The Merging of Conferences and Journals

Jonathan Grudin, Microsoft Research
Jonathan Grudin

- Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research
  Previously, Professor of Information & Computer Science, UCI

  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)
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
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

Networking, build research community

Leading Conferences

- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven
Two Niches

Quality, build research reputation

Leading Journals

- wide circulation
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

Networking, build research community

Leading Conferences

- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven
Two Niches

**Quality, build research reputation**

**Leading Journals**
- wide circulation
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

**Leading Conferences**
- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven

Networking, build research community
Two Niches

Quality, build research reputation

Leading Journals
- wide circulation
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

Networking, build research community

Leading Conferences
- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven

Quality, build research reputation
Networking, build research community

Leading Journals
Leading Conferences
Two Niches

Quality, build research reputation

- wide circulation
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

Networking, build research community

- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIG</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLAN</td>
<td>12,335</td>
<td>4,362</td>
<td>2,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAPH</td>
<td>11,811</td>
<td>6,298</td>
<td>6,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOFT</td>
<td>10,824</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>2,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>8,955</td>
<td>1,917</td>
<td>1,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPS</td>
<td>6,801</td>
<td>2,356</td>
<td>1,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHI</td>
<td>5,023</td>
<td>4,950</td>
<td>4,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH</td>
<td>4,685</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>4,089</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOD</td>
<td>3,952</td>
<td>2,941</td>
<td>1,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>3,082</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(all 30+)</td>
<td>103,489</td>
<td>47,042</td>
<td>38,707</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 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.
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.


4. Journal acceptance before conference presentation. A conference that is “a journal that meets in a hotel.” Examples: PVLDB -> VLDB, TACO -> HiPEAC.
Two Niches

Quality, build research reputation

- wide circulation
- archival
- selective
- open length
- open-ended reviewing

Networking, build research community

- limited circulation
- ephemeral
- inclusive
- limited length
- deadline-driven
The Merging of Conferences and Journals

jgrudin@microsoft.com

1960s, 1970s, 1980s. Please send recollections of how and when proceedings were assembled & distributed.
Membership, 10 largest Special Interest Groups (1990). Today only two of 37 SIGs have 3000 members.

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