



Announcement and Call for Participation

17th Systems Administration Conference (LISA '03)

Sponsored by USENIX, the Advanced Computing Systems Association, and SAGE, the System Administrators Guild
<http://www.usenix.org/lisa03>

October 26-31, 2003

Conference Organizers

Program Chair

Aleen Frisch, *Exponential Consulting*

Program Committee

David Blank-Edelman, *Northeastern University*

Gerald Carter, *HP/Samba Team*

Alva Couch, *Tufts University*

Michael Gilfix, *IBM*

Joshua Jensen, *Red Hat Inc.*

Douglas P. Kingston, *Deutsche Bank, London*

Mario Obejas, *Raytheon*

Joshua S. Simon

David Williamson, *Certainty Solutions*

Elizabeth Zwicky, *Great Circle Associates*

Invited Talks Coordinators

Esther Filderman, *Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center*

Dee Mikula, *Telaroma Public Access Internet Security Track Coordinator*

Lynda True, *Northrop Grumman*

Networking Track Coordinator

William Lefebvre, *CNN Internet Technologies*

The Guru Is In Coordinator

Lee Damon, *University of Washington*

Workshop Coordinator

John Orthoefer, *Tufts University*

Advisor

Rob Kolstad, *SAGE Executive Director*

The USENIX Association Staff

Get Involved!

Experts and old-timers don't have all the good ideas. This is your conference, and you can participate in the planning in many ways:

- Submit an extended abstract for a refereed paper.
 - Suggest an Invited Talk speaker or a Panel discussion topic.
 - Share your experience by leading a "Guru Is In" session.
 - Propose a tutorial topic.
 - Organize or suggest a Birds-of-a-Feather (BoF) session.
 - Email an idea to the program chair.
- These options are all described later in this announcement.

Important Dates

Extended abstracts and Invited Talk

proposals due: April 21, 2003

Notification to authors: May 2003

Final papers due: August 4, 2003

"Effective Real World System Administration: Virtuosity, Flexibility, Ingenuity, Perseverance"

The annual LISA conference is the meeting place of choice for system and network administrators. System administrators of all specialties and levels of expertise meet at LISA to exchange ideas, sharpen old skills, learn new techniques, debate current issues, and meet colleagues and friends.

People come from over 30 different countries to attend LISA. They include a wide range of system and network administrators working in the full spectrum of computing environments—large corporations, small businesses, academic institutions, government agencies, and so on—as well as many full- and part-time students.

The conference's diverse group of participants is matched by an equally broad spectrum of activities:

- **Tutorials** for both beginners and experienced attendees cover many administrative topics, ranging from basic procedures to using cutting-edge technologies.
- **Technical sessions** present the latest developments and ideas related to system and network administration.
- **Invited Talks and Panels** discuss important and timely topics in depth, and typically include lively and/or controversial debates.
- **Work-in-Progress reports (WiPs)** provide brief looks ahead to next year's innovations.

LISA also makes it easy for people to interact in more informal settings:

- Noted experts answer attendee questions at **Guru Is In** sessions.

Town & Country Resort Hotel, San Diego, California

- LISA participants discuss/celebrate/commiserate about a shared interest at **Birds-of-a-Feather (BoF)** sessions.
- Vendors answer questions and offer solutions at the **Exhibition**.

Finally, LISA offers the opportunity for informal discussions among participants on both technical and non-technical topics (sometimes called the "hallway track"). LISA is a place to learn and to have fun!

Conference Themes

The conference covers all facets of the practice and theory of system and network administration. The following is a list of some appropriate topics:

Technical Practices: Describing and analyzing important system administration tasks or issues and their solutions

- Automated system administration
- Best practices in current system administration
- Comparison of alternative approaches or solutions to important tasks
- Distributed system administration
- High availability and disaster recovery
- Integration of emerging technologies
- Managing very large installations (scaling issues)
- OS/platform migration strategies
- Performance analysis and tuning
- Security
- Special concerns in heterogeneous environments

Tools and Meta-Tools: Discussions of new tools that solve an important and widely applicable task or problem

- Evaluations/comparisons of system administration tools
- Innovative system administration tools and meta-tools
- Surprising new uses for existing tools
- Ways to automate system administration

Analysis and Theory: Theoretical considerations of system administration issues and practices

- Computer immunology
- Convergent automation in distributed systems
- Metrics for system administration

- Security models

Case Studies: *Discussions of how an organization/site addresses a system administration problem or task*

- Experiences supporting large sites (thousands of users or machines)
- Intranet planning, deployment, support, and maintenance
- Managing enterprise-wide services (e.g., email, authentication)

Organizational and Social Issues: *Discussions of non-technical issues that affect system administrators*

- Budgeting, cost analysis, and project planning for system administration
- Ethics and system administration
- Privacy issues in system administration
- The system administrator's role in the organization
- Working effectively as or with contractors or consultants

This topic list should not be considered exhaustive. Good proposals focusing on any important aspect of system administration are always welcome. If you are unsure whether your topic is appropriate, contact the Program Chair by sending email to lisa03chair@usenix.org.

