Message from the SDWM Workshop Chairs

Welcome to the First International Workshop on Social Web for Disaster Management.

While traditionally a handful of news channels report updates, recently citizens and organizations have used multiple communication channels to share, predict, detect, discuss and report on large-scale events. Prime examples are the communications patterns and sharing motifs that emerged shortly after the London underground bombings (cell-phone based updates), Hurricane Katrina (Craigslist), or the Hudson River plane crash (Twitter). Existing approaches to mining public feeds are primarily aimed at searching for specific information or providing general trends within the whole dataset, and crucially post event (e.g. time or location based crowd clustering). To enable effective management of large-scale events, whether natural or economic disasters, there is a need for advances in situational awareness and reduction in response times in disaster management processes. In order to achieve that, a system needs to go beyond using post-event system-generated data, and incorporate both algorithm and crowdsourcing techniques to gather, analyze, organize and then visualize Web data and activity around an event in real-time.

We are excited about the variety of papers that are included in the workshop program reflecting the global momentum in research in this domain. The selected works address a number of key topics in this space, such as, making sense of social Web Data in disasters, mining community generated feeds to obtain situational awareness of the events, modeling global events from a variety of Web sources, and Web-platforms for disaster management. These papers present interesting approaches to cross-referencing, summarizing and presenting social Web in consumable manner to address case studies from recent disasters. Position papers in this workshop pave the way for stimulating discussion about future of Social Web and its applications to increased disaster awareness and accelerated response.

Our thanks to the authors, reviewers, and Program Committee members whose enormous and vital service generated this program.

We hope you enjoy the First International Workshop on Social Web for Disaster Management and find the WWW 2012 Proceedings of use for your work now and your future projects and activities.

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