ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The two editors wish to express their sincere gratitude to all authors that contributed to the writing of the Chapters, for the quality of their work, for the efforts spent and for their great patience which had been challenged many times during the course of this project. Many special thanks are also given to the Editor Mr. John Martindale at Springer for his encouragement and patience, to his helpful and cheerful former Assistant Editor Ms. Angela Quilici-Burke, and also to his current Assistant Editor Mr. Robert Saley.

The editing of this book would never have been accomplished without the help and inspiration from a number of people to which Evangelos Triantaphyllou is deeply indebted. His most special thanks go to his first M.S. Advisor and Mentor, Professor Stuart H. Mann, currently the Dean of the W.F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at the University of Nevada. He would also like to thank his other M.S. Advisor Distinguished Professor Panos M. Pardalos currently at the University of Florida and his Ph.D. Advisor Professor Allen L. Soyster, currently the Dean of Engineering at the Northeastern University for his inspirational advising and assistance during his doctoral studies at Penn State. Special thanks also go to his great neighbors and friends; Janet, Bert, and Laddie Toms for their multiple support during the development of this book and beyond.

Most of the research accomplishments on data mining and optimization described in the work by Dr. Triantaphyllou would not had been made possible without the critical support by Dr. Donald Wagner at the Office of Naval Research (ONR), U.S. Department of the Navy. Dr. Wagner’s contribution to this success is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks go to his colleagues at LSU. Especially to Dr. Pius J. Egbelu; former Dean of Engineering and current Dean of the NSF Academy, Dr. Kevin Carman; Dean of the College of Basic Sciences at LSU for his great leadership and support to all of us especially during the challenging times when Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit our area in the fall of 2005, Dr. S.S. Iyengar; Distinguished Professor and Chairman of the Computer Science Department who leads and inspires by example, and Dr. T. Warren Liao; his good neighbor, friend and distinguished colleague at LSU.

Dr. Triantaphyllou would also like to acknowledge his most sincere gratitude to his graduate and undergraduate students, which have always provided him with unlimited inspiration, motivation and joy.

Giovanni Felici is particularly grateful to his friend and mentor Klaus Truemper, Distinguished Professor at the University of Texas at Dallas. Besides providing a large and significant contribution to the chapters of this
book, he has always inspired and stimulated Dr. Felici’s work, sharing his ideas and work with the greatest generosity.

Amongst the many people who oriented his work, Dr. Felici wants to address a special thank to professor Giacomo Patrizi of the University of Rome “La Sapienza”, who, many years ago, as Ph.D. Advisor, seeded the interest for research on Data Mining and Learning in the mind of his young student.

Profound gratitude is also expressed to Professor Giovanni Rinaldi, current “direttore” of the IASI - Istituto di Analisi dei Sistemi ed Informatica – of the Italian National Research Council (CNR). He has always provided the greatest support and has made all efforts to realize a pleasant and productive working environment, while sharing with Dr. Felici his profound knowledge in all fields of Operations Research and Optimization.

Most of the recent work and experience of Dr. Felici in Data Mining has been generated by close interaction with colleagues within the framework of the Optimization Laboratory for Data Mining of IASI (OLDAM), a young project that is significantly contributing to the advance of research and to the consolidation of a strongly connected research community. Many thanks are thus addressed to all the people who have been part of OLDAM, and in particular to Dr. Marco Sciandrone, researcher in IASI and co-founder of the Lab.