

# **The Merging of Conferences and Journals**

Jonathan Grudin, Microsoft Research

# Jonathan Grudin

- Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research  
Previously, Professor of Information & Computer Science, UCI
- Editor in Chief, *ACM TOCHI* (1997-2003)  
Associate Editor, *Computing Surveys* (since 2005) & other journals
- Conference co-chair, CSCW 98 and iConference 2011  
CSCW 2012 program chair; many program committees
- *ACM Interactions* history column editor/author since 2006
- Essays on publication culture:  
*CACM* (2), *TOCHI*, *The Information Society*, iConference 2010

# Communication Channels for Reporting Research

- Books
- Leading journals
- Lower-tier journals
- Special issues of journals
- International conferences
- Regional conferences
- Lower-tier conferences
- Symposia
- Workshops
- Professional magazines
- Mass media articles & interviews
- TED, YouTube & other online lectures
- Invited talks
- Tutorials
- Web pages
- Blogs & other social media
- and more...

# Each Field Has A Complex, Dynamic Ecology

- Within a field, channels occupy different niches, creating a unique ecosystem
- Different ecosystem models for humanities, science, art...  
... and computer science (US)

# Computer Science

Conferences and journals are migrating to occupy the same niche. What do ecologists say about this?

## The Competitive Exclusion Principle

"No two species can occupy the same niche in the same environment for a long time. One will always overcome the other, leading to either the extinction of this competitor or an evolutionary or behavioral shift towards a different ecological niche. *Complete competitors cannot coexist.*"

# Two Niches

Quality, build  
research reputation

**Leading Journals**



Networking, build  
research community

**Leading Conferences**



# Two Niches

Quality, build  
research reputation

## Leading Journals

wide  
circulation - **J**

archival - **J**

selective - **J**

open length - **J**

open-ended  
reviewing - **J**

Networking, build  
research community

## Leading Conferences

**C** - limited  
circulation

**C** - ephemeral

**C** - inclusive

**C** - limited length

**C** - deadline-  
driven

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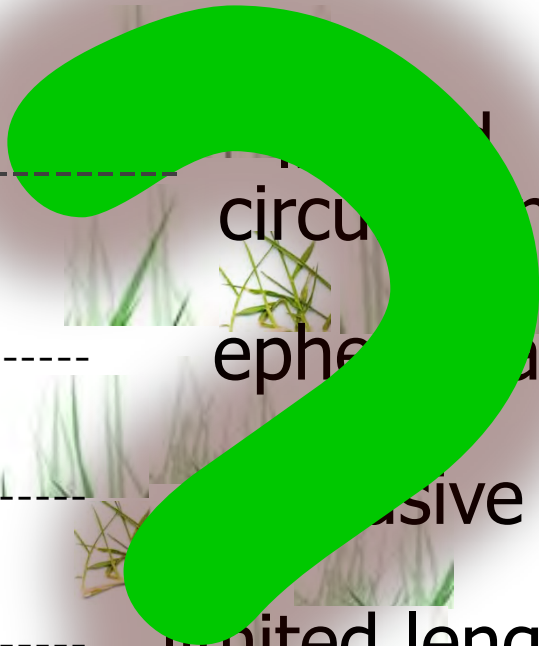
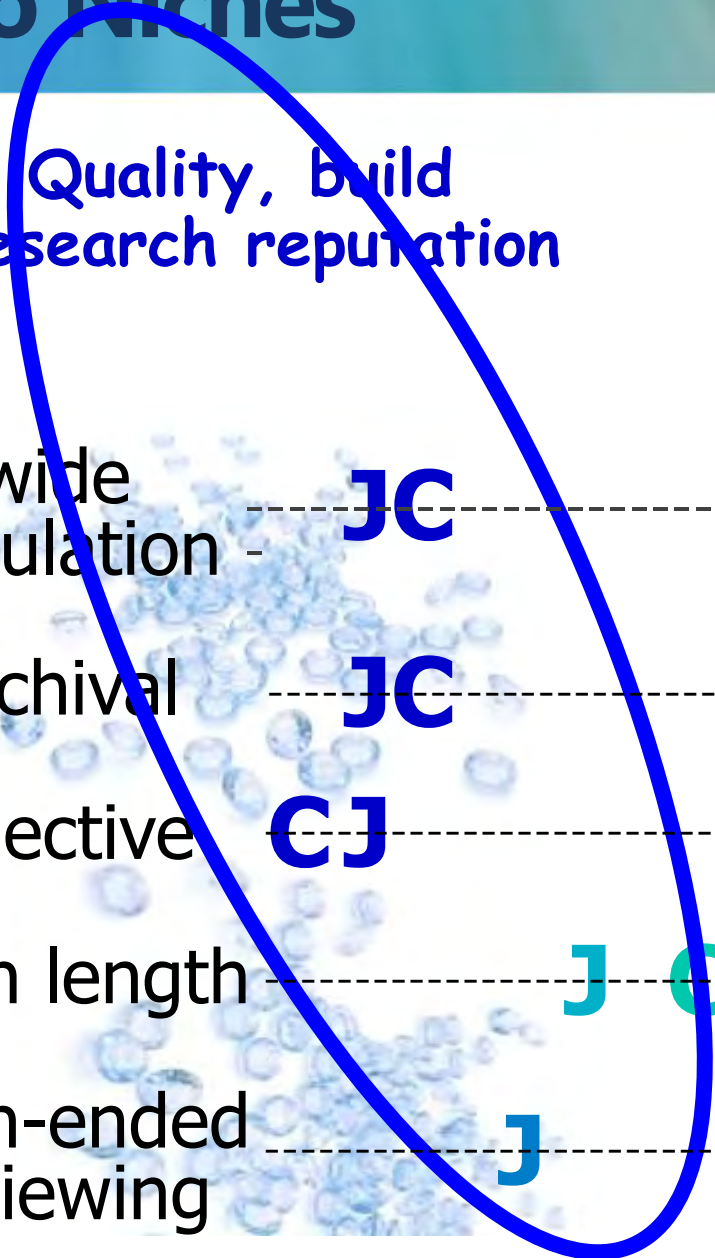
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SIG	1990	2000	2011
PLAN	12,335	4,362	2,161
GRAPH	11,811	6,298	6,093
SOFT	10,824	3,313	2,441
ART	8,955	1,917	1,048
OPS	6,801	2,356	1,828
CHI	5,023	4,950	4,306
ARCH	4,685	1,730	1,391
ADA	4,089	685	266
MOD	3,952	2,941	1,869
MIS	3,082	755	457
(all 30+)	103,489	47,042	38,707

