About the authors

David Bell graduated from Queen's University, Belfast in 1969 in Pure Mathematics, and has three research degrees in different topics: programming language design, database performance, and artificial intelligence in database systems. He worked as a programmer in industry for 3 years before embarking on an academic career. He has been a full professor since 1986. He has well over 300 publications, including co-authoring of 'Distributed Databases' (Addison-Wesley) and 'Evidence Theory and its Applications' (North Holland), and has supervised more than 30 PhDs to completion. He has been a prime investigator on many national and EU-funded projects (eg MAP, ESPRIT, DELTA, COST, AIM,…) in IT since1981. He is a member of the editorial boards of Information Systems and The Computer Journal, and he has been guest editor of special issues of well-known journals, on subjects such as Data Mining and The Semantic Web. He has also chaired /co-chaired several programme committees, including those for VLDB and ICDE. His research is in data and knowledge engineering—often linking reasoning under uncertainty, machine learning, and other artificial intelligence techniques with distributed database work.

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Dave Bustard is currently a Professor of Computing Science and Head of School at the University of Ulster. Before that he was at

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Rem Collier is a Lecturer in the School of Computer Science and Informatics, College of Engineering, Mathematical, and Physical Sciences, University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland. He completed a B.Sc. in Pure and Applied Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics, University of Bristol, United Kingdom in 1994, and went on to study for a M.Sc. in Computation at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), United Kingdom, which he completed in 1995. Following this, he also completed a one year M.Phil. at UMIST, which he completed in 1996 before commencing a Doctorate in Computer Science in the Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Science, University College Dublin, entitled "Agent Factory: A Framework for the Engineering of Agent-Oriented Applications". In 2002, he returned to academia as a Post-Doctoral researcher in the University College Dublin, before taking up his current lecturing post in 2003. His primary research interests are Agent-Oriented Software Engineering, Agent-Oriented Programming Languages, and Autonomic Computing Systems.

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Peter Milligan is a senior lecturer in the School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. His research interest include the design and implementation of semi-automated development environments for parallel, distributed and mobile computing; software modelling and re-engineering: the use of object models as a basis for the design, development and maintenance of software systems; meta-heuristic knowledge engineering: the use of combined AI techniques as intelligent agents in the development, transformation and maintenance of sequential and parallel codes; meta-computing systems: the dynamic transformation and generation of software and hardware systems; the utilisation of FPGAs for dynamic hardware construction.

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