The 2008 International Conference on Service Science (ICSS 2008), organized by IBM and Harbin Institute of Technology, was held in April 17-18, 2006, Beijing, China. It is a growing and broadening effort and forum for exchanging ideas, observations, results on Service Science, following the 2005 SSME Symposium at Peking University, in Beijing, China, and the 2006 Asia Pacific SSME Symposium at Tsinghua University, in Beijing, China. It is considered as the first formal SSME-related international conference held in China.

Service has been existing as an important economy for hundreds of years. But modern service industries are created on top of the latest achievements of modern science and technology and modern management. Integrating modern technology and modern management significantly changes our lives and our society. In order to speed up the process of building modern service industries, a new multi-disciplinary research and academic effort – Service Science is needed to integrate aspects of established fields such as Computer Science, Operation Research, Engineering, Management Science, Social and Cognitive Sciences to address the theoretical and practical aspects of service business. Just like Computer Science plays a critical role for Information Technology (IT) Industry, Service Science will play a similar role for the Modern Service Industry from both technology/computing and management perspectives.

The ICSS 2008 featured a unique mix of academia, industry, and cross-discipline topics related to service that illustrate the need for integrating perspectives and approaches – the need for a science of service, as well as the latest progress on Service Science. The conference provided a platform for over 130 worldwide professors, industry practitioners, researchers, and students from 11 countries and regions to exchange latest progress including research results on Service Science, experience of teaching Service course, case studies on industry practices, etc. 67 papers was selected from total 151 submissions after strict peer-review process, and orally presented on the conference.

The four selected papers in this special issue are considered as the best papers by ICSS program committee. Although some works in these papers are still in progress, from them our readers could know to a certain extent what Chinese SSME researchers are doing and which levels they have reached to.

In An Approach to Deploying SOA in Technological Information Integration - A Case Study, facing to the real-world requirement of integrating and interoperating between multiple distributed, heterogeneous information resources, Zhao et al. proposed a domain-specific SOA deployment approach, in which information resources are identified as business services and then they are integrated together based on a domain-specific information service mash-up language.

In Service Composition Based Software Solution Design: A Case Study in Automobile Supply Chain, Mo et al. introduced a case study from automobile supply chain domain.
to illuminate how various service composition and web mash-up technologies are effectively applied to integrate multiple distributed and heterogeneous SaaS (Software as a Service) together to support business-level collaborations between enterprises.

In *Supermarket Service Modeling and Evaluation*, Bao et al. focus their research on a specific domain, i.e., supermarket service. They put forward a new hybrid supermarket service model concentrating on self-service and automated service in supermarkets, followed by a quantitative metrics for supermarket service quality evaluation.

In *Service Science, Management and Engineering Education: A Unified Model for University*, based on their practical experiences on SSME education, Wei et al. presented a unified model for SSME education in universities in three levels (undergraduate, graduate and PhD), including the objective, reference curriculum, teaching methods, etc.

Nearly two years have passed since ICSS 2008. During these days, SSME has become a quite hot research domain and, SSME research and practices are flourishing all over the world. It is our honor if these selected papers would provide you some references for your SSME research.

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