

Program Committee Chair Report

John Hershberger
SoCG 2009
June 8, 2009

The Program Committee

Boris Aronov

Scot Drysdale

Dan Halperin

Mark Keil

Jack Snoeyink

Subhash Suri

Carola Wenk

Afra Zomorodian

Sunil Arya

Stefan Funke

John Hershberger

Steve LaValle

Bill Steiger

Pavel Valtr

Mariette Yvinec

Thank You!

Additional thanks

Submitting authors

204 outside reviewers

Efi Fogel, Video and Multimedia PC chair

Local arrangements team, especially Lars Arge and Else
Mågard

Lisa Tolles, Sheridan Printing

Monique Teillaud, SoCG'08 PC chair

CG steering committee: Pankaj Agarwal, Jeff Erickson, Marc
van Kreveld, Joe Mitchell, Günter Rote

Process: overview

We used the free conference support system EasyChair throughout the process.

September 27	Call for papers published
November 24	Titles and abstracts due
December 1	Papers due
January 23	Decision-making started
February 6	Review-editing began
February 12	Notification

Process: submissions

- November 24** 195 abstracts received.
Used EasyChair to disable new submissions,
but allow revisions.
- Nov 24–29** PC read abstracts, bid on papers.
- December 1** 170 papers received.
EasyChair server crashed that evening.
I turned off web submission at midnight, but
accepted email submissions until 5pm Dec 2.
- December 2** Assigned papers to readers.
- December 3** Reading started.

Process: reading

Dec 3–Jan 23 Reading, subrefereeing, review writing.
Average 34 papers per PC member.
3 PC members per paper.
Most papers also read by 1–3 outside reviewers.

Process: decisions

- January 23** PC reviews due.
Electronic PC meeting using EasyChair.
I supplemented EasyChair's ranking system with scripts for analysis and normalization.
Target of 45 acceptances—max allowed by single-track schedule.
Proposed 10–20 papers for decision each day.
In-depth discussion of controversial papers, some additional reading.
Some controversy, but overall very cordial, courteous, and professional.
Wished we could have accepted more papers.
- February 9** Decisions complete.

Process: reviews and notification

February 6 Review editing began.

Each PC member edited reviews for 11-12 papers.

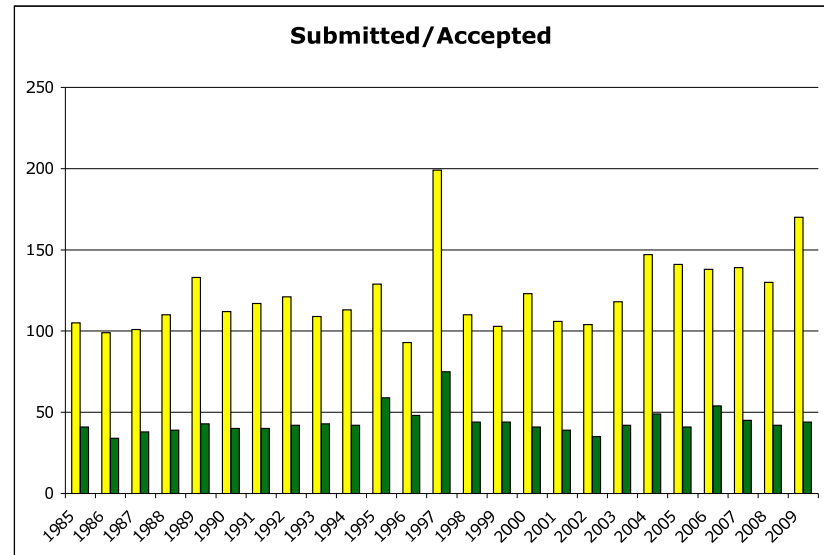
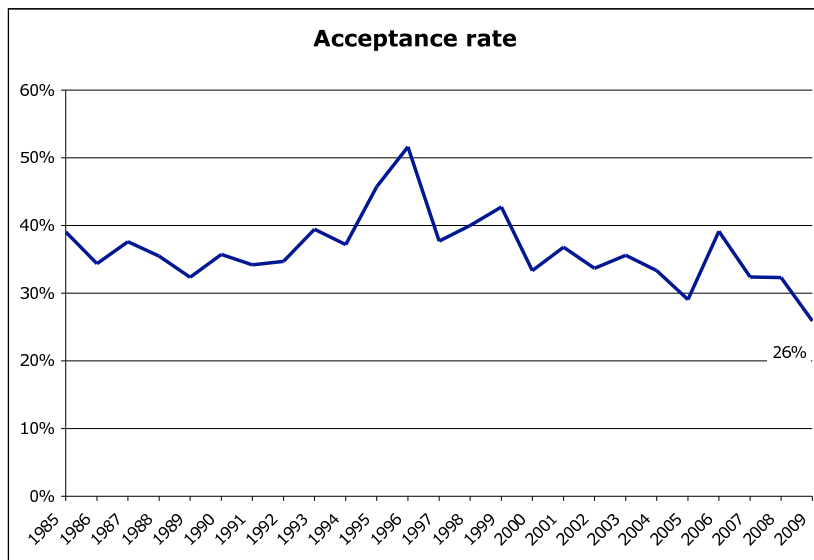
Goals: clarity, appropriateness, incorporation of discussion.

Non-goals: uniform tone, single review.

