

Message from the 2014 USENIX Annual Technical Conference Program Co-Chairs

Welcome to the 2014 USENIX Annual Technical Conference.

This year's program committee has put together a program of 44 papers, including five short papers. These papers span a wide range of topics covering both novel research contributions and practical ideas in storage systems, networking, big data, distributed systems, security, virtualization, multi-core systems, and hardware.

We received a record number of submissions this year. Authors submitted a total of 245 papers (after registering 305 abstracts a few days before the submission deadline). Forty-nine of these were submissions of short papers, which had to be at most six pages long, and the other 196 were full-length papers that had to be at most 12 pages long. The program co-chairs rejected four of the full-length papers without review for violating format requirements (all were judged to give the authors at least a column of additional text).

The program committee reviewed the submissions over two rounds. In the first round, each of the 241 papers received two reviews. Papers receiving an "accept" or "strong accept" review moved on to the second round, as well as papers with two "weak accept" reviews, papers without sufficiently confident reviewers, and papers where reviewers explicitly said the paper should advance to the second round. This amounted to a total of 110 papers. The remaining 131 papers were tentatively rejected. Papers in the second round received three more reviews, as well as additional reviews from external experts. Altogether, this produced 834 reviews.

After an online discussion among reviewers, the program committee met in person in April in Seattle, immediately after the USENIX NSDI conference; five of the members were unable to attend in person. Over a period of nine hours across two days, the committee discussed 66 papers that were highly ranked or merited further consideration after online discussion, and they decided to accept 36 papers, including four short papers. Shepherds were assigned to specific papers judged to have specific shortcomings.

This year, we introduced a resubmission process: for papers that appeared to contain interesting ideas and techniques but that could not be accepted in their submitted form, the program committee could reject the paper but give the authors an option to resubmit a revised version of the paper. The program committee decided to give 11 rejected papers (including one short paper) this option; each such paper was assigned a contact who helped the authors understand reviewers' concerns. All 11 authors took advantage of this option. The original reviewers read and commented on each resubmitted version over a period of a week and decided to accept 8 out of 11 resubmissions. Out of an average of five original reviewers per resubmitted paper, an average of four engaged in evaluating the resubmitted version.

The committee was comprised of 30 members, plus the two co-chairs. Twelve of them were affiliated with industrial organizations, and 22 were affiliated with academic institutions (two fell in both categories). Program committee members were allowed to submit papers. We followed conventional rules for handling conflicts of interest: conflicted members (or co-chairs) left the room during discussion of conflicted papers. One paper, authored by a co-chair, was separately handled by the other co-chair.

In addition to the authors that submitted their work for consideration, the program committee, and the external reviewers, we would like to thank the USENIX staff that took care of all organizational details. Their help made our jobs a lot easier and allowed us to focus on reviewing papers and putting together the technical program.

We hope that you enjoy the conference, and thank you for participating in the USENIX ATC community.

Garth Gibson, *Carnegie Mellon University*
Nickolai Zeldovich, *Massachusetts Institute of Technology*
USENIX ATC '14 Program Co-Chairs