



**University  
of Southampton**

Ref: WH/JS

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Professor Peter Smith  
Computing and Information Systems  
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Dear Peter

**Re: CPHC Distinguished Dissertation Award - Mike Salamasis**

It is my pleasure to support your proposal to put Mike's PhD thesis forward for this award both as his external examiner and a member of the research community in which his work is based.

His thesis is entitled

An Agent-Based Hypermedia Digital Library

which very aptly sums up the work. I can honestly say that this is one of the best PhD's I have read in terms of the amazing depth of understanding that Mike shows of the research area, and the fact that he is the first person to my knowledge to design a distributed open hypermedia system completely based on communicating agent processes. His thesis demonstrates that he understood the research issues in this quite specialised area completely, analysed with a considerable degree of insight the flaws in the current systems and saw a clear way forward to the next generation of distributed open hypermedia systems. He only had time to implement a partial version of the system in his PhD work but the overall design is complete and this is one of the main reasons that I would like to see this PhD thesis win an award. It really should be published in its entirety so that other researchers can pick it up and use it to inform the design of future generations of hypermedia systems. Papers published from the thesis will not be able to convey both the depth and breadth of the system Mike has envisaged.

There are in fact two major pieces of work described in the thesis. I have concentrated on the agent-based hypermedia aspects because this is the area I am closest to, but Mike also describes a novel collection fusion strategy which uses hypermedia links to solve the collection fusion problem. This is excellent work in its own right and the results should also be widely disseminated.

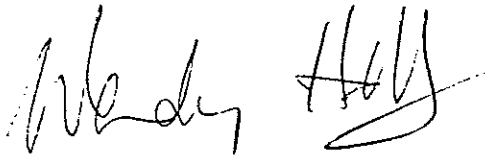
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The thesis is possibly too long, mainly as a result of the amount of background information Mike has to present because his work crosses the boundaries of so many different areas. As a result although its long there really is no superficial information in the thesis - it is all relevant and necessary to set the context of the novel work Mike has undertaken. I cannot recommend this thesis highly enough. It would be wonderful to see a thesis in this research area winning an award.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Hall'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Professor Wendy Hall