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Preface

These proceedings contain the refereed technical papers and posters presented at the 30th Annual European Conference on Information Retrieval (ECIR 2008). ECIR is the annual conference of the British Computer Society's specialist group in Information Retrieval (BCS-IRSG). This year the conference was organised by the Department of Computing Science, University of Glasgow.

ECIR 2008 received 139 full paper submissions. Many of these submissions came from outside Europe, and 25 countries are represented in the final ECIR 2008 programme, reflecting the international popularity and reputation of the conference series. All submitted papers were reviewed by at least three members of the international programme committee. Thirty-three papers were selected as full research papers and a further 19 were accepted as short research papers. Of these 52 selected papers, 26 have a student as the primary author indicating that the traditional student focus of the conference is still relevant today. The accepted papers themselves come from a mixture of universities, research institutes, and commercial organisations.

The collection of papers presented in these proceedings demonstrates the commitment of Information Retrieval to sound theoretical research allied with strong empirical evaluation. The topics cover core IR problems, such as evaluation and retrieval, and emerging topics such as social media and expert search. We owe a great vote of thanks to our various committees – programme and poster committees, tutorial and workshop committee and award committees – for their hard work in ensuring the quality of the ECIR 2008 programme. We really appreciate the support, expertise and effort given so freely.

ECIR 2008 marked the 30th anniversary of the conference. The programme of the conference and its venue reflected the celebratory nature of ECIR 2008, with exceptionally rich and varied scientific and social events. The conference took place in the University of Glasgow's historic and most famous venue, the Bute Hall. For the first time in ECIR's history, we organised a programme of tutorials and workshops. We are very grateful to the workshop organisers and tutorial presenters for their contributions. Following the success of previous BCS-IRSG Industry Days, we organised an Industry Day as an intrinsic part of the ECIR 2008 programme, held in the same venue as the main conference.

We are grateful to our keynote speakers, Nicholas J. Belkin, Amit Singhal, and Bettina Berendt, for their stimulating contributions to the conference.

We are also grateful to our sponsoring institutions, Google, Matrixware Information Services, Microsoft Research, and Yahoo! Research, for their support of ECIR 2008.

Our final thanks go to Peter Dickman and Jon Ritchie, for dealing with all local arrangements, Claire Harper at the University of Glasgow's Conference & Visitor Services, who sorted out the registration process and the preparation of

the conference venues with efficiency and tact, and the many local volunteers, for their huge contribution to the smooth running of ECIR 2008.

March 2008

Craig Macdonald
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Table of Contents

Invited Presentations

Some(What) Grand Challenges for Information Retrieval	1
<i>Nicholas J. Belkin</i>	
Web Search: Challenges and Directions	2
<i>Amit Singhal</i>	
You Are a Document Too: Web Mining and IR for Next-Generation Information Literacy	3
<i>Bettina Berendt</i>	

Evaluation

Discounted Cumulated Gain Based Evaluation of Multiple-Query IR Sessions	4
<i>Kalervo Järvelin, Susan L. Price, Lois M.L. Delcambre, and Marianne Lykke Nielsen</i>	
Here or There: Preference Judgments for Relevance	16
<i>Ben Carterette, Paul N. Bennett, David Maxwell Chickering, and Susan T. Dumais</i>	
Using Clicks as Implicit Judgments: Expectations Versus Observations	28
<i>Falk Scholer, Milad Shokouhi, Bodo Billerbeck, and Andrew Turpin</i>	

Web IR

Clustering Template Based Web Documents	40
<i>Thomas Gottron</i>	
Effective Pre-retrieval Query Performance Prediction Using Similarity and Variability Evidence	52
<i>Ying Zhao, Falk Scholer, and Yohannes Tsegay</i>	
iCluster: A Self-organizing Overlay Network for P2P Information Retrieval	65
<i>Paraskevi Raftopoulou and Euripides G.M. Petrakis</i>	

