



Association for  
Computing Machinery

*Advancing Computing as a Science & Profession*

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## **SIGIR 2016 Showcases Exciting Advances in Information Retrieval**

*Conference Includes Industry Track Presentations  
That Highlight Entrepreneurial Innovation*

**New York, July 6, 2016** – For nearly 40 years, the Association for Computing Machinery’s Special Interest Group on Information Retrieval (SIGIR) has presented the latest research and development on information retrieval through conferences, awards, travel grants and more. This year, the 39<sup>th</sup> annual [ACM SIGIR Conference on Research and Development on Information Retrieval](#) (SIGIR 2016) will be held from July 17-21 in Pisa, Italy.

SIGIR 2016 includes fascinating technical programs with research talks, tutorials, demos and focused workshops. Once again, the conference will play host to a focused industry track with sessions dedicated to companies both large and small, as well as modeling and evaluation.

“The field of information retrieval has undergone unprecedented growth in recent years,” explains SIGIR 2016 General Co-Chair Raffaele Perego of the Istituto di Scienza e Tecnologie dell’Informazione (ISTI-CNR, Italy). “At the same time, it is also a multifaceted area of research. The SIGIR conference serves as ‘the’ major international forum for our field, where the wide breadth of all the exciting things happening in the field can be explored. One aspect of information retrieval that holds especially exciting promise is the area of deep learning, and our conference program this year reflects that with a keynote address, presentations and workshops.”

### **2016 ACM SIGIR HIGHLIGHTS**

**Keynote Speakers** (*All times local to Pisa, Italy, GMT+2*)

**Christopher Manning, Auditorium, Monday, July 18, 9:30-10:30**

Recognizing that information retrieval and natural language processing both require an ability to understand language, Manning, a professor at Stanford and an expert on computational linguistics problems, examines how deep learning techniques may help machines more effectively learn word meanings and larger sections of text. This area of research promises to bring about major advances in synchronizing a machine’s information search process with the goals of the human conducting the search.

**Vipin Kumar, Auditorium, Wednesday, July 20, 9:30-10:30**

Recent advances in data mining and machine learning offer huge potential for more effective monitoring, understanding and predicting of the Earth’s ecosystem. Kumar, a professor at the University of Minnesota, will examine the challenges in analyzing such datasets and discuss a selection of his team’s research results. Kumar has mapped the dynamics of surface water globally, and used data from Earth-observing satellites to detect deforestation in tropical forests.

## **Industry Track**

The SIGIR Industry Track, more recently known as the SIGIR Symposium on IR in Practice (SIRIP), offers a unique opportunity for the community to meet and discuss the latest search-related technologies as applied in large and small companies. Industry participants will present their innovative approaches.

Organizers hope SIRIP presentations inspire bright graduate students and postdoc attendees to pursue the application of their ideas to real-world tasks, either through starting their own company, or by some other exciting path.

SIRIP includes 15 presentations divided into three separate categories: “Big Companies, Big Data,” “Small Companies, Big Ideas,” and “Modeling and Evaluation.”

Examples of SIRIP presentations include:

### **Amazon Search: The Joy of Ranking Products**

Daria Sorokina (A9.com), Erick Cantu-Paz (A9.com)

At Amazon, even small improvements in relevance ranking both positively influence the shopping experience of millions of customers and significantly impact revenue. This talk describes how products in the Fashion and Books categories can be ranked for greatest utility using a general machine learning framework, NLP techniques used for matching queries and products, and task and category tailored algorithms.

### **Ranking Financial Tweets**

Diego Ceccarelli, Francesco Nidito, and Miles Osborne (Bloomberg LP)

Data never sleeps: every second thousands of people are writing news stories, uploading videos, tweeting and so on. Whilst all of this data can be processed by machines, identifying important, market moving news requires human review. Making this process scalable can be considered a dynamic ranking problem where news stories are sorted temporally but also on their importance to the current market movements. This talk presents the challenges of identifying important news within a streaming setting and compare it with similar problems.

### **From Research to Industry, in Ten Not-So-Easy Steps**

Radim Řehůřek (RaRe Technologies)

The gap between "an exciting journal article published" and "ready to integrate a robust, reliable and scalable machine learning model into production" is surprisingly large and under-appreciated by both sides of the academia/industry divide: this talk recounts the journey of the speaker, from an academic researcher via industry to entrepreneurship, with pointers, challenges, and lessons learnt, to inspire and inform those interested in following a similar trajectory.

## **About SIGIR Conferences**

The SIGIR Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval is the major international forum for the presentation of new research results and for the demonstration of new systems and techniques in the field of information retrieval (IR). The SIGIR conference welcomes contributions related to any aspect of IR theory, foundations, techniques, and applications, and solicits proposals for workshops, demonstrations, tutorials, and industry-oriented papers.

**About SIGIR**

SIGIR is the Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Information Retrieval. Since 1963, SIGIR has promoted research, development and education in the area of search and other information access technologies. SIGIR [sponsors or co-sponsors several conferences](#) including SIGIR, CIKM, JCDL, WSDM, ICTIR and CHIIR, and recently started the [SIGIR Student Travel Grant program](#) to help students attend these conferences. SIGIR publishes [SIGIR Forum](#), a twice-yearly newsletter, maintains [SIGIR-list](#) and supports IR-related events through the [Friends of SIGIR program](#).

**About ACM**

[ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery](#), is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

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