Community Systems: The World Online

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Abstract. The Web is about you and me. Until now, for the most part, it has denoted a corpus of information that we put online sometime in the past, and the most celebrated Web application is keyword search over this corpus. Sites such as del.icio.us, flickr, MySpace, Slashdot, Wikipedia, Yahoo! Answers, and YouTube, which are driven by user-generated content, are forcing us to rethink the Web — it is no longer just a static repository of content; it is a medium that connects us to each other. What are the ramifications of this fundamental shift? What are the new challenges in supporting and amplifying this shift?

About the Speaker

Raghu Ramakrishnan is VP and Research Fellow at Yahoo! Research, where he heads the Community Systems group. He is on leave from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he is Professor of Computer Sciences, and was founder and CTO of QUIQ, a company that pioneered question-answering communities such as Yahoo! Answers, and provided collaborative customer support for several companies, including Compaq and Sun. His research is in the area of database systems, with a focus on data retrieval, analysis, and mining. He has developed scalable algorithms for clustering, decision-tree construction, and itemset counting, and was among the first to investigate mining of continuously evolving, stream data. His work on query optimization and deductive databases has found its way into several commercial database systems, and his work on extending SQL to deal with queries over sequences has influenced the design of window functions in SQL:1999. His paper on the Birch clustering algorithm received the SIGMOD 10-Year Test-of-Time award, and he has written the widely-used text "Database Management Systems" (WCB/McGraw-Hill, with J. Gehrke), now in its third edition.

He is Chair of ACM SIGMOD, on the Board of Directors of ACM SIGKDD and the Board of Trustees of the VLDB Endowment, and has served as editor-in-chief of the Journal of Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery, associate editor of ACM Transactions on Database Systems, and the Database area editor of the Journal of Logic Programming. Dr. Ramakrishnan is a Fellow of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), and has received several awards, including a Distinguished Alumnus Award from IIT Madras, a Packard Foundation Fellowship, an NSF Presidential Young Investigator Award, and an ACM SIGMOD Contributions Award.