

Cruncher



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HRS goes WWW

HRS has had a web presence for several years, but it has been relatively passive. We now believe our customers are so used to using the web that it is time to do much more with our site. Some of the changes will show up right away, and more will be brought in later in the year. We are doing much more than altering our web site – we are changing all aspects of communication with our customers.

We have always been very tied in to our customer database – now the database will be linked to our web site. Don't expect "bleeding edge" technology, but do expect things to become more useful to you, and easier for you as well.

You may have noticed that this Cruncher has no enclosures. We now put all the information that was in our enclosures into special web pages. The last page of this Cruncher gives you brief descriptions of what is there – go to the given web site addresses for more information and to enrol for the courses and seminars.

Of course, if it is more convenient for you, we are happy for you to phone us on our freephone number to ask for paper-based material on these events.

Do let us know if you feel strongly one way or the other about these changes – we want them to work for you.

HRS goes Email

As noted above, HRS is making active use of modern technology. If we have your email address we sent you a plain-text email of the table of contents of this Cruncher, as well as this paper version, as a once-off introduction to the new system. Some people will prefer to get the email, and others the paper version. We will not send you the emailed version again unless you "opt-in" by one of the response mechanisms we provide. The emailed table of contents contains a web link and an automatic email response mechanism that are convenient ways to tell us your preference.

If we do not have your correct email address and you want to receive this newsletter by plain text email then please send your name, address and phone number (so we can match you with our existing records) by email to one of the following addresses.

Newsprod@hrs.co.nz if you want to get both the Cruncher and product update information by email. This product information will pertain to products which you have purchased from us, and will relate to bug fixes, new releases, and anything else connected with making the most of your product. We don't expect to send more than 4 messages per year per product you own.

News@hrs.co.nz if you just want the Cruncher by email, and do not want to receive product information this way. We will try to post your important product information.

If you do not want to receive anything, then please fax us the mailing label on this mailout or send email to nonews@hrs.co.nz with your name and address so we know who you are and that you do not wish to receive mail.

If you do nothing we will continue to send you the Cruncher by post.

Automated email

You will often see in our emails an odd address like mcadcourse@hrs.co.nz. These speed up or simplify our response to you, because our mail system can automatically send you an email in reply, containing an appropriate response. For example, the above one could send you details of a course. We may not immediately read the contents of such email, so please don't put important information in the body of emails to such ad-

resses. Similarly, we may not immediately read an email that is sent to an address intended to indicate preferences for future mailings.

Email address changes

We use your email address as a quick way to find you in our database. If we have your email address you only need to give us your other contact information once. However, this only works if you tell us when you start using a new address to contact us.

Business Software

Support Requests

When you email a support request, please ensure we know more about your than just your email address.

We need to know your name, your employer's name, the software name and version, and the operating system. If you know who bought the program that will also help to identify exactly which version you are using, and any history of previous problems in your environment.

SPSS Hint Six

In all recent versions of SPSS, once you have double clicked on any output table you can find help specific to that output by clicking Help/Results coach. A set of windows will take you step by step through the interpretation of the output.

@RISK licensing

Palisade have introduced a new licensing system for their @RISK Monte Carlo simulation Excel add-in. Palisade gives you 30 days from the time of installation to use @RISK 4.0 before authorising it. You can authorise your @RISK 24 hours a day, 7 days a week over the web. If you do not have Web access you can email the request code to HRS and we will obtain your authorisation code within 48 hours or less. If you are migrating to a new machine, or need to install @RISK 4.0 to another machine, you need to contact HRS to obtain a new authorisation code.

All special offers you may receive after registering with Palisade can be processed by HRS, so you can pay on your normal purchase order system.

@RISK 4.0.2 patch

This patch updates current installed versions of @RISK 4.0.x to version 4.0.2. The patch will not update @RISK version 3.5 or earlier. This is a general maintenance upgrade recommended for all users of @RISK. Go to

<http://www.hrs.co.nz/patches/risk.html>

For SAS users!

We stumbled across an article on the web that gives an opinion of SYSTAT in comparison with SAS.

<http://ces.iisc.ernet.in/hpg/envis/doc98html/softstat1531.html>

The writer of the above article believes SYSTAT is much easier to use than SAS, so that SYSTAT users get more done.

