Acknowledgment

The editor would like to acknowledge the help of all involved in the collation and the review process of the book, without whose support the project could not have been satisfactorily completed. Deep appreciation and gratitude are due to Prof. Douglas Gordon, Dean of College of Liberal Arts and Science, Christopher Newport University, for giving me three Dean’s Office Grants to support my research and the editing this book. Deep appreciation and gratitude are also due to Prof. David Doughty, Chair of Department of Physics, Computer Science and Engineering, Christopher Newport University, for signing my book contract with the publisher and my copyright agreement forms to support my research and the editing this book. My appreciations are also due to Dr. A. Martin Buoncristiani, Dr. Randall Caton, Dr. David Hibler, and Dr. George Webb, Professors of Department of Physics, Computer Science and Engineering, Christopher Newport University, for always strongly supporting my research. I would like thank my distinction supervisor, Dr. Rod Scofield, Senior Scientist of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Washington DC, USA for supporting my artificial neural network research and awarding me as an USA National Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow (1991-1992) and a Senior USA National Research Council Research Associate (1999-2000). I would like to thank Dr. John Fulcher, Professor of University of Wollongong Australia, for a long time of research cooperation in the artificial neural network area since 1992.

I wish to thank all of the authors for their insights and excellent contributions to this book. Most of the authors of chapters included in this book also served as referees for chapters written by other authors. Thanks go to all the reviewers who provided constructive and comprehensive reviews and suggestions.

Special thanks also go to the publishing team at IGI Global, whose contributions throughout the whole process from inception of the initial idea to final publication have been invaluable. In particular to Jessica Thompson, Kristin Roth, and Meg Stocking, who continuously prodded via e-mail for keeping the project on schedule and to Mehdi Khosrow-Pour and Jan Travers whose enthusiasm motivated me to initially accept his invitation for taking on this project.

Special thanks go to my family for their continuous support and encouragement, in particular, to my wife, Zhao Qing Zhang, for her unfailing support and encouragement during the years it took to give birth to this book.

Ming Zhang, Editor, PhD
Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA, USA
October 2007