

MSST2004, the Twelfth NASA Goddard Conference on Mass Storage Systems and Technologies/Twenty-first IEEE Conference on Mass Storage Systems and Technologies has as its focus long-term stewardship of globally-distributed storage. The increasing prevalence of *e-everything* brought about by widespread use of applications based, among others, on the World Wide Web, has contributed to rapid growth of online data holdings. A study¹ released by the School of Information Management and Systems at the University of California, Berkeley, estimates that over 5 *exabytes* of data was created in 2002. Almost 99% of this information originally appeared on magnetic media. The theme for MSST2004 is therefore both timely and appropriate. There have been many discussions about rapid technological obsolescence, incompatible formats and inadequate attention to the permanent preservation of knowledge committed to digital storage. Tutorial sessions at MSST2004 detail some of these concerns, and steps being taken to alleviate them. Over thirty papers deal with topics as diverse as performance, file systems, and stewardship and preservation. A number of short papers, extemporaneous presentations and works in progress will detail current and relevant research on the MSST2004 theme.

Our thanks go to the researchers, authors, and the Program Committee for their zeal and energy in putting together an interesting agenda.

P C Hariharan
Nabil Adam
Publications Chairs

Ben Kobler
Conference Chair

¹ <http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/research/projects/how-much-info-2003/execsum.htm>