Abstract

This report constitutes the proceedings of the fourth Text REtrieval Conference (TREC-4) held in Gaithersburg, Maryland, November 1-3, 1995. The conference was co-sponsored by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and was attended by 140 people involved in the 36 participating groups.

The goal of the conference was to bring research groups together to discuss their work on a large test collection. There was a wide variation of retrieval techniques reported on, including methods using automatic thesaurii, sophisticated term weighting, natural language techniques, relevance feedback, and advanced pattern matching. As results had been run through a common evaluation package, groups were able to compare the effectiveness of different techniques, and discuss how differences between the systems affected performance. In addition to the main evaluation, 5 more focussed evaluations, called "tracks" were run.

The conference included paper sessions and discussion groups. This proceedings includes papers from most of the participants (several poster groups did not submit papers), tables of the system results, and brief system descriptions including timing and storage information.