This issue of the International Journal of Web Services research (JWSR) collects five articles on various topics of Web services.

The first article is titled *A Framework & Protocols for Service Contract Agreement Based on International Contract Law*. Parkin, Kuo, and Brooke address two issues regarding current Web/Grid service usage protocol: not having the capability to form negotiated agreements and not considering the legal requirements of the agreement process. The authors propose a framework and a domain-independent negotiation protocol for creating legally binding contracts in a distributed, asynchronous, service-oriented architecture.

The second article is titled *XML Data Binding for C++ Using Metadata*. Payrits, Dornbach, and Zólyomi tackle the issue of mapping XML document schemas and Web service interfaces to programming language C++. They focus on generating flexible and compact code considering embedded environments.

The third article is titled *The DeltaGrid Service Composition and Recovery Model*. Xiao and Urban propose an abstract execution model for service composition featuring user-defined correctness and recovery. A layered protection facility is built for forward recovery of a process when failure occurs. Rollback is enabled for recovery from failure. A case study with a simulation and evaluation framework is also presented.

The fourth article is titled *Early Capacity Testing of an Enterprise Service Bus*. Ueno and Tatsubori explore a feasible way for capacity planning and performance evaluation of Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) as the core messaging infrastructure of an enterprise service-oriented architecture. Their proposed technique aims to be used at the early stages of the system development life cycle. The authors also show their mock environment as a case study.
As a research staff member and program manager of application architectures and realization at IBM T.J. Watson Research Center, Liang-Jie (LJ) Zhang has made significant original contributions to services computing innovations and interactive media systems. He is the founding chair of IBM Research’s Services Computing Professional Interest Community and has been leading an IBM Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) tooling and architecture research project for years. He has been coleading IBM’s SOA Solution Stack (aka SOA Reference Architecture: Solution View) project since 2004. His new book Services Computing was published by Springer in 2007. He has received 2 IBM Outstanding Technical Achievement Awards, 9 IBM Plateau Invention Achievement Awards, an Outstanding Achievement Award from the World Academy of Sciences, and an Innovation Leadership Award from the China Institute of Electronics. Zhang has 37 granted patents and 20 pending patent applications. As the lead inventor, he holds federated Web services discovery and dynamic services composition patents. LJ chairs the SOA and Web Services standards working group to define the IEEE 1723 Standard for SOA Solution Reference Architecture. He is the chair of IEEE Computer Society Technical Committee on Services Computing.