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First Publication Servers

Related information can be obtained from the following web pages:

Linköping University:	http://www.liu.se/
Dept of CIS:	http://www.ida.liu.se/
EMTEK:	http://www.ida.liu.se/ext/etai/
This article:	http://www.ida.liu.se/ext/etai/1997/03/
The author:	http://www.ida.liu.se/~erisa/

1 Summary

The present memo describes an arrangement whereby a university department that puts its departmental reports on-line may agree with the ETAI to be called a **First Publication Server** (FPS) for the ETAI. Posting a research article at an FPS is one way of making it possible to submit it to the ETAI. Basically, the conditions for an FPS agreement are:

- the FPS must have a stable organization so that articles posted there continue to be held available to the scientific community;
- it shall be agreed that the ETAI can download and archive (but not necessarily to post) an electronic copy of any FPS posted article, and that it will use it for verifying that an article has not later been changed.

The following gives the background, motivation, and formal details of FPS agreements.

2 Background

The publication and review system of ETAI (the Electronic Transactions on Artificial Intelligence) is based on the idea that articles are made available to the research community in electronic form already at the beginning of the public review process, and with a guarantee of persistence so that the article can not be 'improved' retroactively. It is intended that the originally published version of the article shall count for priority purposes, and therefore it must be permanently available without change.

The main mechanism for achieving this is the **First Publication Archives** (FPA's), that is, servers where articles are made public, and where considerable care is taken to guarantee the permanence and unchangeability of the works. It is foreseen that many major universities and research institutes will set up such FPA's, but this will take some time, in particular since each FPA must have a strong guarantee that the published works will remain on-line for an extended period of time (at least 20 years). Such commitments can only be made at a high level in the university or organization.

There is therefore a need for an intermediate solution. It was originally foreseen that the first participating FPA's would help out by accepting to publish works from other universities than their own for a limited period of time. However, certain copyright restrictions have made it necessary to add another intermediate solution to the first one. The present memo describes how this problem is handled.

3 Submission of conference accepted articles to the ETAI

It is common practice that work that has been published at conferences is later on resubmitted to a journal. Often, the author takes the chance to extend and modify the article in-between, but sometimes the conference article is ready for journal submission as is. The journal publication is often perceived as more valuable because the journal reviewing process is more careful than the one at conferences, due to the possibility of dialogue and feedback in the journal, and the haste that is intrinsic to the reviewing schedule of all conferences.

The ETAI is going to maintain at least the same reviewing requirements as the best conventional journals in its area, and add the qualitative advantage of public debate and feedback. We therefore wish to invite authors of papers accepted e.g. at IJCAI, ECAI, and AAAI to resubmit their works to the ETAI, to the extent that they fall within ETAI speciality areas.

4 Dealing with the copyright restrictions

The standard copyright agreement of IJCAI 1997 stipulated that the author is authorized to put his or her article on-line on a www or ftp server operated by herself or by her employer, but not elsewhere. The AAAI has a similar requirement. These rules are compatible with publication in an FPA *provided that the author's university or institute already operates such an FPA*, but not otherwise. The AAAI has a similar rule.

If the author makes nontrivial changes to the paper before resubmission to ETAI, then there is not a problem anyway. However, many authors may feel that their paper is ready for journal resubmission as is, or with so small changes that it does not qualify for the formula "the author may include parts of the present article in his own later works". There must be a reasonable procedure for these cases as well in the ETAI.

Basing ETAI submissions on paper copies of articles, that is, on the conference proceedings themselves is not a viable solution for practical reasons.

5 ETAI Rules for First Publication Servers

An entity within a university or research institute that posts research articles on the Internet in an organized way may be recognized as a **First Publication Server** (FPS) for the ETAI if it satisfies the following requirements:

1. The entity must be operated by a department or a similar organizational unit. (In other words, an individual researcher may not register as an FPS).

2. The FPS must have a systematic way of assigning an individual URL to each contribution, and must have a stated intention to retain the contribution at that URL for the foreseeable future.

