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Shortest path problems are among the most fundamental combinatorial optimization problems with many applications, both direct and as subroutines. They arise naturally in a remarkable number of real-world settings. A limited list includes transportation planning, network optimization, packet routing, image segmentation, speech recognition, document formatting, robotics, compilers, traffic information systems, and dataflow analysis. Shortest path algorithms have been studied since the 1950's and still remain an active area of research.

This volume reports on the research carried out by participants during the Ninth DIMACS Implementation Challenge, which led to several improvements of the state of the art in shortest path algorithms. The infrastructure developed during the Challenge facilitated further research in the area, leading to substantial follow-up work as well as to better and more uniform experimental standards. The results of the Challenge included new cutting-edge techniques for emerging applications such as GPS navigation systems, providing experimental evidence of the most effective algorithms in several real-world settings.

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