

Preface

One of the important ways for users to feel comfortable with and become productive using information technology is to personalise or tailor systems to individuals or groups of users. This covers both explicit personalisation directly by the user, and implicit tailoring by systems that track users usage patterns and preferences and adapt systems and interfaces accordingly. The concept of personalisation thus is about making systems different for individual people, but the concept of personalization itself can mean different things.

One type of personalisation that is growing in use is recommender systems. Such systems take input directly or indirectly from users and based on user needs, preferences and usage patterns, recommender systems will then make personalised recommendations of products or services. These vary from recommending books to buy or TV programs to watch, to suggesting web pages to visit. The ultimate goal of such recommender systems is to reduce the amount of explicit user input and to operate, effectively, based on usage patterns alone, thus giving users what they want without them having to ask.

Personalisation and recommender systems may have different characteristics in digital library environments, because individual user behavior and aggregate traffic patterns may differ significantly from those of Web and E-commerce environments. For example, few digital libraries will see millions of transactions within a short period of time. Digital library resources may be structured (e.g., by digital librarians), and more stable (e.g., as compared with commercial sites). Digital library characteristics and usage patterns may provide opportunities for types of long-term learning that would be difficult or impractical in other environments, for example, learning about the relationships among resources in a single digital library or among resources in multiple digital libraries.

This workshop brought together researchers and practitioners, from 14 countries, whose work includes the development of personalisation and recommender systems and techniques, particularly as they apply to digital libraries. Twenty-five papers were submitted to the workshop; fifteen were accepted, covering a range of topics from basic personalisation technologies to studies of user interfaces. The workshop was also fortunate to include invited talks by Susan Dumais, Barry Smyth, and Clifford Lynch.

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