Preface from the General Chair

Welcome to the 7th biennial conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas – AMTA. AMTA has the unique mission of bringing together the three communities of stakeholders in machine translation technology: Researchers, Developers, and Users. From the first AMTA conference, held in Columbia Maryland in 1994, Association events have been educational for all parties. Researchers encounter market requirements, and developers and users see the next generation technology in the pipeline. The open and inclusive spirit in which AMTA was founded has fostered lively exchanges at each event, as the participants bring their energies and perspectives to bear on the community task of pushing machine translation technology forward.

Machine Translation is a technology that has captivated many and often frustrated those who have worked with it. But it remains a compelling topic for at least two reasons. First, enabling communication across languages has a value to humanity that needs no explanation. Second, we are creating the future. The story of how machine translation technology will evolve and mature is still being written – by this community.

Laurie Gerber
General Chair

Preface from the Program Chairs

The last few years have witnessed major changes in the field of machine translation. Statistical methods have taken a lead place in the field and managed to cross the bridge from research to commercial enterprise. Interest and active work on hybrid approaches has returned. There is more work on introducing morphology and syntax into statistical systems in order to capture linguistic generalities that seem hard to model statistically. And there is also more work on introducing statistical and corpus-based resources and techniques into already existing symbolic systems to increase their robustness. As each of these competing paths of statistical and symbolic approaches has reached its independent potential, the focus is now moving to exploiting their complementary advantages. MT Evaluation has also been attracting increasing amounts of attention. The collection of research papers that have been selected for AMTA-2006 reflects these current trends.

We received over 100 intensions to submit papers this year. The pool of actual submissions was later reduced to 63 papers. Each submission was peer reviewed by three program committee members. Based on the reviews, we selected 18 papers for oral presentation and 10 papers for poster presentation. As such, the acceptance rate for oral papers is 29% and the acceptance rate for all papers is 44%. The selected high-quality papers cover a diverse and broad range of language-pairs, MT approaches, and MT-related topics. We hope you find the research program both interesting and enjoyable!

We would like to thank all those who submitted papers to the conference and all the members of the program committee for their time and effort.

Nizar Habash and Alon Lavie
AMTA-2006 Program Chairs

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Laurie Gerber, Language Weaver

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Jennifer Decamp, MITRE Corporation

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Rod Holland, MITRE Corporation

Tutorials and Workshops

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