e., an average of 1 paper out of 4 submitted, not counting posters). For the workshops, the acceptance rate varied but was stricter than before, about 1 in 2, to 1 in 3 for GADA and WoRM. Also, for this reason, we decided to separate the proceedings into two books with their own titles, with the main proceedings in two volumes and the workshop proceedings in a separate, third volume, and we are grateful to Springer for their suggestions and collaboration in producing these books. The reviewing process by the respective program committees as usual was performed very professionally and each paper in the main conferences was reviewed by at least three referees. It may be worthwhile to emphasize that it is an explicit OnTheMove policy that all conference program committees and chairs make their selections completely

autonomously from the OTM organization. Continuing an equally nice (but admittedly costly) tradition, the OnTheMove Federated Event organizers decided again to make ALL (sizeable!) proceedings available to ALL participants of conferences and workshops, independent of their registrations.

The General Chairs really are especially grateful to all the many people who were directly or indirectly involved in the setup of these federated conferences and in doing so made them a success. Few people realize what a large number of people have to be involved, and what a huge amount of work, and, yes, risk organizing an event like OTM entails. In particular we therefore thank our eight main conference PC co-chairs (DOA 2004: Vinny Cahill, Steve Vinoski, and Werner Vogels; ODBASE 2004: Tiziana Catarci and Katia Sycara; CoopIS 2004: Wil van der Aalst, Christoph Bussler, and Avigdor Gal) and our 15 workshop PC co-chairs (Angelo Corsaro, Corrado Santoro, Mustafa Jarrar, Aldo Gangemi, Klaus Turowski, Antonia Albani [2x], Alexios Palinginis, Peter Spyns [2x], Erik Duval, Pilar Herrero, Maria S. Perez, Monica Scannapieco, Paola Velardi, Herve Panetto, Martin Zelm) who, together with their many PC members, did a superb and professional job in selecting the best papers from the large harvest of submissions. We also thank our Publicity Chair (Laura Bright) and Publication Chair (Kwong Yuen Lai), and of course our overall Workshops Chair (Angelo Corsaro).

We do hope that the results of this federated scientific event contribute to your research and your place in the scientific network. We look forward to seeing you at next year's edition!

August 2004                    Robert Meersman, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium
                                    Zahir Tari, RMIT University, Australia

# Organization Committee

The OTM (On The Move) 2004 Federated Workshops, involving six workshops (i.e., GADA – Workshop on Grid Computing and Its Application to Data Analysis, JTRES – Workshop on Java Technologies for Real-Time and Embedded Systems, MIOS – Workshop on Modeling Inter-organizational Systems, WORM – Workshop on Regulatory Ontologies, WOSE – Workshop on Ontologies, Semantics, and E-Learning, PhDS – PhD Symposium, and INTEROP – INTEROP NoE Dissemination Workshop), were proudly supported by RMIT University and Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

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