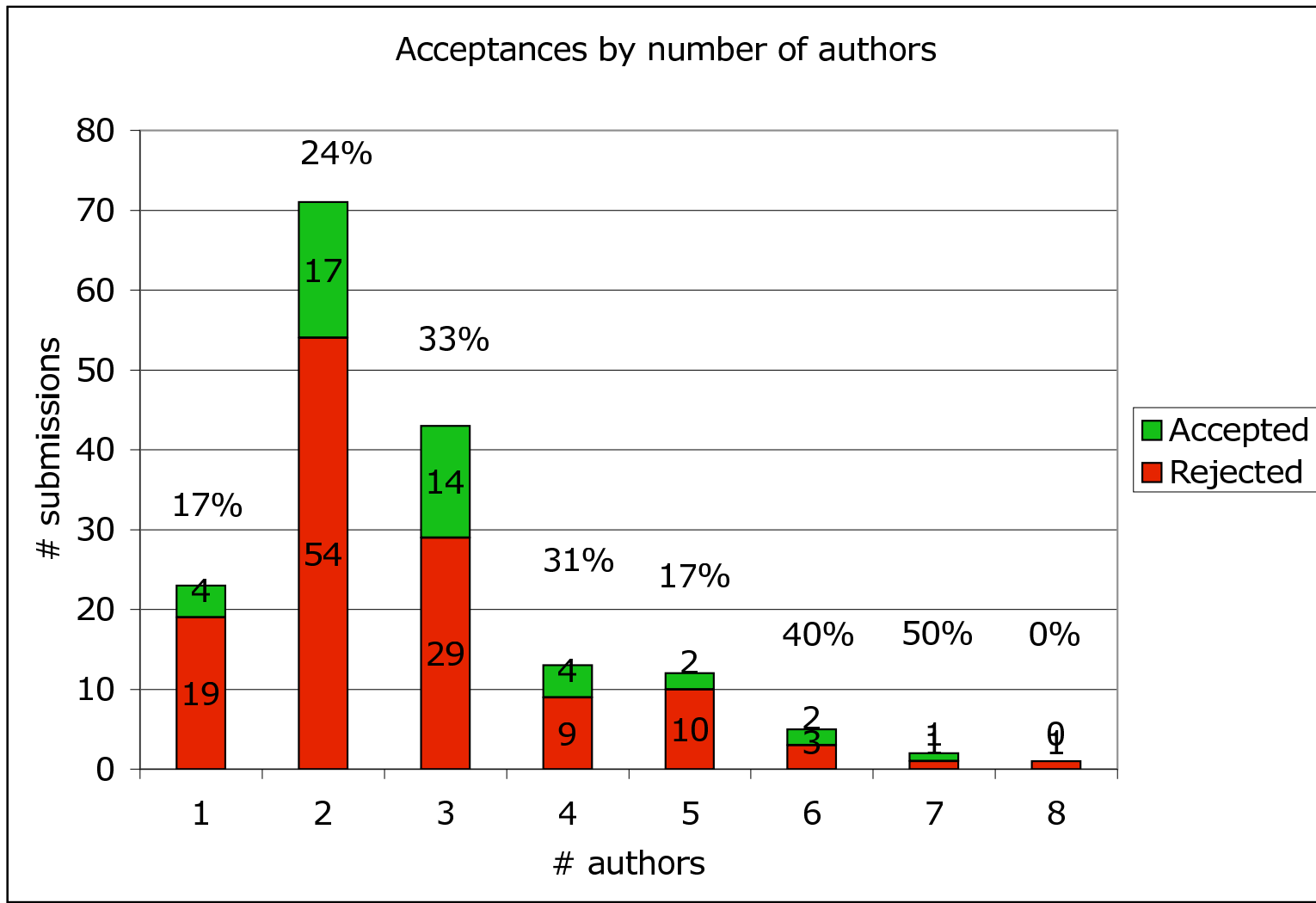
February 12 Notifications and reviews sent from EasyChair.

Statistics: submission/acceptance

170 submissions, 44 acceptances. Acceptance rate 26%.



Statistics: number of authors



No statistics for . . .

Countries: EasyChair statistics are unreliable

Topics: Many topics, many papers with multiple topics

Suggestions and questions

- Server failure
- Submission format
- Blind reviewing
- Proceedings cover design

Server failure

The CFP needs to include a contingency plan for submission server failure.

A simple suggestion:

In case of submission server failure, send submissions to the PC chair by email before the deadline.

Do we need a plan for malicious failures, too?

Submission format

“What part of ten pages don’t you understand?”

- CFP asks for 10 page submissions
(+ title page + bibliography + appendices)
- In my 36 papers, the mean submission length was 15.6 pages, and the standard deviation was 4.2.
- [How] should we limit submission length?

Blind reviewing

- Do we want blind refereeing?
 - + other conferences do it
 - + arguably fairer
 - not customary at SoCG
 - requires a procedural change
 - ~ must be done uniformly, else unfair
- Blind subrefereeing would be easy—submit paper without author names.
- Blind PC would be harder—changes the rôle of the PC chair.

Proceedings cover design

What will the cover of SoCG proceedings look like in the future?

- ACM wants its proceedings to have a uniform appearance.
- Sheridan Printing suggested:
 - It was easy to say “no” this year:
 - SoCG09 is in-cooperation with ACM, not sponsored-by.
 - The 25th year justifies a traditional look.
 - Someday ACM may twist our arm harder.

