
WORKSHOP REPORT

7th Dutch-Belgian Information Retrieval Workshop
March 28- 29, 2007
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

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The 7th Dutch-Belgian Information Retrieval Workshop on March 28 and 29, 2007 was hosted at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium. The DIR workshop was held for the second time at this university. Compared to its 2002 edition at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven the DIR workshop has gained in importance over the years and is now run in a two-day format. During the two days of DIR 2007 we have welcomed 94 participants.

The first day of the conference was held in the historical town of Leuven in the 18th century *College De Valk*. During this first day we have welcomed several keynote speakers. Thomas Hofmann, Director of Engineering of the Google Zurich European Engineering Centre, Switzerland, gave his lecture the title *Beyond the Library – Organizing the World’s Information*. Nick Craswell, Associate Researcher of Microsoft Research Cambridge, UK unraveled for us the *Challenges in Web Information Retrieval*. The last keynote lecture of the day is by Douglas W. Oard, Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, USA, entitled *But How Will They Use It? Thinking About Evaluation of Integrated Multilingual Multimedia Information Systems*. During this first day there was one full paper presentation on the topic of evaluation in information retrieval. Tobias Blanke and Mounia Lalmas presented *Theoretical Benchmarks of Evaluation Methodologies in XML Retrieval*, where the goal is to evaluate the relevancy and the granularity fit of retrieved XML segments.

DIR is a forum that especially addresses Ph.D. students. During the lunch break and the poster session, there was plenty of time for them to meet our keynote lecturers and to discuss with them the Ph.D. research.

The Dutch Working Community on Information Sciences (WGI) sponsored the award of the best student paper consisting of the student registration fee for one of the next SIGIR conferences. This year Tobias Blanke was the lucky one. After the award ceremony we had a lovely dinner at the Faculty Club located in the *Groot Begijnhof* of Leuven in premises dating from the 13th century.

For the second day of the workshop we moved to the campus of Sciences and Technology at the outskirts of Leuven and more specifically to the 16th century Arenberg Castle. Our keynote speaker of this day was Josef Sivic, Research fellow at the University of Oxford, UK, who enchanted the public during his lecture on *Efficient Visual Search and Automatic Annotation of Videos*. During the second day there were several full paper presentations, featuring indexing issues and a variety of information retrieval applications. *Applying Hash-based Indexing in Text-based Information Retrieval* by Benno Stein and Martin Potthast analyzed several hash-based indexing techniques. Joris D'hondt, Joris Vertommen, Dirk Cattrysse, and Joost Duflou presented new weighting schemes suitable for capturing relationships between documents in a lecture entitled *Development of a Mid-frequency Favoring Weighting Scheme for Document Clustering*. *Content-based Image Retrieval via Multi-scale Graph-based Segmentation* by Iris Vanhamel, Cosmin Mihai, Hichem Sahli, and Ioanis Pratikakis focused on an image segmentation technique based on a multiscale water-shed driven algorithm. In *Memory Based Learning and the Interpretation of Numbers in Archaeological Reports* Hans Paijmans and Sander Wubben explained the extraction and classification of numbers in archaeological reports. In the last presentation, *Support for Decision Making: Electoral Search*, Valentin Jijkoun, Maarten Marx, Maarten de Rijke, and Frank van Waveren presented a tool for searching and comparing programs of political parties.

This workshop would not have been possible without the hard work of the authors and the reviewers and we are very grateful to them. We would like to thank the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven for hosting the workshop and are especially grateful to our sponsors. The workshop was organized under the auspices of the Dutch Working Community on Information Sciences (WGI) and the Dutch research school for Information and Knowledge Systems (SIKS). We are deeply grateful to our diamond sponsors: the audiovisual research community (AVS), the STEVIN program of the Dutch-Flemish Language Union (NTU), and the Flemish Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology (IBBT). We wish to mention the IRSG, the Information Retrieval Specialist Group of the British Computer Society (BCS), an organization associated to WGI. Without their financial aid we would have been forced to raise the workshop fees substantially.

We would finally like to thank Jan De Beer, the web master of the DIR 2007 Workshop and safeguard of the registration system. More information on DIR 2007 and its proceedings can be found at: <http://www.cs.kuleuven.be/~liir/conferences/dir2007/>

The 8th Dutch-Belgian Information Retrieval Workshop (DIR 2008) will be held at the University of Maastricht on April 14 and 15, 2008 and is organized by Eduard Hoenkamp.