

ARTES++ Travel Report to DSN 2007

The 37th Annual IEEE/IFIP International Conference on
Dependable Systems and Networks,
June 25-28th 2007

Carl Bergenhem
July 6th, 2007

1 DSN

Industry, business, infrastructure and individuals rely more and more upon systems and networks that integrate digital devices and communications with complex software and humans. These systems must maintain safety and confidentiality, be resilient to malicious attacks and accidental faults – it is essential that they deliver a service that is **dependable** in all respects.

DSN (Dependable Systems and Networks) is *the* annual international conference that directly addresses the requirement of dependability; presenting research and solutions, and posing new challenges. In 2007 the DSN conference will once again incorporate the Dependable Computing and Communications Symposium (DCCS) and the Performance and Dependability Symposium (PDS), together with workshops, tutorials, student forum, fast abstracts and an exhibition of tools and technologies. This years DSN contained 80 papers and corresponding presentations in the DCCS and PDS tracks and also papers and presentations in the student forum, fast abstract and several workshops taking place.



Solving problems with the presentation

2 Venue

DSN 2007 was held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre and organised by Newcastle University, U.K. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland, and one of the most attractive cities in the UK. The city is situated along the “Firth of Forth”; the estuary or firth of Scotland's River Forth, which flows eastwards into the North Sea.

Edinburgh has convenient travel connections with Gothenburg. My travel arrangements consisted of a cheap Ryan Air flight to Prestwick (on the west coast) and train via Glasgow. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Edinburgh offers a vast range of cultural and historical attractions. These include: Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile, the new Scottish Parliament building, and the Queen's official residence in Scotland - Holyrood Palace; art galleries and museums abound, and of particular significance is the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre.

3 Impressions

My general impression of the various speakers and their 30 minute presentations is that they are of the highest quality; well spoken, excellent slides and pedagogically conveyed topic. It is really a pleasure to see these presentations and also to read the corresponding papers. After all, the acceptance rate for the two main tracks (DCCS and PDS) is around 20%. This level of quality is definitely something to strive towards. However, in many situations the actual technical contribution does not seem to be high. It may be a new angle or incremental advance based on a known problem.

This leads to the question of what the essence of research is. The following may be considered.

1. Either research is the deep investigation of a particular hot topic and must always lead to a high advance of technology compared to the current state-of-the-art.
2. Or, that research is related to the writing process itself, methodology to perform the research itself, no matter on which subject, and the pedagogical proficiency to convey the knowledge. The proficiencies that are learnt in this view are, of course, timeless and applicable in any area; as opposed to the first view.

My view is that research should be firmly based on the second view but must also include elements of the first in order for the research to also be relevant. The research contributions at DSN generally fulfil both these goals, but the first goal may be questioned occasionally.

4 Thoughts and Conclusion

There were several gains of my visit to DSN 2007. As stated above, the main gain is the high quality of the contributions to the conference. They give inspiration for my own research and show the current hot topics in the area of which many are highly relevant for my own research. Then there is the chance to get to talk to other PhD students in the same area. Finally I also had good talks with my professor who attended DSN as a program committee member and session chair. Back home at Chalmers, there seems to be too little time for this type of informal discussions.

Together, the above reasons made the visit to DSN successful, even though I did not present a paper myself. Many thanks to ARTES for giving the grant for the trip!



Myself at the Forth bridge