Preface

The Pacific Rim International Conference on Artificial Intelligence (PRICAI) is the leading conference in the Pacific Rim region for the presentation of research and the latest developments in Artificial Intelligence, including the application of AI to problems of social and economic importance. PRICAI 2000 was the sixth in the biennial series of conferences and was held in Melbourne, Australia, August 28–September 1, 2000.

The PRICAI 2000 workshops were designed to provide a forum for researchers and practitioners to present and exchange the latest developments at the AI frontier. Workshops are more specialized and on a smaller scale than conferences to facilitate active interaction among the attendees. They encourage AI theories to meet reality, AI researchers to work with practitioners, and vice versa. Through workshops, both sides get exposure to evolving research and tools, and to the practical problems to which AI can be applied. As an excellent indicator of the current level of active research and development activities, PRICAI 2000 included a total of seven workshops: *AI and the Internet*, *Intelligent Information Agents*, *Applications of AI in Industry*, *Multi-Agent Systems*, *Text and Web Mining*, *AI in E-Commerce*, and *Teams with Adjustable Autonomy*.

The work from four of the seven workshops has formed this unique collection of four parts. *Part I* reports on Applications of AI in Industry; *Part II* covers AI in E-Commerce; *Part III* details Intelligent Information Agents, and *Part IV* discusses the issues of Teamwork and Adjustable Autonomy in Agents. Each workshop paper was accepted after review by at least two experts. Further improvements were included in many papers in preparation for this collection. Readers can find diverse topics and careful discussions centered around the four important themes in our ever changing world. This collection plays an important role in bridging the gap between AI theory and practice, to emphasize the importance of AI in the research and development of Agents, E-Commerce, and in many real-world applications, and to publicize and extend AI technology to many domains in this fast moving information age.

The chairs of the workshops did an excellent job in bringing together many AI researchers and practitioners from the Pacific-Asia region and from all over the world. The well received workshops at PRICAI 2000 and the publication of this collection have convincingly shown the significance and practical impact of the work presented in this collection. Professor Nancy Reed's great effort in producing this special, fine collection will be applauded and appreciated by many. I am certain that this collection will stimulate more AI research and applications, influence many graduate students to conduct research and development in AI, and have a positive impact toward making our future better by creating an increasingly intelligent world.

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