Acknowledgements

The two editors wish to express their sincere gratitude to all authors who have contributed to the writing of the chapters, for the quality of their work, for the effort spent, and for their great patience which had been challenged many times during the course of this project.

The editing of this book would never have been accomplished without the support from a number of people to which ***T. Warren Liao*** is deeply indebted. First and foremost his thank goes to the former NSF Program Director, Professor Janet Twomey from Wichita State University. Without her support for the International Workshop on Data Mining in Manufacturing Enterprise Systems, this book might not be materialized. He would also like to thank his good colleague and dear friend, Professor E. Triantaphyllou, for his willingness to collaborate in this area of research and his total dedication to this edited book. Dr. Liao is also very grateful to his friends at the Intelligent Systems Branch of the Army Research Laboratory (ARL). His one-year sabbatical at ARL has definitely enriched his research experience and had served quite well as the launch pad for his research in the mining of time series data. Furthermore, Dr. Liao would like to acknowledge the support of his research collaborators as well as the assistance of his graduate students in carrying out various research projects and ideas. It is this experience of exploring and learning together through research that he really relishes.

Evangelos Triantaphyllou is always deeply indebted to many people which have helped him a tremendously during his career and beyond. He always recognizes with immense gratitude the very special role his math teacher played in his life; Mr. Leuteris Tsiliakos and his UG Advisor at

the National Technical University of Athens; Dr. Luis Wassenhoven. 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, former IE Chair at Penn State and former 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. Especially for allowing him to work on this book in their amazing Liki Tiki study facility. Many special thanks are also given to Dr. Steve Patt, Editor at World Scientific, the publisher of this book, for his encouragement and patience.

Most of the research accomplishments on data mining and optimization 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. Kevin Carman; Dean of the College of Basic Sciences at LSU for his 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 at LSU, and Dr. T. Warren Liao; his good neighbor, friend and distinguished colleague at LSU, and last but not least to Dr. Janet Twomey from the NSF and Wichita State University.

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