Editorial

Rafael Corchuelo

Dep. de Lenguajes y Sistemas Informáticos,
University of Sevilla ETSI Informática,
Avda. Reina Mercedes, s/n 41012 Sevilla, Spain
E-mail: corchu@us.es

José L. Álvarez and José L. Arjona

Dep. de Tecnologías de la Información,
University of Huelva Pabellón Torreumbría,
Campus de La Rábida,
21071 Palos de la Frontera, Huelva, Spain
E-mail: alvarez@uhu.es
E-mail: jose.arjona@dti.uhu.es

David Ruiz

Dep. de Lenguajes y Sistemas Informáticos,
University of Sevilla ETSI Informática,
Avda. Reina Mercedes, s/n 41012 Sevilla, Spain
E-mail: druiz@us.es

Biographical notes: Rafael Corchuelo is a reader in Computer Science at the Department of Computer Languages and Systems of the University of Seville, Spain, from where he received his PhD. He has led its Research Group on Distributed Systems since 1997; his current research interests focus on the integration of web data islands; previously, he has worked on multiparty interaction and fairness issues.

J.L. Álvarez has been a Lecturer Professor at the Department of Computer Science at the University of Huelva (Spain) since 1995. He received his PhD in Computer Science from the University of Seville (Spain) in 2002. His current research interests include knowledge discovery in data, data mining and evolutionary algorithms, as well as extracting knowledge from the web.

J.L. Arjona received his PhD from the University of Seville in 2005. Currently, he is a Lecturer with the Department of Computer Science at the University of Huelva, Spain. He worked as a software engineer and a software consultant for companies such as Isotrol S.A. and Norsistemas S.A., and was involved in several projects on electrical network modelling, digital TV, and e-commerce solutions. His current interests include extracting knowledge from the web, and enterprise application integration.

David Ruiz is a Lecturer of Computer Science at the Department of Computer Languages and Systems of the University of Seville, Spain. He received his PhD in 2003. He worked as software engineer for IBM in a Spanish speech recognition project. His current research interests focus on semantic web services and enterprise information integration; previously, he has pursued research on fairness issues in advanced interaction models.

The Spanish Conferences on Software Engineering and Artificial Intelligence are well-established reference forums for Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin-American researchers and practitioners. In 2007, both conferences hosted special workshops on developing and integrating web applications, and this special issue contains a selection of the papers that were presented.

The first paper was written by Frantz, from the Unijuí University (Brazil), and reports on a domain-specific language that provides a number of building blocks for designing abstract integration solutions; the second paper was written by Rivero, and reports on the implementation of a system that can be used as a high-level front-end to typical web applications since it maps SQL queries onto web search forms; the third paper, which was written by Pinto, Fariña and Fernández, reports on a technique that helps disambiguate the meaning of the words used to fill in typical web search forms, thus improving the accuracy

of the results; the fourth paper was written by Palacios and Fernández de Viana, and reports on a number of optimisations that are applicable to FOIL, which is a well-known inductive logic programming algorithm that is applied to extracting information from web pages; the fifth paper reports on a method to calculate the similarity between the objects returned by a query, which may help reduce duplicated records found on the web, for instance, and it was written by Blázquez, Arias, Luque and Sánchez; the sixth paper was written by De la Rosa and Gasca, and reports on a technique that helps gather networks of topic-related people from the web; the seventh paper, which was written by Guerrero, Juiz and Puigjaner, reports on a technique that helps evaluate and improve the performance of typical web applications; the eighth paper, which was written by Sánchez, Moreno, Segrera and López, reports on a conceptual framework that helps software engineers develop recommender systems; the ninth paper reports on a system that helps gather learning objects, and was written by Gil-González and García-Peñalvo; the tenth paper was written by Reina-Quintero, and surveys current approaches to modelling navigation in web applications, with emphasis on the model-driven techniques; the eleventh paper reports on using OCL to model semantic web services, and it was written by Sánchez, Acuña, Cavero and Marcos.

In summary, these papers report on a broad number of techniques that help software engineers face the problem of designing and building software agents that must gather data from user-friendly websites and incorporate them into automated business processes. The papers by Rivero, Pinto et al., Palacios and Fernández de Viana, and Blazquez et al. provide part of the foundations to build web wrapping systems; the paper by Frantz provides the foundation to design integration processes amongst web applications. De la Rosa and Gasca, Guerrero et al., Sánchez et al., Gil-González and García-Peñalvo, on the contrary, reported on applications of integrating web applications, thus providing an overall idea of the broad range of problems in which integrating web applications may provide added value. The papers by Reina-Quintero and Sánchez et al. focus on methodological aspects.

We are also thankful to the Spanish Ministry of Education, the FERDER programme and the Andalusian Government for grants TIN2007-64119, TIN2007-29667-E and JA TIC-2602, which supported the workshops from which the papers in this special issue were selected.