

CONFERENCE REVIEW-1: “VSST 2007 - Veille Stratégique, Scientifique et Technologique”

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From 21 to October 25 information professionals have a meeting in Marrakech in the *Journées de Veille Stratégique, Scientifique et Technologique* organized jointly by the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*, the *Institut de Recherche en Informatique de Toulouse* and the *Société Française de Bibliométrie Appliquée*.

These conferences were the first of its kind in Europe in the field of technology watch and competitive intelligence, and have been organized for over 10 years now, every 3 years. The first one was in 1995 in the French city of Toulouse, where there have been two more editions. These conferences have gradually established themselves as one of the main meeting points for specialists from around the world. Internationalization began with the presentation of experiences from projects from other francophone countries, and is establishing itself not only for the participation of experts from different continents, but also for having held the third edition of 2004 outside France, in Barcelona and to take this year's edition to an African city, Marrakech, Morocco. In addition, experts from countries like Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Spain, Luxembourg, France, Austria, China, Switzerland and France will be present in this year's edition.

From the very start, these conferences has been a meeting point for researchers and information professionals to present progress in this discipline and its practical applications in both the institutional level and in different economic sectors, especially in the field of research. At the institutional level, the experiences to enhance technology watch as basis to create wealth in a certain region, especially in developing countries, are very important. In this sense, the conference this year will hold sessions specifically addressed for SMEs about territorial watch.

The subjects treated are many, among which some are highlighted, such as the methodology and processes associated with the design of a competitive intelligence project, the need to find effective tools to identify, analyze and draw the necessary knowledge from information to identify opportunities and threats and to support decision making.

A major concern is the control of all relevant information, despite the large volume of information available. Because of that some of the recurring themes have been the language of interrogation, classifications, ontologies, semantic relations, intelligent agents, partners and associated algorithms in order to carry out an automatic extraction of meaningful data and information. In this context it is important to display the information retrieved by the agents, to facilitate the work of the information analysts. The interest in these issues is made clear by the large number of communications in the various issues related to these fields of knowledge.

Metadata, data mining and text mining, prototyping software, technology maps, standardization of methodologies, dashboards, gossip analysis, risk management, are some of the issues that

have been incorporated into the conferences that have been held throughout time. They all express the evolution and adaptation of the conference to the needs of organizations when it comes to technology watch and economic intelligence.

The meeting in Marrakech will be structured in 21 sessions devoted to the analysis of needs, economic intelligence, information search, strategic watch, weak signals identification, networks, risk management, bibliometrics, text mining, territorial watch, SMEs and industry, tools, and the exercise of watch.

Surely the 2007 edition of the conference will be the consolidation of it as a platform for communication and exchange of knowledge that is essential for experts in the areas of technology watch and competitive intelligence.