Literature Search in Computer Science

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Questions ...

How do referees get chosen for a paper you submit?

You and your supervisor submit a paper, which unfortunately gets rejected because the paper missed a reference to some very similar work. What went wrong?

Questions ...

How many papers should one expect to read as background reading for an M.Sc. thesis? When should one be reading these ? Do you need to understand them all in detail ?

Questions ...

The program of an upcoming conference has just been announced, and there is a paper that will be presented that has a title which bears a remarkable resemblance to your ongoing M.Sc. thesis work. Now what ?

Questions ...

You're looking for a solution to a particular sub-problem for your research, and there seem to be many papers published on this topic. Do you read and cite them all?

Questions ...

At a conference, you find out that one of the important references for your work makes some assumptions that are key to your work, and which are not stated in the paper. You discover this by talking to the paper author. How can you document the existence of these key assumptions in your own work?

Questions ...

Who should be listed as authors on the papers you write?

Where to Look

- Google
  http://www.google.ca/
- ACM Digital Library
  http://www.acm.org/dl
- IEEE Digital Library
  http://www.computer.org/publications/dlib/
- NEC CiteSeer
  http://citeseer.nj.nec.com/cs
- Online CS Bib
  http://liinwww.ira.uka.de/bibliography/

ACM Digital Library

UBC Library
http://www.library.ubc.ca/

NEC Citeseer

Impact of online papers

Patent Searches
http://www.uspto.gov/

Authors per paper

Figure 9--Mean Number of Authors Per Paper
In 12 Fields of Science, Top 110 Universities, 1981-1999

Authors per paper

Figure 4--Mean Number of Authors per Paper, for Papers
With at Least One Author In the Top 110 U.S. Universities, 1981-1999

Conf / Journals / Books over time

Figure 5. The distribution of article types for random citations to articles published a specified number of years prior to the citing publication. Very recent citations are predominantly to technical reports and conference articles, while most cited items that are 10–20 years old are journal articles or books.