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Proceedings

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Preface

Task analysis and modelling have existed for many years, initially for training purposes but latterly for providing a principled approach to improving the usability of existing and proposed interactive systems. There have been many successes along with critical appraisal of the utility of task analysis. The community remains strong, active and enthusiastic. Over the years we have developed a plethora of theoretical approaches, models and techniques. These differ in terms of what is modelled, the nature of the representations and notations used, their scalability, the ease with which they can be applied with good effect, and the ease with which they can direct the design of systems to support task execution.

Task models and associated diagrams that represent task knowledge and behavior are in demand now as much as they ever were. Good design is fundamental, appreciated by users, sells and improves the quality of our daily lives, and good system design means supporting users and their interaction with technology. Technology is changing – we now have mobile and pervasive systems – and yet we still need to analyze the goals and tasks undertaken using these systems. The nature of the tasks might be different (shorter in duration, overlapping, needing to be performed more quickly, be routed in communication and entertainment), but it is still important to understand, model and support user goals.

The proceedings give a flavor of the issues facing task modelling at this moment in time. A primary aim of Tamodia as a conference series is to educate, to promote and exchange existing ideas and problem solutions, and to generate new ideas and associated research programmes. As in previous years the scope of the papers is broad. This year we were very privileged that the invited talk on 'Modelling Activity Switching' was given by Stephen Payne, from Manchester Business School. Other highlights of the conference included sessions on Workflow-Based Systems; Task Patterns; Task Models for Non-standard Applications; Model-Driven Engineering; Task-Based Evaluation and Testing; and Extending Task Models.

A rigorous refereeing process was applied to the papers, and the standard of the accepted papers is high and represents a good cross-section of academic research and to a lesser extent industrial research. We are grateful to the authors for submitting their papers to Tamodia and to the many people who took part in refereeing including the Programme Committee members. These contributions have made the conference series a success.

The proceedings is a valuable information resource for both researchers and industry members alike, who are interested in applying task analysis and modelling techniques to an ever-widening range of domains and problems. The reported research is diverse and gives some indication of the new directions in which task analysis theories, methods, techniques and tools are progressing.