With each version, the developers of SYSTAT are making it more useful as a tool to use in conjunction with SAS. If you have both products you get the depth and database power of SAS, while having the tremendous graphing power and ease of use of SYSTAT.

Data mining white paper

We were so impressed by a "white paper" from SPSS that we put it on our site so we could find it again. It explains well the difference between OLAP products and Data Mining products. It happily mentions SAS as well as SPSS strengths! Read it if you need to know why OLAP is not enough.

www.hrs.co.nz/whitepapers

SPSS for Macintosh

We expect to be able to supply SPSS 10.0 for Macintosh before the end of the year. The Base system, Advanced Models, Categories, Conjoint, Missing Value Analysis, Regression Models, Tables and Trends modules will be available for the Mac OS 9.0.4 or above. Other system requirements are Power Macintosh G3 233 MHz (including iMacs), 64 MB RAM and 800 x 600 colour resolution.

Current SPSS 6.1.4 for Macintosh users will receive a 40% discount when they upgrade and receive automatic upgrades with the annual renewal contract.

The specification sheet is available on our web site at <http://www.hrs.co.nz/more/spss.htm>.

SPSS 10.0.7 patch

This patch will upgrade your existing SPSS 10.0.5 for Windows product to version 10.0.7. This is a general maintenance upgrade recommended for all users of SPSS, although we have not seen many of the problems that are fixed. SPSS 10.0.7 is an incremental release with many minor changes:

- Some infrequent memory leaks were fixed.
- There were issues with temporary files
- There were some data editor data display problems.

The patch affects SPSS Base and most of the modules. It only works on version 10.0.5. In a network environment, the administrator will need to upgrade the version of SPSS on the network. No additional client software installation is needed.

<http://www.hrs.co.nz/patches/spss.html>

Perseus SurveySolutions for the Web 3.0

Version 2.0 won PC Magazine's Editors' Choice Award in February this year. Version 3.0 addresses the Editors' comments with additional question types and more validation of response entries. The Professional version possesses advanced functionality for market research firms. Check out the details at

<http://www.hrs.co.nz/more/perseus.htm>.

Employers

We often get approached by people wanting jobs in which our software could be useful. If you could employ mathematically or statistically skilled people please let us know - we are happy to informally pass names on to you.

Information Resources

Product slide shows

Many people are curious about the products we sell, and would like to see them in action, but do not have the time to install the products and learn how to run them. A lot of people come to our seminars, where we show off the products, but this is time-consuming for them.

We have recently created animated Powerpoint slide shows that allow people to quickly and easily see what some of our products do. You can access these shows from our web site, and in a few minutes you will be shown the key points of the programmes. With this background you will find it easier to understand what the other descriptive information we supply is referring to. For instance, the differences between MATLAB and Mathcad, or SPSS and SYSTAT become obvious.

To check out which products currently have a slide show go to www.hrs.co.nz/slideshows. At the time of writing the shows included Mathcad, SPSS, SYSTAT, MATLAB, and AnswerTree. We expect to do Remark OMR, @RISK and others in the near future.

Talks and seminars

Our web site provides the text of some of the talks and seminars that we give. The index page is

<http://www.hrs.co.nz/talks>

Currently the talks are:

- **Determining the statistically significant segments in your database and using the information profitably**
- **Data analysis with statistics software**

Data analysis documents

Many of our technical support requests are general queries on how to perform certain kinds of analysis, rather than problems specific to a particular programme. Ray has a long term interest in such matters, and has written articles on his experiences in data analysis. These are placed on our web site, with an index page at

www.hrs.co.nz/analysis.

Some of the articles are listed below. We expect more will be added from time to time, and we welcome criticism, extra information or your own contributions. If you have a problem that you would like us to work on, please send it to us for our viewpoint.

- **Removing flow rate effects from stream water quality information**
- **Summarising combinations of variables**
- **Missing values – what they are and why they are important**
- **Creating groups of data from continuous records**
- **Dates in data analysis**

Links

We have many links to relevant web pages. Go to <http://www.hrs.co.nz/links.html>.