Refereed Papers

Refereed papers explore techniques, tools, theory, and case histories that extend our understanding of systems and networks, and they present their results in the context of previous related work. Cash prizes will be awarded at the conference for the best refereed paper and best refereed paper by a student.

System administration is a broad topic, and good papers take a variety of approaches. A few examples:

- Description/analysis of a new technique, tool, technology, or theory
- Applying an existing technique/tool/etc. in a novel way
- Critical analysis of the alternatives for solving a common problem, including new recommendations
- New lessons learned from a detailed and honest evaluation of a case history

The crucial component of all of these is something new—something that was not previously available, discussed, considered, measured, analyzed, formalized, or recognized.

The program committee is particularly interested in contributions from full-time students.

Writing a refereed paper for LISA is a rewarding challenge. A properly crafted paper can make a difference in the thinking or practice of thousands of your colleagues. For the best possible impact, your paper should be written so that it is understandable to and relevant to a majority of our attendees. An ideal paper is understandable to an intermediate-level system administrator, while containing ideas that will be new and timely to expert administrators.

It is particularly important to fit your own work into the context of past work and practice. LISA papers must provide references to prior relevant work and describe the differences between that work and their own. Authors should browse proceedings of previous LISA conferences for references, and can use the online bibliography and resource page at Oslo University College (<http://www.iu.hio.no/SystemAdmin>) to find references to related work. The Program Chair and Program Committee members can also give you tips on previous work that might be relevant (send email to lisa03chair@usenix.org for help).

Proposal and Submission Details

Potential authors must submit the following items for review:

- An extended abstract of 500–1500 words (not counting figures and references)
- A brief outline of the final paper.

Note that, contrary to the practice in previous years, full papers should not be submitted. Proposals can be submitted only by the author of the paper

For administrative reasons, every submission must begin by listing:

1. Paper title and names and affiliations of all authors. Indicate whether each author is a full-time student.
2. The author who will be the contact to the Program Committee. Include his/her name, paper mail address, daytime and evening phone numbers, email address, and fax number (as applicable).
3. Whether the paper could be considered a “student paper” for awards purposes (the lead author must be a student).

4. Whether you would prefer to present the paper as a “long talk” or a “short talk” (see below), if you have a strong preference.

All abstract submissions must be electronic, in ASCII or PDF format only (PostScript is not accepted). ASCII format is greatly preferred. Proposals must be submitted using the Web form located on the LISA '03 Web site, <http://www.usenix.org/lisa03>.

Proposals are due by April 21, 2003.

The Program Committee will judge submissions on the quality of the written submission, the novelty of approach, and its technical correctness. Be aware that the best abstracts provide many specific details about the work they describe.

Papers whose only purpose is to promote a commercial product will not be accepted.

To aid authors in creating a paper suitable for LISA's audience, authors of accepted papers will be assigned one or more “shepherds” to help with the process of completing the paper. The shepherds will read one or more intermediate drafts and provide comments before the authors complete the final draft.

Like most conferences and journals, LISA requires that papers not be submitted simultaneously to more than one conference or publication, and that submitted papers not be previously or subsequently published elsewhere for a certain period of time. All submissions are held in the highest confidence prior to publication in the conference proceedings, both as a matter of policy and as protected by the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976. Papers or proposals accompanied by non-disclosure agreement forms are not acceptable and will be returned unread.

Presenting the Paper at the Conference

All accepted papers must be presented at the LISA conference by at least one author.

There are two lengths of presentations at the conference: 20 and 30 minutes (both formats include 5 minutes of Q&A). These “short” or “long” talks are assigned to accepted papers based on the Program Committee's judgment as to how straightforward the content is to describe. Presentation length is not a reflection of perceived paper quality, and it has no effect on the best paper competition.

Authors of an accepted paper must provide a final paper for publication in the conference proceedings. Final papers are generally limited to 16 pages, including diagrams, figures, references, and appendices. Complete instructions will be sent to the authors of accepted papers.

