Managing Editor's Column

Dear Readers:

Here is the pilot issue J.UCS 0,0 (1994) of the Journal of Universal Computer Science. J.UCS is a refereed journal dealing with all aspects of computer science: hence the pretentious term "universal". Its contributions are published in electronic form, but also (at the end of each year) in a printed and a CD ROM version by Springer Pub.Co. The format of all papers is - up to small details such as page numbering - identical in the electronic and the printed versions. This makes it easy to quote papers in exactly the form you are used to from more traditional journals.

This pilot issue is somewhat different from all other issues of J.UCS: it does not contain scientific refereed material but papers of general interest concerning hypermedia electronic publishing. Also, it is the only issue that will not appear in print: of course you can hardcopy any part of it yourself! The first issue with refereed material will appear in January 95.

This issue starts with a substantial paper by Odlyzko analyzing the basic reason for electronic journals like J.UCS: technical journals in printed form are doomed, and will not survive much longer, particularly in areas where computer networks are quite widespread, such as in computer science! It is followed by an overview of applications of hypermedia systems by Lennon et al.: electronic publishing is just one of the many uses of networked hypermedia systems; and since all educational J.UCS servers provide full hypermedia capabilities they may also be used for other purposes. The third paper by Calude et al. explains the basic philosophy of J.UCS: it was the seminal paper that got J.UCS off the ground. The third paper by Schmaranz and myself is a somewhat more technical description of J.UCS: it also compares J.UCS to other efforts. In the fifth paper Andrews et al. explain why it was necessary to use a "second gneration" hypermedia system as basis of J.UCS: "first generation" systems such as the popular WWW do not provide enough functionality for a serious publishing effort. The final paper by Lennon et al. puts multimedia and the internet in a new perspective: a printed version of this has recently appeared in Datamation.

In addition to the journal proper you find a list of the editorial board of J.UCS: many of the editors have made material such as a CV, a photo or a list of publications available, so that J.UCS readers can look up who is doing what in which area. There are also two lists of J.UCS servers: the first one is the List of Publicly Accessible J.UCS Servers; the second is a complete list of all places currently running or planning to run a J.UCS server: either their full server is not operational yet or else the organisation at issue does not want to provide access to users outside their LAN. Finally, you can find a complete list of Computing Review Categories as they are used for classification of papers: the classification scheme of ACM's Computing Reviews has been adopted with the permission of the ACM; categories are hyperlinked with editors, so you can find out who is in charge of what areas and vice versa.

Let me conclude this with a few technical remarks: J.UCS is running on a network of Hyper-G servers. You may not feel much of this when you use one

of the WWW viewers such as Mosaic; however, notice that functions like full text search even within user defined scopes are possible and - once more than one journal is installed on the same basis - even searches across even server boundaries and a number of other neat features are available. Maybe you want to have a closer look at Hyper-G and its native viewers Harmony and Amadeus that make optimal use of Hyper-G's features, yet allow to peruse e.g. WWW, Gopher and WAIS much as you are used to, with automatic caching thrown in for you. Try the FTP server iicm.tu-graz.ac.at in directory pub/Hyper-G for further info and software, after you have read the pertinent papers in JUCS 0,0 i.e. the current issue!

The use of online electronic hypermedia journals is traditionally slow due to network delays. I hope that you find J.UCS somewhat better since we don't use a single server, but a network of servers: please try to use a server with which you have a fast communication link or, better still, you may want to install a J.UCS server in your own Local Area Network. Since the software is free and installation is easy this is the best solution if J.UCS is used reasonably frequently in your organisation.

Finally, the current J.UCS editorial board is quite substantial. But covering all aspects of computer science is also a momentuous task! Thus, if you are interested in joining the editorial board, please send me an email with a vitae, and with the name of one or two of the members of the current editorial board who know you: the J.UCS editorial board will be continuously increased by eminent computer scientists. However, we will make an attempt to cover all areas fairly evenly, in both the scientific and geographic sense.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, points of criticism or such, please send them to me: I will answer all of them personally. I will also mention issues of general interest in the Column of the Managing Editor of the always next issue of J.UCS.

For now: good reading! If you have a nice contribution, please don't forget to submit it to J.UCS: this may well be the fastest way to get something quotable published; and since J.UCS is a refereed journal with a printed version and (I hope you agree!) a great editorial board it has all the prestige you may want.

Yours sincerely

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