Social Media

Labeling Categories and Relationships in an Evolving Social Network . . .	77
<i>Ming-Shun Lin and Hsin-Hsi Chen</i>	

Automatic Construction of an Opinion-Term Vocabulary for Ad Hoc Retrieval 89
Giambattista Amati, Edgardo Ambrosi, Marco Bianchi, Carlo Gaibisso, and Giorgio Gambosi

A Comparison of Social Bookmarking with Traditional Search 101
Beate Krause, Andreas Hotho, and Gerd Stumme

Cross-Lingual Information Retrieval

Effects of Aligned Corpus Quality and Size in Corpus-Based CLIR 114
Tuomas Talvensaari

Exploring the Effects of Language Skills on Multilingual Web Search . . . 126
Jennifer Marlow, Paul Clough, Juan Cigarrán Recuero, and Javier Artiles

A Novel Implementation of the FITE-TRT Translation Method 138
Aki Loponen, Ari Pirkola, Kalervo Järvelin, and Heikki Keskustalo

Theory I

The BNB Distribution for Text Modeling 150
Stéphane Clinchant and Eric Gaussier

Utilizing Passage-Based Language Models for Document Retrieval 162
Michael Bendersky and Oren Kurland

A Statistical View of Binned Retrieval Models 175
Donald Metzler, Trevor Strohman, and W. Bruce Croft

Video

Video Corpus Annotation Using Active Learning 187
Stéphane Ayache and Georges Quénot

Use of Implicit Graph for Recommending Relevant Videos: A Simulated Evaluation 199
David Vallet, Frank Hopfgartner, and Joemon Jose

Representation I

Using Terms from Citations for IR: Some First Results 211
Anna Ritchie, Simone Teufel, and Stephen Robertson

Automatic Extraction of Domain-Specific Stopwords from Labeled Documents 222
Masoud Makrehchi and Mohamed S. Kamel

Wikipedia and E-Books

Book Search Experiments: Investigating IR Methods for the Indexing and Retrieval of Books	234
<i>Hengzhi Wu, Gabriella Kazai, and Michael Taylor</i>	
Using a Task-Based Approach in Evaluating the Usability of BoBIs in an E-book Environment	246
<i>Noorhidawati Abdullah and Forbes Gibb</i>	
Exploiting Locality of Wikipedia Links in Entity Ranking	258
<i>Jovan Pehcevski, Anne-Marie Vercoustre, and James A. Thom</i>	
The Importance of Link Evidence in Wikipedia	270
<i>Jaap Kamps and Marijn Koolen</i>	

Expert Search

High Quality Expertise Evidence for Expert Search	283
<i>Craig Macdonald, David Hannah, and Iadh Ounis</i>	
Associating People and Documents	296
<i>Krisztian Balog and Maarten de Rijke</i>	
Modeling Documents as Mixtures of Persons for Expert Finding	309
<i>Pavel Serdyukov and Djoerd Hiemstra</i>	
Ranking Users for Intelligent Message Addressing	321
<i>Vitor R. Carvalho and William W. Cohen</i>	

Representation II

Facilitating Query Decomposition in Query Language Modeling by Association Rule Mining Using Multiple Sliding Windows	334
<i>Dawei Song, Qiang Huang, Stefan Rüger, and Peter Bruza</i>	
Viewing Term Proximity from a Different Perspective	346
<i>Ruihua Song, Michael J. Taylor, Ji-Rong Wen, Hsiao-Wuen Hon, and Yong Yu</i>	
Extending Probabilistic Data Fusion Using Sliding Windows.....	358
<i>David Lillis, Fergus Toolan, Rem Collier, and John Dunnion</i>	

Theory II

Semi-supervised Document Classification with a Mislabeling Error Model	370
<i>Anastasia Krithara, Massih R. Amini, Jean-Michel Renders, and Cyril Goutte</i>	

Improving Term Frequency Normalization for Multi-topical Documents
and Application to Language Modeling Approaches 382
Seung-Hoon Na, In-Su Kang, and Jong-Hyeok Lee