If you have others that you think we should list, please send them to support@hrs.co.nz

Science and Engineering Software

Free CD's with Mathcad

Until Friday 1 September (unless we run out of stock) we will give away one of the following CD's with each Mathcad purchase:

“The Maths and Science Collection” – a collection of three Mathcad electronic books that reviews the fundamental principles of maths and science.

“Problem solving in Engineering” This CD contains over 140 practice problems specific to electrical, mechanical and civil engineering, and demonstrates how to use Mathcad effectively to solve a wide variety of problems

Please tell us which one you want when you order.

Application stories

We have some great stories from clients who have used our products for advanced applications. However, we know that most people who use Mathcad, SPSS and other products are using them for unadventurous but essential day to day work, where the ease of use is more important than the depth of the analysis.

If you or your company are a user who makes extensive but basic use of any of the products we sell, we would love to hear from you, so we can pass your experiences on to others.

MATLAB and financial Markets

Although Genesis Power already had MATLAB for engineering-related tasks, they have recently begun using it more intensively for energy trading. According to Genesis Power senior analyst Chris Mauger, “We chose MATLAB and its toolboxes because it provides a powerful analytical environment”

Which product should you use?

“Mathcad is used for day to day engineering calculations, MATLAB for control loop design, DSP design and optimization. I use Mathematica and Nodal for electronic circuit analysis.”

*Roumen Petkov, of
Invensys Energy Systems.*

Training and seminars

Enrol on the Web

For detailed information on all these events, please go to the appropriate web page. You will find descriptions of the events, and links to sources of related information. You can also enrol from the web site. We believe this will give you a much better background on the events than we can give

you on paper, and it will save a significant number of trees from destruction.

If you do not have web access, please phone us at 0800 477 776 and we will mail you the appropriate information.

Free seminars

There are two seminars in this series. Each is repeated in Auckland (13 September and 29 November), Wellington (29 August) and Christchurch (31 August)

Seminar 1: Tools for Survey Research and Data Analysis. This seminar will demonstrate software that lets you design data capture forms, use scanning software, summarise and explore your data, and find hidden patterns. (SPSS, Remark and AnswerTree). For details, go to www.hrs.co.nz/services/datasem.html.

Seminar 2: Mathcad for Engineers and scientists. Mathcad lets you calculate in the same way you think about a problem. This seminar will show how Mathcad can be used both for one-off calculations and as a design documentation tool. For details, go to www.hrs.co.nz/services/mcadsem.html.

Training – Analysing data with SPSS.

A one-day introduction to SPSS will be given in Auckland (12 September and 30 November), Wellington (30 August) and Christchurch (1 September). This course is ideal for people who want to get quickly into data analysis with SPSS and use it efficiently. It is also taken by people who are evaluating SPSS for use in their organisation. For details, go to www.hrs.co.nz/services/spsstrain.html.

Private seminars and training courses

In addition to the above scheduled events, we frequently visit companies to discuss products that can be of use to them, and we arrange specially customised training courses on many products. Do give us a call if we can help you, or visit www.hrs.co.nz/services/training.html to find out more about courses on SYSTAT, MATLAB, and other products.

Bits and Pieces

Staff

Andrew Highley has left us to work for Ceanet, the Australian MATLAB distributor. As a transition, we have temporarily employed Cherie Flintoff (a previous employee of ours) to cover the period

while we found a replacement. From the first of August, Jan Hania, an engineer with experience with a consulting engineering firm and a local body, will sell our mathematics programs. Cherie will remain in the background for a while, training Jan.

Privacy policy

Because of the extent we are integrating our communications and database, we believe you have a right to know our privacy policy. The full description is posted on our web site at www.hrs.co.nz/privacy.html, but in summary, it is as follows:

- We do not ever sell or give away our contact information.

- We store records of our discussions with you about the products we sell, to improve our support.

- We will tell you what information we have about you at any time, as long as you can identify yourself to us.

- We will change information we have at your request. We will normally confirm this by email.

- You can choose what material we send to you, if any.

We hope you found this issue of the Cruncher to be useful.

The last one was in May, 2000.

If you have colleagues who could benefit from a personal copy of the Cruncher and our Software Guide, please get them to contact us.

Contacting HRS

We are based in Hamilton, but supply, support and demonstrate our products around NZ as needed.

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