ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER ON
REASONING ABOUT ACTIONS AND CHANGE

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Today

The ETAI mailing list has been fairly quiet for two months now, but several things are happening towards the end of this year. The first contribution to the Logic Modelling Workshop has come in (more about this below), and some more seem to be in the pipeline. The ETAI is also preparing several special issues that are based on specialized conferences and workshops. One of them is a special issue from the IJCAI workshop on Nonmonotonic Reasoning, Actions and Change, edited by Michael Thielscher. I expect to be able to advertise the set of contributions for this issue in the next few days.

Other special issues include one from the latest Machine Intelligence workshop, and one from the IJCAI workshop on Intelligent Dialogue Systems. Please check the general ETAI webpage for details.

Logic Modelling Workshop

Formalization of TRAFFIC in Fluent Calculus

We have now received the first contribution to the ENRAC Logic Modelling Workshop, namely an article by Andreas Henschel and Michael Thielscher with a formalization of the LMW Traffic World in the Fluent Calculus. To see this contribution, please access the ETAI/RAC webpage, click “Logic Modelling Workshop” in the menu, and then “TRAFFIC” in the resulting menu.

Let us briefly review the basic ideas with the Logic Modelling Workshop, or LMW. It is an ENRAC initiative for encouraging the exchange of formalizations of common-sense or robotic phenomena in a structured way. The LMW is set up in such a way that later contributions shall be able to build on earlier ones, and so that contributions using different formal approaches to actions and change can be compared effectively. The LMW webpage therefore defines the following framework for contributions:

- A set of *standard approaches* each of which is defined using an ETAI reference article; optionally also in other ways using e.g. a list of articles, or on-line materials for tutorial or reference usage.
- A set of *scenario worlds* each of which has an explicit but informal definition. The Workshop invites contributions where one of the scenario worlds is formalized, in whole or in part, using one of the established standard approaches.

The use of precise definitions for each one of the standard approaches is intended to facilitate for contributions to build on each other. The LMW also has options for adding to the list of standard approaches, and for filing 'challenges' illustrating points where the standard approaches are claimed not to suffice.

LMW contributions are not intended to be regular journal or conference articles; it is supposed that they will focus on technical detail and entirely omit the background, references to previous work, etc. Discussions about LMW contributions may concern both the technical details and the comparisons between approaches. They will be included in the News Journal on Reasoning about Actions and Change (ENRAC), so they achieve published but unrefereed status in that electronic journal.

We expected originally that LMW contributions would be for a few pages each, which means that they would have the format and character of "notes" rather than "articles". However, the Henschel/Thielscher contribution is the size of a full article, so we will administrate it as such. It has been indicated that additional contributions will also be of article size. It means that the ENRAC will now contain both notes and full articles, just like the ETAI journal itself.

The LMW webpage is accessed from the ENRAC webpage,

`http://www.etaij.org/rac/`

by clicking "Logic Modelling Workshop" in the main menu. Contributions are welcome and can be sent to the editor of this Newsletter.

Online Tutorial for Fluent Calculus

Michael Thielscher has prepared an on-line tutorial for the fluent calculus. It can be accessed from the Logic Modelling Workshop page (details above) by clicking "Standard Approaches" in the menu column.

Authors of other approaches are invited to make similar contributions. The LMW section for "Standard approaches" has one slot for each one of the six approaches that the workshop recognizes at present. The minimal presentation of each approach is through a reference article, but additional material may be added, for example bibliographies, tutorial articles, or online tutorials. The easiest is if the author sends us the URL (or URL's) that he wishes to have included in the presentation page for the approach.

Hopefully the LMW can evolve into a free on-line resource that provides both tutorials, reference texts, examples of use, continued reading, and discussion for the major approaches in our area.

This newsletter is issued whenever there is new news, and is sent by automatic E-mail and without charge to a list of subscribers, in plaintext format. The present postscript issue is a bona fide rendering of the same information in alternative typography. Instruction for contributors and other additional information is found at the following URL:

http://www.etaij.org/rac/