Object-oriented real-time distributed computing is a rapidly growing, young technological field, whose importance for next-generation complex distributed applications has been recognized as a key issue. WORDS 2001, which was the sixth in the highly successful WORDS series and was held for the first time in Europe, has continued its theme in integrating three key computer system engineering technologies (CSETs): Object-oriented CSET, Real-time CSET, and Dependable CSET, for developing real-time distributed and safety-critical applications.

As a cutting edge software engineering practice workshop, WORDS 2001 has been a valuable forum for the exchange of newly recognized research issues, promising advanced formulations, and research progress reports that are of a conceptual, theoretical, innovative design, or experimental nature, and represent technological or scientific advances.

WORDS 2001 has attracted participants from over 17 countries. The International Program Committee has recommended 32 papers for presentation and inclusion in this final proceedings (33% from America, 40% from Europe and 27% from Asia). The program includes technical sessions on emerging standards, such as UML-RT and Fault-Tolerant CORBA, Distributed Systems, Performance Analysis, Component-Based Systems, Dependability and Safety Issues, Visualization, Communication, as well as two very interesting panels.

The first panel discussed the most urgent research problems of component-based software engineering for resource-constrained systems. The second one, whose topic was on needs and requirements on middleware for real-time and objects from the perspective of different application domains, included panelists from companies developing applications in fields ranging from communications, embedded systems, military, medical, and industrial applications to e-government and services. Both panels were very rich in valuable discussions about key issues regarding the application of object-oriented concepts for real-time, safety-critical, distributed applications.

Similar to all successful events, WORDS 2001 required the effort of many individuals and organizations. The authors, presenters, and panelists are to be commended for a truly excellent job. The Program Committee and its Referees have done an outstanding job selecting the best candidates from among many high-quality submissions. Thanks are also given to the General Co-Chairs and the Steering Committee for their valuable and wise support. We are indebted to IEEE Computer Society for supporting this workshop. Members of the Dipartimento di Informatica e Sistemistica of the University of Rome "La Sapienza" have volunteered significant time to the organization and operation of the workshop.

We hope that all attendees have enjoyed the hospitality of the ancient city of Rome, and that the fruitful technical exchange that occurred during this meeting can have many follow-ups. We sincerely hope that you had a rewarding and enjoyable experience at WORDS 2001.

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