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[data+service] Newsletter 06/2018

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Newsletter #8
26.06.2018

Welcome to this month's Newsletter!

SDS|2018 is over and we hope you enjoyed it. Christoph Heitz, President of our alliance, definitely did. Read his review below.

Also, the new Use Case Talks series started. Alexander Grimm, CEO of Aspaara Algorithmic Solutions AG, reviews the event in the second article below.

Also, another new expert group has been established and we welcome our new members Adcubum and Swisscom.

Questions, remarks or contributions for the newsletter? Reach out to the editors.

Happy reading!
The Editors

Make sure to scroll all the way down -- don't-miss-it-goodie at the end!

Upcoming Events

- 04.09.2018 - **Smart Maintenance Conference 2018.** At ETH Zürich. More information here. Register here.

Review SDS|2018

by Christoph Heitz, President

The 5th Swiss Conference on Data Science SDS|2018 is over. Again, this flagship conference of our Alliance has been a huge success with around 400 participants -- an impressive increase by nearly 50% compared to last year. I hope that you enjoyed the program as much as I did.

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Many of you, the members of Data+Service, have participated, and many have actively contributed to this event. I want to thank you all. The fact that this conference has become such an inspiring and high-quality event can be attributed to large parts to your contributions. Thank you for sharing, thank you for involving yourself, thank you for helping with organizing!

In this respect, special thanks go to our new member Fernfachhochschule Schweiz, which organized the pre-conference event on Deep Learning. It was completely sold out with 60 participants. Thank you Beatrice and Martina!

Also, I am full of admiration and gratitude for the great work of the Organizing Committee. Melanie, Amrita, Gundula, and Michel: you did a fantastic job in preparing and running this conference!

The goal of the SDS conference is to bring together researchers from academia and practitioners from companies, for discussing all issues of data-based value creation: From data acquisition and processing, over analytics, up to the development of new services and their implementation; and not ignoring the societal impact that we all generate with our work. To my impression, this year's SDS could well live up to this aspiration.

Please mark the date of next year's SDS in your calendar. It will take place on June 13-14, 2019, again in Bern. For next year, we will go a step further and enlarge the conference to two days. Researchers will have the opportunity to publish their latest research in conference proceeding. We will largely extend the program committee in order to further increase the number and quality of submissions.

Still inspired from SDS|2018, I am already very much excited about SDS|2019. Our goal is to make this conference the most important event in Switzerland, where the innovators and the game-changers in the field of Data Science and data-based services can meet, exchange and discuss, and inspire each other. Because this is how we can make a significant contribution in pushing Switzerland forward as an internationally recognized lighthouse for data-driven value creation.

Best regards
Christoph

PS: Get inspired by some highlights in our [blog](#).

Use Case Talks Series No.1

by Alexander Grimm, CEO Aspaara Algorithmic Solutions AG

Despite perfect weather for a Friday evening about 20 members of the Alliance came together to discuss challenges in *Time Series Prediction.*

Dr. Michel Philipp reported about the Advanced Analytics Solutions for the NOVA Platform and *Dr. Peter Kauf* from Prognosix provided ideas on how to predict rare event time series with potential use of aggregate information.

We thank our host AWK for kindly offering rooms and apero!

If you are interested in hosting an event, proposing an interesting topic or presenting a use case in the future just contact me (alexander.grimm@aspaara.com).

The next use case talks will be hosted by [Aspaara Algorithmic Solutions AG](#).

New Expert Group "Natural Language Processing in Action"

Silvia Quarteroni (ELCA, Lausanne) and Martin Jaggi (EPFL) will start a new Expert Group on *Natural Language Processing in Action*. The first meeting will be scheduled soon.

Natural language processing (NLP), born over half a century ago at the crossroads of computer science and linguistics, is now an empowering force behind many AI applications. In recent years, the availability of large datasets from which to learn statistical models has contributed to a considerable progress in several natural language understanding tasks, including spoken language understanding, machine translation and many others. Nevertheless, in practice there exist hugely varying approaches to tackle such problems depending on the industry. In many cases, the latest results of academic research are well ahead of the industrial practice, for example when it comes to general-purpose natural language understanding "enablers" on the cloud. The objective of the expert group "NLP in action" is to foster a productive dialogue between the academic and industrial actors of NLP in Switzerland. Our aim is to discuss how the latest models in the academia can quickly turn into successful industrial applications, and how lessons learned in the industry can benefit and motivate academic research. We are aware that NLP research and development is still at an early stage in Switzerland, which is why we believe that

the organizations who are active in the domain should reach out to one another and share common experience and – ideally – data.

Please contact the Expert Group leaders (Silvia, silvia.quarteroni@elca.ch and Martin, martin.jaggi@epfl.ch) for joining the group. Please see here for more details.

Welcome new members!

We cordially welcome three new members that joined our Alliance in the last month:

Adcubum, represented by Stefan Haag and Matthias Zimmermann, join the Alliance as Silver Industrial Member. Adcubum is a Swiss software solution provider founded in 1997 employing over 300 people. With its standard software adcubum SYRIUS Adcubum is the market-leading provider of health and accident insurance solutions in Switzerland, and an active player in the property insurance market.
By joining the Alliance, they believe to interact with the most relevant ecosystem for machine learning and advanced analytics in Switzerland. They bring in know-how and expertise about concrete insurance solution, applied machine learning and are open to help interested members to set up innovation project with their solution. Workshops are also welcome and could be hosted by Adcubum.

Swisscom, represented by Roger Berliat, join the Alliance as Silver Industrial Member. Swisscom, in particular Swisscom Enterprise Solutions, is engaged in several topics as shaping the digital future of economy and society in general. Data and digital services are key topics of the Swisscom business in B2C and B2B. The B2B market, in particular, is shaped and managed by the unit "Swisscom Enterprise Customers". They provide services based on the Internet of Things (IoT) and Machine-to-Machine (M2M) technology. Special focus is on data acquisition, connectivity, and data transmission, but also handling and storage of data in Swisscom-own cloud solution and own data center, namely the Swisscom IoT cloud and Analytics cloud. A further focus refers to the data insights analytics service and platform business. They provide IoT cloud and analytics platform to Expert Groups of the Alliance for free use in research.

Data Science Read of the Month

Das Beste zum Schluss

"... all the impressive achievements of deep learning amount to just fitting a curve to data."

The father of causal inference has a new book. And it's most likely worth your time. Happy reading!

💗 [Judea Pearl's new book.](#) 💗

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