3. The FPS has made a **verification agreement** with an ETAI FPA, such as the Linköping University Electronic Press, to the effect that the FPA is authorized

   - To download and store, but not to post, an electronic copy and a paper copy of each article posted by the FPS and submitted to the ETAI.
   - To use the downloaded file for answering any queries in order to verify that the version of the article retained at the FPS has not changed since the date of download.

4. Articles posted by the FPS must use widely spread formats, at present, postscript, PDF, or HTML. It is also recommended, but not required, that articles posted by the FPS follow the same pattern as those required for ETAI FPA's, for example with respect to layout and physical appearance.

The ETAI will receive articles which have been accepted for publication at conferences in the same way as FPA published articles, provided that the following conditions are met:

- The conference proceedings is published by a commercial publisher.

- The article has also been posted in an ETAI recognized FPS, and the backup has been received by an ETAI FPA with which the FPS has a verification agreement.

- The posting of the article at the FPS and the verification agreement with the matching FPA are consistent with the copyright releases that have been made to the conference organizers and to the publishers of the conference proceedings.

If these conditions are met, the article will be treated in the ETAI system in the same way as if it has been published in an ETAI recognized FPA. Its date of appearance in an ETAI newsletter will count as date of first appearance for the purpose of the ETAI.

ETAI will provide a standard form of the agreement between the FPS and the FPA that provides verification.

6 Cover pages

In order to meet the requirement for a URL that can remain valid over a long period of time, it is recommended to use a "cover page" system, where for each article there is a short HTML page that contains links to the full file for the article and the basic bibliographic information. The URL of the cover page is used as an identifier for the article. In other words, there is one level of indirection when you follow a link to the article. By this scheme, it is sufficient that the cover page retains the same URL over time, but the physical location of the article itself may change.

For example, if the copyright agreement with the publisher of the conference proceedings should only allow the article to be maintained at the server of the author's **current** employer, after he or she has moved to another employer, then the cover page can easily be modified to point to the new location of the article. In this way, the URL serving as the key to finding the article retains its validity.

7 Migration from First Publication Server to First Publication Archive arrangements

From the point of view of participating universities or research institutes, the scheme described here can serve as a convenient entry point: while waiting for the administrative measures which are needed in order to qualify as a First Publication Archive, the department or institute in question can get started by making a First Publication Server agreement.

In most cases, it will be quite easy to make the arrangements required for being a First Publication Server. Most major computer science departments (or equivalent) already have an organized way of putting their preprints online. Basically, what is needed in addition is to set up a cover page system, and to do the paperwork of the verification agreement.

In particular, in order to be able to comply with the copyright consistency requirement, the participating department may consider setting up a register of the copyright releases that are signed by its employees, if it does not have such a register already.

An FPS arrangement should be seen as a provisional one, which normally is only to be used for a limited time, after which the FPS is upgraded to FPA status. This has several advantages for them, in particular, that articles can be published without having to wait for acceptance at some conference, and that an earlier date of appearance is obtained.

In addition, it may be appropriate to have FPS's on a more or less permanent basis in small universities, or universities with little electronic publishing activity, so that it is impossible to set up a full FPA there.

8 Additional formal details

The arrangements described above are quite straight-forward, and should work without problems in all normal cases. The following are some observations for the unlikely case that someone tries to challenge the arrangement on formal grounds.

It has to be verified that the conference's copyright agreement does not preclude obtaining the electronic and paper copies for archive purposes. What we have here certainly falls under "academic purposes", but it does not qualify as "personal use". If a fee has to be paid for the release of those copies, it has to be paid by the author or the FPS; if even that is not sufficient, then the ETAI system will not be able to receive the article.

We assume that the creation of a link to an electronic document counts as "mention" rather than "inclusion", so that it is not an infringement into the copyright of that document. We take that as completely obvious, although we recognize that the reverse position has been taken in at least one instance.