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Editorial

The Semantic Web Challenge 2014



The goal of the Semantic Web Challenge is to provide researchers and industry with a forum to showcase the best Semantic Web applications, to demonstrate practical progress towards achieving the vision of the Semantic Web, and to show the value of Semantic Web technologies within various application domains.

The Semantic Web Challenge has been organised annually since 2003.

The Semantic Web Challenge 2014 took place at the 14th International Semantic Web Conference held in Riva del Garda, Italy, from 19–23 October, 2014. As in previous years, the challenge required that applications had to provide a practical value to web users or domain experts. Systems should also make use of heterogeneous information sources under diverse ownership or control, and the meaning of data should play a central role.

The Semantic Web Challenge 2014 received 15 submissions. All submissions were evaluated rigorously by a jury composed of leading scientists and experts from industry in a three-round knockout competition, according to a comprehensive set of challenge requirements. Fifteen submissions were invited to present a poster and demonstration during the ISWC conference. Following the presentation, seven finalists were chosen to give an oral presentation and live demo during a dedicated session, with the winners then being selected.

In 2014, there were four systems selected as winners, three in the Open Track, with a special Big Data Prize being awarded to the best system making use of large-scale data sets. This special issue presents expanded articles about three of these systems.

The winning system was “Mining the Web of Linked Data with RapidMiner” by Petar Ristoski, Christian Bizer and Heiko Paulheim of the Data and Web Science Group at the University of Mannheim, Germany. The application provides an extension to the RapidMiner system that allows data analysts to exploit Linked Data without the need to be familiar with the details of Semantic Web Technologies.

The submission “Enabling Live Exploration on The Graph of Things” by Danh Le Phuoc, Hoan Nguyen Mau Quoc, Hung Ngo Quoc, Tuan Tran Nhat and Manfred Hauswirth of INSIGHT Centre for Data Analytics National University of Ireland, Galway was awarded second place. This application provides a dashboard pulling together real time data from the Internet of Things.

In third place was “DIVE into the Event-Based Browsing of Linked Historical Media” by Victor de Boer, Johan Oomen, Oana

Inel, Lora Aroyo, Elco van Staveren, Werner Helmich and Dennis de Beurs from Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Hilversum; Department of Computer Science, VU University Amsterdam; Dutch National Library, the Hague; and Frontwise, Utrecht. This entry unlocks radio and television archives, providing innovative access for digital humanities scholars through a well designed and attractive user interface.

The Big Data Track Prize went to another team from the Data and Web Science Group at the University of Mannheim, comprising Oliver Lehmborg, Dominique Ritzke, Petar Ristoski, Kai Eckert, Heiko Paulheim and Christian Bizer, for “Extending Tables with Data from over a Million Websites”. The system allows a user to search for and integrate data from a wide variety of tabular formats on an impressive scale.

As in previous years, the submissions to the challenge were of high quality, provided clear demonstrations of the use of Semantic Web Data, and targeted a wide range of problems. Entries came from both academic research institutes and industrial research labs. The winning entries were well-designed and polished and supported clear use cases.

We would like to thank all the members of the jury for their detailed judgment of the strengths and weaknesses of the submitted applications. Judging the challenge is an intense process that requires significant commitment from the jury, which consisted this year of:

- Enrico Motta (Open University, UK)
- Kerry Taylor (CSIRO, AU)
- Sweitze Roffel (Elsevier, NL)
- Hideaki Takeda (National Institute of Informatics, JP)
- Bryan Thompson (SYSTAP, US)

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