

# THE EXPERIENCE OF VLDB'91

The 17th International Conference on Very Large Data Bases was held in Barcelona. I am confident that all participants in the conference enjoyed the atmosphere of the city of Barcelona, captured the character of the Catalan people, and experienced our Mediterranean way of life. Other readers of this volume will find a set of papers of the highest scientific quality, and perhaps will regret they did not have the experience of attending the Conference in person.

From the organizers' side, VLDB'91 was certainly an experience. During the four years of preparation, from our first presentation to the VLDB Endowment in Brighton in 1987, through the building up of the committees and the whole organization, and the increasing load being put on all the people involved, to culminate in the conference itself, we did experience a lot of sensations. There were terrifying feelings during the war in the Persian Gulf; there was a general relief when it ended; there were other ups and downs throughout.

Many people collaborated towards the success of VLDB'91. I experienced the help, the advice, the cooperation, the hard work, of many volunteers. But first of all we would like to thank the VLDB Endowment, and in particular Past President Alfonso Cardenas and President Janis Bubenko Jr, for their confidence in granting to us the organization of this 17th conference; and I express our deepest gratitude to their representative, Peter Lockemann, for all his guidance and advice throughout the preparation.

I must particularly thank the Local Arrangements Chair, Jordi Guinovart, its Treasurer, Jaume Argila, and the other members: R. Camps, Ll. Olivella, J. Sistac, R. Rius, for the timeless hours and effort put into the organization. It goes without saying that I appreciate the work of the whole Organizing Committee (page iv), and the effort of the Regional Coordinators (page iv) and of their institutions.

All the Program Committee members (the list is on page iv) deserve our gratitude, and I would like to echo the acknowledgement by the editors in their Preface. But I must thank very specially the Chairs, Guy Lohman and Amílcar Sernadas, for the extraordinary work they did in the selection of the papers, and for their help in many other areas. Moreover, they have been, together with Rafael Camps, the editors of these proceedings. Toni Olivé put together an outstanding tutorial program, and Alfonso Cárdenas organized an excellent set of panels; we are extremely thankful to them.

On the professional organization side, I must thank Víctor Obach and his team of Difin, S.A., for all their work. We gratefully acknowledge the support from all contributors (listed on page ii), and from industry supporters from Spain and the USA (their logos are on page vi, vii). Our thanks to the US Office of Naval Research (ONR) and other supporters.

The Association for Computing Machinery and the IEEE Computer Society provided us with in-cooperation-with sponsorship; we do appreciate their help. The Asociación de Técnicos de Informática (ATI) supported the organization of the conference from the start. They provided all kinds of support: organization, finances, publicity and much more; without their enthusiasm we would not have been able to organize VLDB'91. I must thank in particular past President B. Aladjem and President J. Argila.

I have reserved this last paragraph for a very special thanks. David Hsiao and Georges Gardarin, General Chairs for North America and for Europe, not only filled their roles very aptly; they provided the organization with their experience from past conferences, and helped in every aspect. In particular, David Hsiao achieved the sponsorship from the US industries and the cooperation from ACM and the IEEE-CS, and helped in many other ways - too many to be listed here. I personally thank them for this experience, that I will not forget.

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General Chairman for VLDB'91