

Cruncher

SPSS distribution

SPSS Australasia has terminated the distribution agreement it had with HRS. We notified our SPSS customers personally of the termination, but have not been able to tell them what the alternate arrangements will be. SPSS gave us very little information, apart from telling us that we were no longer to represent them. When this was announced to our SPSS users, we received many letters

of support, mostly based on surprise that SPSS would want to be represented by anyone else. Thank you, everyone who contacted us.

HRS no longer has any role in the distribution of SPSS business or market research products, and we cannot offer any technical support after 31 October 2001.

We are very disappointed that SPSS has chosen to do this. We are a financially sound company, and all our other supply arrangements are unchanged. We have negotiated distribution arrangements for several new products in the last few weeks, and expect to announce these and others on our web site as soon as details are finalised.

SPSS Science products

We expect that we will continue to be able to supply these – SigmaPlot, TableCurve, SigmaScan Pro, SYSTAT etc., since these are distributed via a stand-alone division of SPSS.

Statistics software from HRS

We regard SPSS products as being very suitable for certain users, and have no reservations about having promoted them so heavily and successfully over the last few years. However, we are aware that other products have been improved recently, so they are now much more suitable for some tasks, and may have better purchasing arrangements.

At the time of writing this newsletter we are negotiating supply arrangements for various well-known and capable products. We intend to devote much effort to promoting and supporting them, so that we remain a great supplier of statistical and market research products.

Staff

Sandra McCormack has recently left her part time job doing marketing for us, to take up full time work with a bank. We wish her every success, and thank her for stepping in at short notice when we had a problem, and doing a very good job.

August seminars

In the August tour we visited New Plymouth and Palmerston North, with good attendances at all the seminars, thanks to the co-operation of local people. We also ran seminars on products that we have not previously demonstrated.

If you would like us to visit your city, and can help to raise some local interest, do ask us whether we can come to see you. Also suggest products you would like to see.

Customer Survey

Sandra McCormack started a project at Waikato University, involving a survey of our SPSS clients, before we made her our marketing co-ordinator. She thanks very much everyone who returned the survey.

We have not seen her final report yet, but the glimpses we have caught show that the information will help us to provide even better service, as well as making us feel that we are doing a lot of things well.

Barbara Mitchell from Progressive Enterprises won the draw - congratulations!

MATLAB News & Notes

The MathWorks have decided that it is now appropriate to distribute the "News and Notes" by email and web site, so you will not receive the paper version again.

To ensure you get this, please update your email details on the MathWorks web site via www.mathworks.com/mla. If you are not currently a MATLAB Access member, you can join from this page.



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Business Software

Remark and scanners

Remark Office OMR has been available for many years, and is used by many organisations in NZ to capture information coded in the marks that respondents make on forms that are scanned. Version 5 has significant improvements in the ease of use and data reporting features, and we will show these in the seminar series that we are about to give.

We have found that some organisations put a lot of effort into form design, and data analysis, but they try to use Remark with a scanner that is not designed for the purpose. Sometimes this fails completely, and sometimes it is merely inefficient. To make it easy for our customers to get this right we are now selling the necessary scanners, as well as the software. We have a scanner of our own, so we can demonstrate the procedure, on your forms if necessary.

SigmaPlot with SPSS

You can now access the graphing, editing and publishing features of SigmaPlot while you're working in SPSS. Simply launch the Graph Wizard from SPSS's SigmaPlot drop-down menu to create compelling, publication-quality graphs.

This needs SPSS 11 and SigmaPlot 7.1. Users of SigmaPlot 7.0 will be able to upgrade to 7.1 by using a free patch which you will find at www.hrs.co.nz/software/sigmaplot.htm when it is available.

Delphi and Kylix

In response to customer demand, HRS has now arranged to provide the Borland Application Development Environments Delphi (for Windows) and Kylix (for Linux). These are much more than programming languages, although Delphi has been described as "object orientated Pascal". They both come with extensive support for databases and for web application development.

A user recently praised Delphi to Ray by saying "its structure makes it difficult to make stupid mistakes". The New Zealand made programs Aulos, featured in the previous Cruncher, and V++, featured in the next section, were both written in Delphi.

Call Marc for more information.

Survey Pro

We have sold this opinion surveying product for many years, and trained people in its use. However, it has always been a bit "non-standard" in the way you use it, and the reports it produced were hard to get the way users wanted them. Its strength has always been that it is relatively simple to use, compared to the corresponding SPSS products, once you understand it.

Survey Pro version 3 is now here, and keeps the strengths of the earlier versions, while becoming a lot more intuitive. It even produces automatic summaries of your data for you, in high quality tables and graphs. We are delighted to be able to offer it to you, complete with seminars and training. (See the seminar programme.)

Many people are using Internet surveys now, and Survey Pro allows you to add an option to create an on-line version of the forms that you design.