Probabilistic Document Length Priors for Language Models 394
Roi Blanco and Alvaro Barreiro

Short Papers

Applying Maximum Entropy to Known-Item Email Retrieval 406
Sirvan Yahyaei and Christof Monz

Computing Information Retrieval Performance Measures Efficiently in
the Presence of Tied Scores 414
Frank McSherry and Marc Najork

Towards Characterization of Actor Evolution and Interactions in News
Corpora 422
*Rohan Choudhary, Sameep Mehta, Amitabha Bagchi, and
Rahul Balakrishnan*

The Impact of Semantic Class Identification and Semantic Role
Labeling on Natural Language Answer Extraction 430
Bahadorreza Ofoghi, John Yearwood, and Liping Ma

Improving Complex Interactive Question Answering with Wikipedia
Anchor Text 438
Ian MacKinnon and Olga Vechtomova

A Cluster-Sensitive Graph Model for Query-Oriented Multi-document
Summarization 446
Furu Wei, Wenjie Li, Qin Lu, and Yanxiang He

Evaluating Text Representations for Retrieval of the Best Group of
Documents 454
Xiaoyong Liu and W. Bruce Croft

Enhancing Relevance Models with Adaptive Passage Retrieval 463
Xiaoyan Li and Zhigang Zhu

Ontology Matching Using Vector Space 472
Zahra Eidoon, Nasser Yazdani, and Farhad Oroumchian

Accessibility in Information Retrieval 482
Leif Azzopardi and Vishwa Vinay

Semantic Relationships in Multi-modal Graphs for Automatic Image
Annotation 490
Vassilios Stathopoulos, Jana Urban, and Joemon Jose

Conversation Detection in Email Systems	498
<i>Shai Erera and David Carmel</i>	
Efficient Multimedia Time Series Data Retrieval Under Uniform Scaling and Normalisation	506
<i>Waiyawuth Euachongprasit and Chotirat Ann Ratanamahatana</i>	
Integrating Structure and Meaning: A New Method for Encoding Structure for Text Classification	514
<i>Jonathan M. Fishbein and Chris Eliasmith</i>	
A Wikipedia-Based Multilingual Retrieval Model	522
<i>Martin Potthast, Benno Stein, and Maik Anderka</i>	
Filaments of Meaning in Word Space	531
<i>Jussi Karlgren, Anders Holst, and Magnus Sahlgren</i>	
Finding the Best Picture: Cross-Media Retrieval of Content	539
<i>Koen Deschacht and Marie-Francine Moens</i>	
Robust Query-Specific Pseudo Feedback Document Selection for Query Expansion	547
<i>Qiang Huang, Dawei Song, and Stefan Ruger</i>	
Expert Search Evaluation by Supporting Documents	555
<i>Craig Macdonald and Iadh Ounis</i>	
Posters	
Ranking Categories for Web Search	564
<i>Gianluca Demartini, Paul-Alexandru Chirita, Ingo Brunkhorst, and Wolfgang Nejdl</i>	
Key Design Issues with Visualising Images Using Google Earth	570
<i>Paul Clough and Simon Read</i>	
Methods for Augmenting Semantic Models with Structural Information for Text Classification	575
<i>Jonathan M. Fishbein and Chris Eliasmith</i>	
Use of Temporal Expressions in Web Search	580
<i>Sergio Nunes, Cristina Ribeiro, and Gabriel David</i>	
Towards an Automatically Generated Music Information System Via Web Content Mining	585
<i>Markus Schedl, Peter Knees, Tim Pohle, and Gerhard Widmer</i>	
Investigating the Effectiveness of Clickthrough Data for Document Reordering	591
<i>Milad Shokouhi, Falk Scholer, and Andrew Turpin</i>	

