

Preface

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The recently launched quarterly journal *4OR* publishes in almost every issue a state-of-the-art survey written by prominent scholars on invitation by the editors. Originally, we invited Peter L. Hammer to write a survey on the Logical Analysis of Data. Being aware of his limited time availability, and wanting to “attract” him, we included in our invitation the list of the surveys published in the period 2003–2005, in order to highlight that his work would appear in a high-level context. His answer was enthusiastic: not only did he accept, but he also proposed that we edit a volume of the *Annals of Operations Research* presenting the already published surveys, in order to make them more widely available to the Operations Research community. We agreed to give the authors the opportunity to revise and update their texts, and established that all the material was going to be sent to him at the beginning of January 2007. While finalizing the editing of this volume, right after Christmas 2006, we learned the very sad news of Peter’s tragic death.

The Combinatorial Optimization community has lost one of its founders, and will miss the illuminating guidance, the extraordinary personality and the stimulating editorial activity of Peter L. Hammer (1936–2006), to whom this volume is affectionately dedicated.