

VSR 2014 Workshop Chairs' Welcome

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the VSR 2014, the first International Workshop on Vertical Search Relevance, held as part of the WWW 2014 conference in Seoul, Korea.

Background: One of the emerging trends of information needs in search engine is using vertical search intent. For example, a user may want to find a restaurant near her current location; another user may want to follow the recent development of a breaking event such as the earthquake in Japan. Recent studies reveal that vertical search engines start attracting more and more attention. Thus, designing effective ranking functions for vertical search has become practically important to improve users' search experience. However, in many verticals, the meaning of relevance is domain-specific and usually consists of multiple well-defined aspects. Thus, we have identified a list of challenging research issues in the field of relevance for vertical search, which mainly fall into two categories, including (1) how to learn an effective ranking model considering multi-facets relevance; (2) how to build effective business model in the context of specific vertical search systems.

Objectives: This workshop is dedicated to presentations and discussions on relevance for vertical search. For the workshop, we aim to bring together researchers from IR, ML, NLP, and other areas of computer and information science who are working on or interested in this area, and provide a forum for them to identify the issues and the challenges, to share their latest research results, to express a diverse range of opinions about this topic, and to discuss future directions.

Review Process: The call for papers solicited submissions in the area of vertical search. Themes of interests were diverse and spanned technologies and applications, models, algorithms, and evaluation methods. Each submission was reviewed by at least two Program Committee members and final decisions were made by the workshop chairs. PC members are listed below and include many experts in the field. We are grateful to all of them for their thorough and insightful reviews.

Program: In this year's workshop, in addition to one accepted paper, we are delighted to have several keynotes as part of the workshop. Kevin Chang from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign will give the research keynote and Kwang-yun Byun from eBay will give the industry keynote. Moreover, we are pleased to have a couple of invited talks in the workshop. Bo Zhao from Microsoft Research, Changsung Kang from Yahoo! Labs, Vidit Jain from Yahoo! India, and Marcus Chan from Yahoo! Taiwan, will give talks about their recent research on vertical search.

We hope that you will find this workshop interesting and thought-provoking and that the workshop will provide you with a valuable opportunity to share ideas with other researchers and practitioners from institutions around the world.



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VSR 2014 Workshop Organization

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Jiang Bian (*Microsoft Research, China*)
Yi Chang (*Yahoo! Labs, USA*)
Neel Sundaresan (*eBay Research Labs, USA*)

Program Committee: Changsung Kang (*Yahoo! Labs, USA*)
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