Additional Publication Opportunity

In addition to normal publication in the Conference Proceedings, the best papers from LISA 2003 will also be considered for possible inclusion in the special edition of the journal *Science of Computer Programming* that is being guest-edited by Mark Burgess.

Invited Talks

An Invited Talk discusses a topic of general interest to attendees. An ideal Invited Talk is approachable, and possibly controversial. A special form of Invited Talk is a Panel discussion in which several acknowledged experts discuss some aspect of the practice of system administration.

Proposals for Invited Talks and Panels can take two forms. You can propose a topic for an Invited Talk you would like to give. This should be accompanied by an abstract of the talk. Similarly, you can propose a Panel discussion topic. It is most helpful to us if you suggest panelists.

Alternatively, you can propose an Invited Talk you would like to hear someone else present. Suggestions for possible speakers are helpful in this case.

Past Invited Talks have addressed a wide variety of topics, such as:

- Cryptography and security hot topics
- Emergent trends in the profession
- Legal issues and developments affecting system administrators
- Myths and realities of the profession
- Overviews of new technologies and/or languages
- Personal experiences (case studies) with broad appeal/applicability to the system administration community

Participants in Panel discussions give opinions on issues of the day, possibly with audience participation. Some past Panels have addressed questions such as:

- The best scripting language for system administration
- The future of computer security
- What computer buzzwords really mean

- The problems that plague university environments
- Whether certification should be a job requirement

If you have a topic of interest to system administrators that is suitable for an Invited Talk or Panel discussion, please submit a proposal to the Invited Talk coordinators. Proposals of a business development or marketing nature are not appropriate.

Please email your proposal to *lisa03it@usenix.org* no later than **April 21, 2003**.

Workshops

Limited-attendance, special-topic workshops will be offered alongside the Tutorial Program at LISA '03. If you are interested in organizing a workshop, please submit a proposal to *lisa03workshops@usenix.org* no later than **April 21, 2003**.

Tutorial Program

LISA offers state-of-the-art tutorials by top experts in their fields. Topics range from introductory skills to advanced topics, updates on developments, and news. You can choose from over 40 full- and half-day tutorials, covering everything from performance tuning, Linux, Solaris, Windows, Perl, TCP/IP troubleshooting, security, networking, network services, sendmail, and Samba to legal issues and professional development.

To provide the best possible tutorial offerings, USENIX continually solicits proposals and ideas for new tutorials. If you are interested in presenting a tutorial at this or other USENIX conferences, or you have an idea for a tutorial you would like to see offered, please contact the tutorial coordinator:

Daniel V. Klein
Tel: +1.412.422.0285
Fax: +1.412.421.2332
Email: *dvk@usenix.org*

Work-in-Progress Reports

A Work-in-Progress report (WiP) is a very short presentation about new work that you are currently undertaking. It is a great way to poll the LISA audience for feedback and interest. We are particularly interested in presentation of student work.

Do you have interesting work you would like to share, or a cool idea that is

not yet ready to be published? To schedule your short report, send email to *lisa03wips@usenix.org*.

Birds-of-a-Feather Sessions

Birds-of-a-Feather sessions (BoFs) are very informal gatherings organized by attendees interested in a particular topic.

BoFs are held Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. BoFs may be scheduled in advance by telephone or email:

Tel.: +1.510.528.8649
Email: *conference@usenix.org*

BoFs may also be scheduled at the conference.

Guru Is In Sessions

The Guru Is In sessions are informal gatherings which allow attendees to pose questions to noted experts in the community. Please email suggestions for Guru Is In sessions, or your offer to be a Guru, to *guru03@usenix.org*.

Contact the Chair

The Program Chair, Aileen Frisch, is always open to new ideas that might improve the conference. Please email any and all ideas to *lisa03chair@usenix.org*.

Final Program and Registration Information

Final program and registration information will be available in August 2003 on the conference Web site, <http://www.usenix.org/lisa03>. If you would like to receive the program booklet in print, please email your request, including your postal address, to *conference@usenix.org*.

Sponsorship and Exhibit Opportunities

LISA, the oldest and largest conference exclusively for system administrators, presents an unparalleled marketing and selling opportunity for sponsoring and exhibiting organizations. Your company will gain both mind share and market share as you present your products and services to a pre-qualified audience that heavily influences the purchasing decisions of your targeted prospects. For more details, please contact:

Cat Allman
Tel: +1.510.528.8649 x32
Email: *exhibits@usenix.org*