

CENG 491 Proposal:

A Conference Management and Hosting System

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Team: Hacked Hard

Members: Seyidagha Aghayev, Utku Sakil, Emre Doğu Yeşilyurt, Talat Uluç Tekbudak

1. Motivation

Conference is a meeting for researchers to present, discuss, identify important problems and formulate future research direction on specific themes. It is not easy to create a large event like a conference. Jobs like collecting paper submission from authors, assigning paper submitted to the reviewers, notifying authors about whether the paper submitted is rejected or accepted surely cause much stress and headaches if done manually. Unfortunately, there can be no effective solution to the planning of such events with manual methods. On the other hand, the need of systems for collaboration support has expanded, leading to their growing application in organizational, communication, and cooperation processes.

There is a need for applications for conference organization to support or manage the workloads. These kinds of applications are conference management systems, which are commonly used in scientific communities and organizations. There exist several conference management system applications. Some of them, such as EasyChair and OpenConf are quite popular and easy to use. But there are also drawbacks in usage of these systems:

- Scheduling of presentations and conference rooms. Distribute rooms and time slots for presentations.
- Authentication and authorization. User types and accessibility of documents.
- Management of multiple conferences at a time.

In our project, we will develop a conference management system with a conference rooms management schedule, single login authentication and with the functionality of managing multiple conferences at a time.

2. Background

A conference management system is web-based software that supports the organization of scientific conferences. It helps the program chair(s), the conference organizers, the authors and the reviewers in their respective activities. A conference management system can be regarded as a domain-specific content management system. Similar systems are used today by editors of scientific journals [1].

Among the advantages of such systems, we can mention smoother registration procedure, easy submission, search, review and evaluation of papers, creating, planning and management of conferences. First of all, registration is easier because names can be entered into a database. It will eliminate the need for endless keying of repetitive information. Second, one can upload a file into the database, where it can be later reviewed, evaluated or removed. Third, conference management issue is easy because one can plan a conference, select attendees, conference room and choose date.

All conference management systems provide all the basic functionalities needed to manage the processes of paper submission, assignment of reviewers to papers, review submission and etc. Most systems offer an automatic pre-press processing of papers and conference proceedings, automatic generation of conference program (based on manual paper clustering), authors' index and table of contents [2].

Typical functions and work-flows supported by conference management systems include:

- Receiving paper submissions
- Collecting reviewers' topic preferences
- Assigning referees to papers
- Collecting reviews
- Sharing reviews among the program committee
- Collecting final accepted versions etc. [3]

There are many conference management tools like [4, 5 and 6] with free implementations. However some of them are missing some useful facilities.

3. Proposal

In this project, existing features from conference management systems are going to be enhanced and some new features will be added. Existing features will be made more user friendly and easy to use. New features include management of multiple conferences, scheduling of presentations

and conference rooms. Also the difference from existing conference management systems will be that this system will have one type of user, who will have functionalities of Editor, Reviewer, and Author. There may be additional functionality like web page in several languages.

References

[1], [3] Conference Management System in Wikipedia,
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[4] EasyChair Conference System web site, <http://www.easychair.org/>

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[6] Microsoft's Conference Management Toolkit web site, <http://cmt.research.microsoft.com/cmt/>