

# IEEE VAST CHALLENGE 2009

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## About this site

The VAST Challenge is a participation category of the [IEEE VAST 2009 Symposium](#) (part of [VisWeek 2009](#)).

## LAST NEWS

Interested in participating in the next challenge? Check the [2010 page](#). If you downloaded the materials from previous years - and registered with a valid address - you will receive an email telling you when the 2010 data is available.

We received 49 entries from 30 teams, and gave 23 different awards to a total of 16 teams. See the [List of awards](#). **Solutions and materials submitted** by the teams can be found (along with other benchmarks) in the [Visual Analytics Benchmarks Repository](#). URL: You have been redirected to a new website but please still use the original URL [www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/VASTchallenge09](http://www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/VASTchallenge09) to refer to the Challenge. Related website: [SEMVAST NSF Project](#), which provided partial support for the organization of this Challenge. e.g Nine teams received student travel funds to attend the Participant Workshop at the symposium. **Questions?** Send email to: [challengecommittee-AT-cs.umd.edu](mailto:challengecommittee-AT-cs.umd.edu), or use the Discussion Blog

## OVERVIEW OF THE EVENT

**This year the challenge centers on a cyber analytics scenario: an employee is leaking important information to the outside world; hypotheses about his identity and network need to be made or confirmed.**

**There are three mini Challenges involving:**

- **Badge and computer network traffic**
- **Social network (with a very small geospatial component)**
- **Video**

The VAST 2009 Challenge continues in the footsteps of the VAST 2008 Challenge and the 2006 and 2007 contests with the purpose of pushing the forefront of visual analytics tools using benchmark data sets and establishing a forum to advance visual analytics evaluation methods. We also hope it will speed the transfer of VA technology from research labs to commercial products, and increase the availability of evaluation techniques.

In order to provide more opportunities for increased participation we again offer an overall Grand Challenge as well as several smaller Mini Challenges. Teams may enter one or more mini Challenges independently of the entering the Grand Challenge. ALL teams submitting an entry to a VAST Challenge will be invited to discuss their work during a challenge workshop.

Entries will be judged on both the correctness of the analysis (based on the availability of ground truth) and the utility of the tools in conducting the analysis. Participants have several months to prepare their submissions.

Although the grand and mini-challenges are currently focused on homeland security topics we want to emphasize that both the problems and their solutions are indicative of very broad applicability. The challenges are very similar and representative of data sets that deal with medical, health, financial, educational, transportation, or social data. In fact it is our strong belief that good tools that succeed in solving the mini or grand challenges will easily apply to a broader collection of data sets, and we encourage individuals and groups from all disciplines to not only participate in the challenges but in the workshop and future planning of the VAST challenge activities.

## AT THE IEEE VAST SYMPOSIUM

We are planning a whole day participant workshop on Saturday October 10th. It will be opened only to teams who submitted an entry to the challenge.

The two page summaries from EACH team submitting an entry will be posted on an [online repository at NIST](#) (National Institute of Standards and Technology) after the Symposium.

The two page summaries of the most deserving entries which receive an award will be also published in the VAST 2009 Symposium Proceedings.

## RULES

The challenge is open to EVERYBODY. If in doubt, ask the chairs.

Student teams must have a faculty sponsor and provide the faculty's contact information with their registration.

Teams may use any existing commercial product or research prototype and, of course, may combine tools. We strongly encourage teams to find partners with complementary expertise (e.g. groups with text analysis or reasoning tools might want to seek partners with user interface expertise). We can assist you if you are looking for partners, please ask!

At least one participant of the teams receiving recognition should attend the Symposium, so please discuss travel support issues early with your advisor or supervisor. If you are a student register as a student volunteer as early as possible. In the past we have been able to offer a few free registrations and hope to be able to continue this tradition but cannot guarantee it at this time.

Remember, everybody who submits is invited to a participant workshop! (but only those who submit...)

## 2009 TIMELINE

Early March    Sample data available  
Mid March     Data sets available - Mini challenge topics finalized  
June 20        Submissions deadline (except for two-page summaries)

- [DOWNLOAD](#)
- [TASK DESCRIPTION](#)
- [CRITERIA FOR JUDGING](#)
- [HOW TO SUBMIT?](#)
- [ANSWER FORMS](#)
- [RESULTS](#)
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- August 1 Results returned to participants
- August 10 Two page summaries submission deadline. Summaries of awardees appear in Proceedings, others appear in Compendium. Submission is optional.
- October 10 Participant workshop before VAST 2009
- October 11-16 VisWeek and VAST Symposium in Atlantic City, NJ

#### VAST CHALLENGE CHAIRS

Georges Grinstein, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Catherine Plaisant, HCIL, University of Maryland

Jean Scholtz, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Mark Whiting, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

#### RELATED URLS

VAST 2008 Challenge

SEMVAST project: Scientific Evaluation Methods for Visual Analytics Science and Technology and associated SEMVAST wiki

CG&A Journal paper about the VAST 2007 contest

CG&A Special Issue on Visual Analytics Evaluation. (submission deadline passed)

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