

Preface

The success encountered by the Web has demonstrated that tightly coupled software systems are only useful for niche markets. Loosely coupled software systems can be more flexible, more adaptive and often more appropriate in practice. Loose coupling makes allows systems to interact with other systems, possibly legacy systems, that share very little with it.

Web services are at the crossing of distributed computing and loosely coupled systems. When applications adopt service-oriented architectures, they can evolve during their lifespan more easily and adapt better to changing or unpredictable environments. When properly implemented, services can be discovered and invoked dynamically using non-proprietary mechanisms, while each service can still be implemented in a black-box manner. This is important from a business perspective since each service can be implemented using any technology, independently of the others.

Each service can be implemented using any technology, independently from the others. What matters is that everybody agrees on the integration technology, and there is a consensus about this in today's middleware market: customers want to use Web technologies. Despite these promises, however, service integrators, developers, and providers need to create methods, tools and techniques to support cost-effective development and the use of dependable services and service-oriented applications.

The IEEE European Conference on Web Services (ECOWS) is the premier conference for both researchers and practitioners to exchange the latest advances in the state of the art and practices of Web Services in Europe. The main objectives of this conference are to facilitate the exchange between researchers and practitioners and to foster future collaborations in Europe and beyond.

The seventh IEEE European Conference on Web Services was held from November 9 - 11, 2009 in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. Previous conferences in the ECOWS series were held in Erfurt, Germany (2003, 2004), Växjö, Sweden (2005), Zurich, Switzerland (2006), Halle, Germany (2007) and Dublin, Ireland (2008). The main conference consisted of two parallel research tracks presenting novel research results and a business track presenting the deployment of Web Services in an industrial setting.

For the research track, we received 49 full research paper submissions. All of these submissions were rigorously peer reviewed by at least three PC members. We finally accepted 20 full research papers, giving an acceptance rate of 40%. We are convinced that these papers are of high quality and offer interesting and stimulating insights into the continuously evolving research area of web services.

Once again, ECOWS proved to be not only a European, but also a truly international conference. Not only did ECOWS 2009 have authors from a large number of European countries; among the accepted papers were also papers from authors from Africa, and North and South America.

However, not only the geographic distribution of ECOWS papers is remarkable. Also, the wide range of covered topics is quite impressive. The submissions show that the trends evident at last year's ECOWS are still there: the discovery and composition of web services and the semantic web continue to play an important role in the research. Additionally, service monitoring and economical aspects of web services are gaining increased attention.

For the business track we were able to attract notable speakers from industry, who shared their insights from the practice with the attendants.

As keynote speakers, we invited prof. Fabio Casati from the University of Trento, dr. Mahmoud Naghshineh, director of Services Delivery Research at IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, and Pim van der Horst, MBa, Chief Information Officer at KAS BANK, The Netherlands. These three keynote speakers highlighted from different perspectives (academia, research labs, industry) key research challenges in the area of web services.

The ECOWS 2009 main conference was accompanied by three workshops:

- 4th Workshop on Emerging Web Service Technology (WEWST)
- 8th Semantic Web Services (SWS) Challenge Workshop
- 1st European Workshop on Service Systems (EWOSS)

These three workshops complemented the program of the main conference nicely, focusing on diverse domains such as technologies, semantic web, and service science.

Finally, we would like to thank the many people that have helped to make this conference a success:

- First of all, all the authors that submitted papers. Without them, there would be no conference.
- Second, our PC members who spent a lot of time and effort to provide detailed and constructive reviews. Without them, there would be no high quality, interesting and inspiring conference. Their continuing support is an important fundament for the successful development of the ECOWS conference that has been evident over the last few years.
- Third, the business chair and all the people from industry that made room in their busy schedule to attend ECOWS. Without them, ECOWS would not be the healthy mixture of academia and practice it is today.
- Fourth, the workshop chair and the organizers of the workshops. ECOWS would lack a forum for intense discussions and presentations of cutting-edge results without their contributions.
- Last, but not least, thanks go to all the people involved in the local organization. Without them, ECOWS 2009 would not have been as pleasurable a conference as it was.

We hope that you find the papers in this volume as interesting as we did and that they will inspire your work and convince you to attend and submit to future ECOWS conferences.

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