Panel: *"Whither XML, ca. 2005?"*

This year, XML will be 9 years old (7 years as a standard). About 6 years ago, the data management community began to adopt it as an interchange and representation format. Some leading database researchers have seen the format as merely an inefficient re-invention of old ideas; others have embraced it as the future and the bridge between databases and "the outside world" (including text). In recent years, we have seen a great deal of work on bridging XML and relations, on developing and customizing languages from XML (building from a variety of foundations, including relational, semi-structured, object, functional, and imperative), on adding ranked retrieval into XML query languages, on using XML as an interchange format, even on using XML as the basis of component-oriented software architectures.

It seems an appropriate time to step back and ask a number of questions like: What have we learned about XML's relevance in today's world? What problems have we solved? What are the critical problems that should be the focus of tomorrow's research?

We have invited a panel of distinguished researchers and practitioners, who will attempt to address these issues and identify important open research challenges. The list of panelists includes Peter Buneman (U. Edinburgh), H.V. Jagadish (U. Michigan), Jayavel Shanmugasundaram (Cornell U.), Daniela Florescu (Oracle), and Tova Milo (Tel Aviv U.).

This panel is conducted as a joint event of XSym and DBPL (Tenth International Symposium on Database Programming Languages).