

Seminar und Praktikum, SoSe 2014

„Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten und Lehren“

Prof. Dr. Florian Alt

Daniel Buschek, M.Sc.



How to Review a Paper

Elements of a Review

- Short summary of the text
- Contribution statement
- Classification within the scientific context
- Typical questions to ask
 - what is new about this work
 - which problem is this work trying to solve
 - which other work does it extend
 - what is the argumentation of the authors

Critical Review

- A review is NOT about personal interests or personal criticism of the author
- The review should focus on content and presentation
- Typical questions
 - which questions are not answered?
 - what are the limitations of the work?
 - where are contradictions?
 - is the argumentation sound and easy to follow?
 - does the work really provide a contribution?

Ethics in Scientific Communication

- It is ok to consider a contribution to be superfluous or of no need for the scientific community.
- It is not ok to personally judge or insult the author.

Tasks of a Reviewer

- Analyse for
 - correctness
 - originality
 - significance
 - quality
 - improvements
- How to
 - judge whether something is worth to be published?
 - determine which improvements are required prior to publication?

Important Questions

- What is a paper that “merits publication”?
- What is expected from a reviewer?
- How does a typical report for a review look like?
- What questions should be covered?
- What is the overall verdict?

When does a paper merit publication?

- A paper merits publication if there is a scientific contribution
- Examples:
 - new and significant results
 - new knowledge through synthesis of known results
 - helpful surveys and tutorials
 - combinations of these categories
- Worth to publish: small, surprising results that stimulate a new direction for future research
- Not worth to publish: repetition of results from other papers
- Only worth to publish after improvement: good ideas that are badly presented

Role of the Reviewer

- Subjective opinion whether or not a paper provides a scientific contribution
- Usually more than one reviewer

How to find / chose reviewers?

- paper bidding
- keywords
- experts from the field

Papers assignment table:

Click on the "Paper Title" hyperlink to view the paper (or download it).
Click on the "Bid" link beside each paper to bid for that paper.

ID	Paper Title (Full Paper)	Paper Topics	Current Assignment?	Bid This Paper?
1	A formalism of ontology to support a software maintenance knowledge-based system	Formal Methods; Knowledge-Based and Expert Systems; Software Process Modeling;	1	Bid
2	A Measure and Prediction Strategy for QoS of Distributed Security Policy Server	Artificial Intelligence Approaches to Software Engineering; Software Engineering Decision Support; Software Quality;	0	Bid
3	The Expressive Language ALCNHR+K (D) For Knowledge Reasoning	3.Automated Reasoning;	0	Bid
6	Two-Dimensional Process Model for Aspect-Oriented Software Development	43.Software Process Modeling;	0	Bid

Expectations Towards a Reviewer

- Decision in the form of a recommendation
 - accept
 - reject
- Justification for the recommendation
- Ways for improvement (particularly in case of rejection)
- How critical should a reviewer be?

Typical Review Report

- Overall judgement (usually scale from 1-5)
- Summary (1-5 sentences)
- Originality and significance
- Quality (methodology, precision, errors, presentation)
- Justification for the rating
- Optional hints for the editors

- Authors receive “cleaned” version / meta-review
- Deadlines

Examples for Review Forms



Reviewer **Florian Alt**
Submission **Towards a privacy threat model for interactive public displays**
Review type **External**

Please direct any questions to the submission's primary: bulling@mpi-inf.mpg.de.

Confidence

How confident are you about your assessment of the work?

- 4 - Highly confident - I consider myself an expert in the area
- 3 - Very confident - I am knowledgeable in the area
- 2 - Somewhat confident - I have passing knowledge
- 1 - Not very confident - I have no knowledge in the area

Contribution to UbiComp

Please briefly summarise this submission's contribution to Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing. Think broadly and positively in terms of the types of contribution a paper can make, referring to the [call for papers](#) if necessary.

The authors present a study that aims at investigating the applicability of the STRIDE model, particularly focusing on the importance of the different categories of the model. Additionally, the authors suggest several modifications.

Overall Rating

Provide your overall rating of the paper. Your written review should support your overall rating.

- 6 - Definite accept: I would argue strongly for accepting this paper.
- 5 - Probably accept: I would argue for accepting this paper.
- 4 - Maybe accept: I would agree with accepting this paper.
- 3 - Maybe reject: I would agree with rejecting this paper.
- 2 - Probably reject: I would argue for rejecting this paper.
- 1 - Definite reject: I would argue strongly for rejecting this paper.

R&R Suitability (Hidden from authors)

Revise and Resubmit Suitability: In case the submission does not get directly accepted at the PC meeting, please rate its potential to be resubmitted in a second round, after the authors have had 5 weeks to do additional work. This might include additional experiments and/or implementation work (the necessary improvements should be made clear in your review). Note that such a resubmission does not guarantee acceptance in the second round.

- No need to resubmit - only minor revisions needed on the current version
- High potential for significant improvement in 5 weeks
- It would be possible to improve within 5 weeks, but difficult
- Reject without offering revise/resubmit - 5 weeks is too short to improve submission sufficiently

The Review

Please describe both what you like about the submission, and what problems you see with it. If possible, identify opportunities for improvement and provide concrete suggestions - in particular in light of a potential "revise and resubmit" decision, where the authors would have additional 5 weeks of time. As always: please be objective and try to maintain a courteous and friendly tone throughout your review.

The authors present a study that aims at investigating the applicability of the STRIDE model, particularly focusing on the importance of the different categories of the model. Additionally, the authors suggest several modifications.

At the same time, there are also some critical aspects I would like to note. Assessing privacy concerns for public displays via an online survey seems somewhat questionable. With high probability, participants have never experienced this kind of threat in the real world, so answers are likely to be very hypothetical. I would also assume, that due to the nature of the topic, people would in general not state their privacy awareness. However, the authors did a good job at focusing on different, very specific aspects of privacy. Hence, this challenge is overcome to a certain extent. While I believe it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the general view of the users with regard to privacy in front of public displays which is also not claimed, a comparison can be drawn between the aspects, which is interesting and novel. In addition, the initial assessment of the qualitative feedback of the participants adds to the validity of the data.

A second aspect is that - as also pointed out by the authors - the content presented on the display is likely to have a strong influence on the need for privacy. Unfortunately, this issue is neglected regardless of the different categories of the STRIDE model. As a result, the recommendations presented in Table 3 are valid, but would have been more valuable if separated per content type. Thus, an application designer could have easily looked up, which threat aspects are crucial to tackle, and which are not. This should at least be discussed by the authors. Overall, the quality of the paper would have been high if the authors had been able to address these points.

Confidential Comments (Optional) (Hidden from authors)

Optional comments for the reviewers and program committee that will NOT be sent to the authors:

Possible Verdicts (Smith, 1989)

- Major results - very significant
- Good, solid, interesting work; a definite contribution
- Minor, but positive, contribution to knowledge
- Elegant and technically correct but useless
- Neither elegant nor useful, but not actually wrong
- Wrong and misleading
- The paper is so badly written that a technical evaluation is impossible

Some Final Issues

- Multiple submissions
- Plagiarism
- Anonymity
- Acknowledgements
- Reputation of the authors
- Can you use material from a paper under review?
- Conflict of interest