BOOK REVIEW

on

Web Engineering: Principles and Techniques
by Woojong Suh (Ed.)
Idea Group Publishing, April   2005
paperback $74.95 (364 pages) ISBN: 1591404339

As the discipline of Web Engineering (WE) evolves and becomes more established, it is quite encouraging to see new books published on the topic. It is especially exciting to see the term "Web Engineering" being accepted as a separate and unique description of the application of engineering paradigms to the design and implementation of Web-based services and applications. WE needs books for would-be and current practitioners, researchers and students to promote the activity and to contribute to its development. Woojong Suh's new book, "Web Engineering – Principles and Techniques" (Idea Group Publishing 2005), is a valuable addition to a Web Engineering body of knowledge. The book's goals, as stated in its Preface are "to enhance the professional insights and capabilities of researchers and technical professionals. (…) it places emphasis on serving both theoretical understanding and the latest research results in the major sub-areas of Web Engineering." In order to accomplish this goal, the author has selected works by the leading researchers in the field.

Suh has interestingly organized the book into six logical themes:
- Web Engineering: Concepts and Reference Model
- Web Application Development: Methodologies and Techniques
- Web Metrics and Quality: Models and Methods
- Web Resource Management: Models and Techniques
- Web Maintenance and Evolution: Techniques and Methodologies
- Web Intelligence: Techniques and Applications

With the possible exception of "Web Intelligence," these themes provide a good coverage of the currently agreed upon scope of Web Engineering. Each of the book's sections are capable of being read or studied independently since there is no cross referencing between them. Substantial bibliographies and other endnote materials are provided for each section. The independence of the sections may lead to some confusion in terminology for the newcomer to Web Engineering, but the references included will assist in overcoming this difficulty.

Case studies provide an especially valuable mechanism for demonstrating the importance of Web Engineering. This book provides several very interesting ones – measuring the quality of Web-based bookstores, a customer analysis-based system for improving Web business systems, and the analysis and customization of Web-based electronic catalogs. These case studies are presented comprehensively and a great deal about application of the WE discipline can be obtained from a careful examination of each of them.

The relevance of Web Engineering in the research and development of the Semantic Web (SW) is somewhat overlooked in this book. While the Semantic Web is mentioned in several of the chapters, the contributions that Web Engineering is capable to making to the advancement of SW applications and systems are seriously understated. It is important to both the WE and SW communities that a rich interchange of ideas will further the development of both fields.

Woojong Suh's "Web Engineering – Principles and Techniques" is a recommended addition to any Web Engineering library. It should be able to both educate and stimulate individuals who are either simply interested in or currently actively involved in this field.

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