The Survey System

The Survey System 7.0 is a powerful survey tool, new to us, but a very well known product. It handles all types of questionnaires, from simple comment cards to the most sophisticated telephone-based interviews. It takes you through all aspects of the survey process from designing and printing a questionnaire through producing professional quality tables and graphics. You can easily enter and edit the data, spell check the text, calculate complex statistics and necessary sample sizes. It offers telephone sample management and multi-user network support. You can incorporate sound and graphic images into the interviewing process. You can even record respondents' answers in their own voices.

Call Glen for details.

Data capture service using OMR

Do you sometimes carry out surveys, and find it tedious to enter the data to your analysis program? If you don't do enough of them to be worth while buying scanners and software, we can scan the data for you, at a charge, and interpret it with Remark Office OMR, providing the questionnaire is of a suitable kind. Please discuss this with Glen.



Ray Says:

The importance of analysis

Corporate failure has been much in the news over the last few months. Just as the last newsletter came out, there was the problem of highly publicised foreign exchange rate losses. During the winter many companies faced problems related to their decision to rely on the spot market for their electrical energy purchases. And more recently, Air NZ needed very expensive rescue.

I am not privy to the details of any of the above problems, but our sales activities give us some idea of the attitude of companies to quantitative analysis. One customer of ours gained hugely from the failure of another company to manage its risk in the power business. This client had invested heavily in tools based on MATLAB for its staff to manage power purchasing and sale. It had impressed us with its skill well before the crisis broke, and now has the customers that used to be serviced by one of its competitors – a competitor that had purchased very little software from us.

The foreign exchange management problem is one that is highly susceptible to risk modelling. We don't know if it was attempted in the publicised case, but if not, it should have been.

My point is that businesses can stand or fall on the way they manage quantitative aspects of their business, long before these aspects get translated into overall profits. HRS supplies products and training that allow both large and small businesses to manage their business quantitatively. Don't be like the man who once said to me "If I can't do it in Excel I don't do it".

Special offer for SigmaPlot

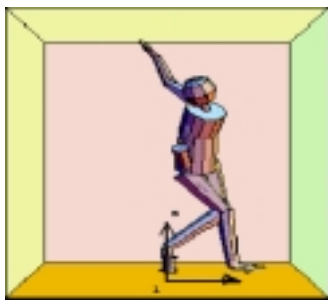
We still have some copies purchased at the special price, which we can sell you for only \$995 + gst. Save \$750! Offer closes 30 November or when stocks run out.

Science and Engineering Software

Mathematica and Cricket!

A team from University of Waikato and University of Auckland used a Motion Analysis System to track the 3D motion of all the major body segments of an elite spin bowler delivering a cricket ball. The resulting information was entered in to a computer model designed using the Mechanical Systems Pack for *Mathematica*. The model gives a 3D representation of the human body as a system of rigid bodies with mass and inertia. The resulting simulation can be used to calculate certain biomechanical aspects of the delivery. Thanks Rene! We will look forward to some breakthroughs to help our cricket team this summer.

For more information about Mathematica and its application packs please call Marc.



webMathematica

This new product offers access to specific *Mathematica* applications through a web browser or other web clients. It adds interactive calculations and visualization to a web site by integrating *Mathematica* with the latest web server technology. You can develop new applications rapidly without requiring developers to learn new skills or to write a lot of Java code for mathematical algorithms, graphics, and input and output. Developers do not have to worry about session management and error recovery either – *webMathematica* takes care of all of these aspects, letting your R & D personnel concentrate on solutions, not the implementation details.

Go to www.wolfram.com/products/webmathematica/ to see details and examples.

Customers with *Mathematica* premium service can get a free copy of the “amateur” version of this product – they should have received an email with the URL, otherwise they can contact Marc.

LUSAS

LUSAS is a program that uses finite element techniques to work out the stress, thermal distribution and deformation in complex 3D structures. You can deal with non-linear and dynamic problems, and there are modules specific to composites, bridge design and structural engineering.

HRS is working with FEA in Australia who will be providing the full support for this product. If you are interested finding out more about how LUSAS can help, please give Marc a call.

MATLAB renewals

A new policy on upgrading and maintaining MATLAB started on 1 October. All existing users should have received notice of the details. The essence is that to upgrade a MATLAB licence that is not on a current subscription plan, you will have to pay all the back subscription amounts from the month the licence expired.

Compaq Visual Fortran 6.6 released

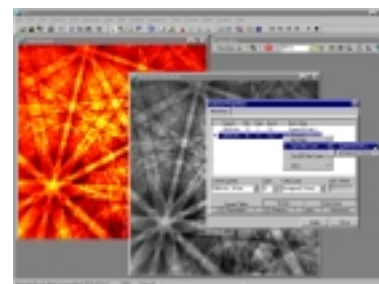
Fortran continues to be a widely-used language for high-performance scientific, engineering and technical applications. Visual Fortran is one of the best Fortran compilers and supports a mixed language development with Visual C++ 6.0. Visual Fortran was sold by Digital Equipment Corp to Compaq several years ago and Intel is now also involved. The latest features of Compaq Visual Fortran 6.6 include Pentium 4 optimisations, support for 64 bit Integer*8 and Logical*8 data types and a better Windows interface. As part of this new release, prices have been slashed until November 30 2001. All Visual Fortran 6.5 customers will receive a free upgrade.

