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Editorial note

Alfred Kobsa[1]

This is my last issue as the editor-in-chief of this journal. After serving for 26 years in this position, it is time to pass on the baton. It was an exciting ride. When I founded the journal, user modeling and user-adapted interaction was an obscure research effort in the intersection of natural-language systems, intelligent tutoring systems and human–computer interaction. At that time, many office workers still used dumb terminals connected to a mainframe, and home computers were rare. And no World-Wide Web, of course. The idea that computers ought to build a model of the knowledge and abilities of each user and adapt to them individually was for sure a bit quixotic.

Twenty-five years later, three fourths of computer users demand personalization from websites and mobile apps; 20–30% of Amazon purchases and 70% of Netflix view are the result of personalized recommendations; millions of students have used adaptive learning software that models their knowledge and instructs the students on the topics they are most ready to learn; and a hundred million users per month listen to music that is individually selected for them based on their listening behavior.

Research published in UMUAI enjoys wide dissemination and impact. 8684 institutions had online access to the journal in 2015, and 43,063 full-text articles have been downloaded. The journal is top-ranked along several citation-to-articles measures in the fields of Human–Computer Interaction, Education, and Computer Science Applications. UMUAI is also highly ranked in several national journal rankings. Last but not least, 92% of authors who publish in UMUAI state that it is likely they will publish with Springer again.

The new editor-in-chief, Judith Masthoff from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, has all the credentials and energy to move the journal forward. Judith has been

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on the journal editorial board for five years, and has published four articles in the journal as well as a special issue on Personalization and Behavior Change in 2014. She was also a program chair of the UMAP conference in 2012 and is a director of User Modeling Inc. Her areas of expertise span recommender systems, persuasive computing, affective computing, language learning and language generation, patient support systems, and human–computer interaction.

I would like to thank the many people with whom I collaborated on this journal during my tenure. Their number goes into the thousands. I wish Judith all the best for her new position.