



New search technologies as driving force for technological innovation

Austrian Research Institute IRF strengthens its standing within the international knowledge landscape.

The „Information Retrieval Facility Society" (IRF) has successfully utilized the planned structural separation from its founding member Matrixware Information Services in 2010 to further raise its reputation as internationally recognized research platform.

The new premises at Tech Gate Vienna (Technology Park for Science and Innovation) provide the best environment for the 14 staff from 8 different countries to establish a trendsetting platform for scientific research and industrial application of new search technologies – a domain of high strategic relevance for R&D-oriented enterprises: In the global race for market shares, efficient information search can give them a distinct technological edge.

In 2010, 60% of the funding proposals, which the IRF has submitted to the European Commission, have been approved. The IRF has thus generated a total of 1.89 Million Euros from the EU ICT funding programme for Austria, which equates to approximately 1.4% of the entire funding which Austria has received from the EU.

The IRF is participating in research projects and center excellence networks that focus on

- the public availability of multilingual patent documents (PLuTO),
- the development of high quality search engines in the medical domain (KHRESMOI),
- the scientific evaluation of search methods (PROMISE), and
- the integration of heterogeneous information retrieval and automatic translation technologies (LarkC, MUMIA)

For 2011 the focus will remain on research, training and technology transfer. The IRF provides academic researchers and industrial end-users with a platform dedicated to the optimization of search and classification methods as well as the development of semantic technologies: Data collections with up to 1 billion of standardized documents, 240 Terabyte of high performance storage and a high-capacity Cloud infrastructure. In addition, the IRF develops prototypes, such as the automatic translation of patents from Chinese to English, which is far ahead of other comparable systems on the market.

An important part of the IRF's mission is to foster the education of young researchers, which is reflected in the IRF studentship programme which currently supports PhD students from Sweden and Iran, an Erasmus Mundus scholarship for a MA student from Romania, as well as a Marie-Curie Post-Doc student from Greece. In June 2011 the IRF will hold its 4th IRF Symposium focusing on Information Retrieval and Intellectual Property, this time with the dialog zooming in on Image Retrieval, Machine Translation and User Interfaces. As application-oriented discussion forum, the IRF Symposium 2011 will not only offer the opportunity for an exchange with international experts but will also provide practical insight into the latest technological advances in Information Retrieval.

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