Please also note that we can now sell concurrent user licensing.

Please contact Marc for more information.

Compaq Visual Fortran distribution

HRS has been appointed by Compaq NZ to be their retail distributor of Visual Fortran. Please tell your purchasing officers that we should be their first call, since this is where they will probably end up anyway.



V++ Precision Imaging Software

V++ is a powerful image processing system that incorporates hundreds of image processing functions, can read an astonishing variety of data formats and can manipulate very complex images. It includes support for 3D stacks and sequences. V++ can control a wide range of lab equipment: CCD cameras, video frame grabbers, and microscope stages. Imaging tasks can be automated using the VPascal™ Programming language to design the routines. The complexity and power is hidden behind an intuitive Windows interface.

V++ was developed by the New Zealand company Digital Optics, which is now a world leader in precision digital imaging software. This software is used in hundreds of applications, in more than 40 countries around the globe. It is used in every US national laboratory, in all of the major universities, military labs, high-tech companies and in dozens of law enforcement agencies. Call Marc to find out more.

Electronic version of the Merck Index:

The Merck Index is a one volume encyclopaedia of chemicals, drugs and biologicals. The 13th edition of the Merck Index has now been published by CambridgeSoft in a fully searchable electronic format that can be read by the ChemOffice desktop software, or by its own (included) viewing program. Ask Marc for more information about this.

Data via serial ports

If you want a tool to input data directly from various instruments such as bar code scanners, scales, or micrometers into your standard windows application, in real time through your serial port, then try Win Wedge. Call Marc for more information.

Science and Engineering Software, continued

Mathcad concurrent user license

We have had a great surge of interest recently in engineers wanting to take advantage of the Mathcad concurrent user license. This lets them install one copy on the network, and have it used by people all over the company. The smallest license of this type supports a maximum of 3 concurrent users, but you can buy more concurrent users if you want.

Improved Mathcad Library on Web

Improvements have recently been made to increase the ease of use of the Mathcad library, a searchable, categorized database of user-contributed Mathcad documents, e-books, Mathcad-generated graphics and animations. (www.mathcad.com/library) Mathcad users and interested people will find hundreds of items of interest in engineering, mathematics and teaching.

Mathcad Client

This product allows you to access the full functionality of Mathcad documents from a web browser, or from a stand-alone viewer. You can edit the values in expressions, but you cannot create new documents or delete text from existing documents. The Mathcad Client is intended for use where many users need to perform calculations in documents created by specialists. It is expected that it will be a very valuable product in organisations that commit to Mathcad as a principal tool for design documentation and technical calculation.

Axum 7

This new version will be made available at no charge to all owners of Mathcad Premium version under the subscription plan, when the next incremental release of Mathcad is complete. (see SmartSketch note.) There is not expected to be an Axum 7 LE version but we believe you will be able to continue using Axum 6 LE.

SmartSketch 4

This new version of SmartsSketch will be made available at no charge to all owners of Mathcad Premium version under the subscription plan, when the next incremental release of Mathcad is complete. (Soon, but don't ask us to promise when!) SmartsSketch LE version 4 will also be released at that time to Mathcad Professional owners who have current subscriptions.

MathType 5 released

This is a major upgrade to a product that makes it easy to do mathematical typesetting. The most remarkable feature is one called MathPage, that converts Word documents into web pages with great looking math. On top of this it contains ease-of-use improvements and time saving features, as well as compatibility to Windows XP.

Contact Marc for more information.

Seminars and training

Seminar series

You can find details of these seminars, and enrol for them, on our web site www.hrs.co.nz/seminars. The Mathcad seminar is similar to the other ones we have given this year, although Ray will be demonstrating a few things that he learned at a recent Mathcad International Distributors conference.

Auckland (27th November), Wellington (29th November), **Dunedin** (30th November) and Christchurch (3rd December).

Seminar 1 (10am) – Mathcad

Seminar 2 (1pm) – Satisfaction Surveying

Seminar 3 (3pm) – Risk, Optimising and Forecasting

The Satisfaction Survey seminar will show you how researchers can save money and get greater understanding by using the related products Survey Pro and Net Collect to create professional forms and databases. The programs also help you to capture and analyse data. With Remark OMR you use a scanner to read your data into a database.

In Seminar 3 we show how to handle uncertainty in a spreadsheet model of the numbers involved in a business decision. We also show you a tool that will find the best method for making forecasts of time series, and another one that is far better at optimising than the normal Excel methods.

@RISK training

Our next public @RISK training course is 14-15 November in Auckland. It is almost full already, so if you are interested, please check the details at www.hrs.co.nz/training and enrol for the course on our web site, or give Glen a call.

Mathcad training

We have no public training courses scheduled for the next few months, but lots of private, in-house ones. Do let us know if you have enough interest in your organisation to run a Mathcad course.

Contacting us ...

We are based in Hamilton, but supply, support and demonstrate our products around all of New Zealand.

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