Analysis of Link Graph Compression Techniques	596
<i>David Hannah, Craig Macdonald, and Iadh Ounis</i>	
An Evaluation and Analysis of Incorporating Term Dependency for Ad-Hoc Retrieval	602
<i>Hao Lang, Bin Wang, Gareth Jones, Jintao Li, and Yang Xu</i>	
An Evaluation Measure for Distributed Information Retrieval Systems	607
<i>Hans Friedrich Witschel, Florian Holz, Gregor Heinrich, and Sven Teresniak</i>	
Optimizing Language Models for Polarity Classification	612
<i>Michael Wiegand and Dietrich Klakow</i>	
Improving Web Image Retrieval Using Image Annotations and Inference Network	617
<i>Peng Huang, Jiajun Bu, Chun Chen, and Guang Qiu</i>	
Slide-Film Interface: Overcoming Small Screen Limitations in Mobile Web Search	622
<i>Roman Y. Shtykh, Jian Chen, and Qun Jin</i>	
A Document-Centered Approach to a Natural Language Music Search Engine	627
<i>Peter Knees, Tim Pohle, Markus Schedl, Dominik Schnitzer, and Klaus Seyerlehner</i>	
Collaborative Topic Tracking in an Enterprise Environment	632
<i>Conny Franke and Omar Alonso</i>	
Graph-Based Profile Similarity Calculation Method and Evaluation	637
<i>Hassan Naderi and Béatrice Rumpler</i>	
The Good, the Bad, the Difficult, and the Easy: Something Wrong with Information Retrieval Evaluation?	642
<i>Stefano Mizzaro</i>	
Hybrid Method for Personalized Search in Digital Libraries	647
<i>Thanh-Trung Van and Michel Beigbeder</i>	
Exploiting Session Context for Information Retrieval - A Comparative Study	652
<i>Gaurav Pandey and Julia Luxemburger</i>	
Structural Re-ranking with Cluster-Based Retrieval	658
<i>Seung-Hoon Na, In-Su Kang, and Jong-Hyeok Lee</i>	
Automatic Vandalism Detection in Wikipedia	663
<i>Martin Potthast, Benno Stein, and Robert Gerling</i>	

Evaluating Paragraph Retrieval for <i>why</i> -QA	669
<i>Suzan Verberne, Lou Boves, Nelleke Oostdijk, and Peter-Arno Coppen</i>	
Revisit of Nearest Neighbor Test for Direct Evaluation of Inter-document Similarities	674
<i>Seung-Hoon Na, In-Su Kang, and Jong-Hyeok Lee</i>	
A Comparison of Named Entity Patterns from a User Analysis and a System Analysis	679
<i>Masnizah Mohd, Fabio Crestani, and Ian Ruthven</i>	
Query-Based Inter-document Similarity Using Probabilistic Co-relevance Model	684
<i>Seung-Hoon Na, In-Su Kang, and Jong-Hyeok Lee</i>	
Using Coherence-Based Measures to Predict Query Difficulty	689
<i>Jiyin He, Martha Larson, and Maarten de Rijke</i>	
Efficient Processing of Category-Restricted Queries for Web Directories	695
<i>Ismail Sengor Altingovde, Fazli Can, and Özgür Ulusoy</i>	
Focused Browsing: Providing Topical Feedback for Link Selection in Hypertext Browsing	700
<i>Gareth J.F. Jones and Quixiang Li</i>	
The Impact of Named Entity Normalization on Information Retrieval for Question Answering	705
<i>Mahboob Alam Khalid, Valentin Jijkoun, and Maarten de Rijke</i>	
Workshop Summaries	
Efficiency Issues in Information Retrieval Workshop	711
<i>Roi Blanco and Fabrizio Silvestri</i>	
Exploiting Semantic Annotations in Information Retrieval	712
<i>Omar Alonso and Hugo Zaragoza</i>	
Workshop on Novel Methodologies for Evaluation in Information Retrieval	713
<i>Mark Sanderson, Martin Braschler, Nicola Ferro, and Julio Gonzalo</i>	
Tutorials	
ECIR 2008 Tutorials	714
Author Index	717