Preface

We are very pleased to present the proceedings of the 13th European Conference on Research and Advanced Technologies for Digital Libraries (ECDL 2009), which took place on the beautiful island of Corfu, Greece from September 27 to October 2, 2009. Since the first conference in Pisa (1997) ECDL has been held in Heraklion (1998), Paris (1999), Lisbon (2000), Darmstadt (2001), Rome (2002), Trondheim (2003), Bath (2004), Vienna (2005), Alicante (2006), Budapest (2007), and Aarhus (2008). Over the years, ECDL has created a strong interdisciplinary community of researchers and practitioners in the field of digital libraries, and has formed a substantial body of scholarly publications contained in the conference proceedings.

The general theme of the 13th European Conference on Digital Libraries (ECDL 2009) was “Digital Societies” and its organization was assigned to the Laboratory on Digital Libraries and Electronic Publishing of the Department of Archives and Library Sciences, Ionian University, Corfu, Greece.

“Digital societies” encapsulate the involvement of user communities in various aspects of information management stages, such as the creation of new information, enrichment of information artifacts, sharing and distribution of information objects, retrieval and filtering and so on. All these activities are augmented by the exploitation of new approaches and functionalities such as social networking, collaboration and management of annotations and tagging, and they require a thorough examination of metadata issues and services. Under the lens of its general theme, the conference covered a wide range of topics, such as architectures, formal issues and conceptual views of digital libraries, users’ studies, Semantic Web and Web 2.0, knowledge organization, metadata, information retrieval, digital curation and preservation. While some of these topics were represented in the general program of the conference, others were extensively addressed in workshops and tutorials.

This year the new concept of a “Special Track” was introduced for plenary sessions, to help high-level works receive the proper exposition to a wide audience. The conference issued four separate Special Tracks calls for papers on Infrastructures, Services, Content and Foundations. While the calls were separate, the assessment of the submissions was unified with the general call, in order to sustain the high levels of integral reviewing. As a consequence of this, only two Special Tracks survived with a minimal number of relevant papers accepted: Services and Infrastructures.

In overall, the total number of submissions was 181, which, according to our memory, is a record in the ECDL series of conferences. In the end of the reviewing process, 28 full papers were accepted (in 129 submissions, thus comprising 21.7% of the submissions). In addition 6 short papers, 20 posters and 16 demos were accepted (these include 17 original submissions to full papers that were moved
to other categories). All the areas of the world are represented by the different submissions, including Europe, USA, Canada, South America, South Africa, Asia and Oceania.

Considering the parallel and satellite events, ten workshops (another record for the ECDL) and four tutorials were organized. The workshops were: (a) Digital Curation in the Human Sciences, (b) Digital Libraries: Interoperability, Best Practices and Modelling Foundations; (c) Harvesting Metadata: Practices and Challenges; (d) The 8th European Networked Knowledge Organization Systems (NKOS) Workshop; (e) The 2nd Workshop on Very Large Digital Libraries (VLDL 2009); (f) BooksOnline 2009: 2nd Workshop on Research Advances in Large Digital Book Collections; (g) Workshop on Exploring Musical Information Spaces (WEMIS); (h) 9th International Web Archiving Workshop (IWAW 2009); (i) Conducting a Needs Assessment for a Joint EU-US Digital Library Curriculum; and (j) Cross-Language Evaluation Forum (CLEF 2009). The four tutorials were: (a) Aggregation and reuse of digital objects’ metadata from distributed digital libraries, by Cezary Mazurek and Marcin Werla; (b) Knowledge Organization Systems (KOS) in digital libraries, by Dagobert Soergel; (c) Designing user interfaces for interactive information retrieval systems and digital libraries, by Harald Reiterer and Hans-Christian Jetter; and (d) Digital preservation: Logical and bit-stream preservation using Plato, EPrints and the Cloud, by Adam Field, Hannes Kulovits, Andreas Rauber and David Tarrant. The list of workshops and tutorials represent the continuation of already established scientific entities, as well as an extension to deliberate new themes and topics.

Finally, the conference was also graced by the keynote addresses of Gary Marchionini, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA and Peter Buneman, University of Edinburgh and Digital Curation Centre, UK. Gary Marchionini’s presentation was titled “Digital Libraries as Phenotypes for Digital Societies,” while Peter Buneman gave a speech on “Curated Databases.”

The success of ECDL 2009 in quantity and quality would not be feasible without the invaluable contributions of all the members of the Program Committee, Organizing Committee, students and volunteers that supported the conference in its various stages. A special mention has to be made regarding the local support of Michalis Sfakakis, without whom a lot of issues would be executed in a deficient mode. Finally, we would like to thank the sponsoring organizations for their significant support, especially in the constrained conditions of our times.

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