Membership, 10 largest Special Interest Groups (1990).  
 Today only two of 37 SIGs have 3000 members.

# Efforts to Mate Conferences and Journals

1. Declare a selective conference to be a journal issue. Examples: SIGGRAPH, Infovis, ICLP. However...

## ***ACM Policy on The Publication of Conference Proceedings in ACM Journals (approved June 2012)***

**ACM journals and transactions** are designed to publish research results which are **the gold standard**... requires open-ended review cycles that ensure the most sound and polished result. **Such a standard is largely incompatible with conference review procedures which are sharply constrained by deadline.** Because of this, it is the ACM Publications Board's policy that **conference proceedings should not be published as issues of ACM journals or transactions**... The Board feels that to avoid confusion the brands "journal" and "transactions" must be **reserved for an open-ended review process.**

# Efforts to Mate Conferences and Journals

1. Declare a selective conference to be a journal issue?  
Examples: SIGGRAPH, Infovis, ICLP.
2. Invite journal paper authors to present at conferences.  
Examples: *TOCHI* -> CHI, *TiiS* -> IUI, *TACL* -> ACL.
3. Include a real revision cycle in a conference review process, like a journal special issue.  
Examples: Tabletop 2012, CSCW 2012 & 2013.
4. Journal acceptance before conference presentation.  
A conference that is "a journal that meets in a hotel."  
Examples: *PVLDB* -> VLDB, *TACO* -> HiPEAC.

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# **The Merging of Conferences and Journals**

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1960s, 1970s, 1980s.

Please send recollections of how and when proceedings were assembled & distributed.



<b>SIG</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>PLAN</b>	<b>12,335</b>	<b>6,574</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>2,765</b>	<b>2,323</b>
<b>GRAPH</b>	<b>11,811</b>	<b>6,986</b>	<b>6,298</b>	<b>7,902</b>	<b>7,216</b>
<b>SOFT</b>	<b>10,824</b>	<b>6,389</b>	<b>3,313</b>	<b>2,916</b>	<b>2,489</b>
<b>ART</b>	<b>8,955</b>	<b>3,707</b>	<b>1,917</b>	<b>1,559</b>	<b>1,123</b>
<b>OPS</b>	<b>6,801</b>	<b>4,154</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>1,793</b>	<b>1,828</b>
<b>CHI</b>	<b>5,023</b>	<b>5,186</b>	<b>4,950</b>	<b>4,409</b>	<b>4,415</b>
<b>ARCH</b>	<b>4,685</b>	<b>3,035</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>1,454</b>	<b>1,384</b>
<b>ADA</b>	<b>4,089</b>	<b>1,867</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>MOD</b>	<b>3,952</b>	<b>2,959</b>	<b>2,941</b>	<b>2,317</b>	<b>1,922</b>
<b>MIS</b>	<b>3,082</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>497</b>
<b>(all 30+)</b>	<b>103,489</b>	<b>65,698</b>	<b>47,042</b>	<b>44,600</b>	<b>41,008</b>

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