News

Editorial

by John Fox

Welcome to the first issue of *R News* for 2008. The publication of this issue follows the recent release of R version 2.7.0, which includes a number of enhancements to R, especially in the area of graphics devices. Along with changes to the new version of R, Kurt Hornik reports on changes to CRAN, which now comprises more than 1400 contributed packages, and the Bioconductor Team reports news from the Bioconductor Project. This issue also includes news from the R Foundation, and an announcement of the 2008 *useR!* conference to be held in August in Dortmund, Germany.

R News depends upon the outstanding service of external reviewers, to whom the editorial board is deeply grateful. Individuals serving as referees during 2007 are acknowledged at the end of the current issue.

This issue features a number of articles that should be of interest to users of R: Gregor Gorjanc explains how Sweave, a literate-programming facility that is part of the standard R distribution, can be used with the LyX front-end to LaTeX. Jeff Enos and his co-authors introduce the **tradeCosts** package, which implements computations and graphs for securities transactions. Hormuzd Katki and Steven Mark describe the **NestedCohort** package for fitting standard survival models, such as the Cox model,

when some information on covariates is missing. Vito Muggeo presents the **segmented** package for fitting piecewise-linear regression models. Cathy Chen and her colleagues show how the **BAYSTAR** package is used to fit two-regime threshold autoregressive (TAR) models using Markov-chain Monte-Carlo methods. Vincent Goulet and Matthieu Pigeon introduce the **actuar** package, which adds actuarial functionality to R.

The current issue of *R News* also marks the revival of two columns: Robin Hankin has contributed a *Programmer's Niche* column that describes the implementation of multivariate polynomials in the **multipol** package; and, in a *Help Desk* column, Uwe Ligges and I explain the ins and outs of avoiding — and using — iteration in R.

Taken as a whole, these articles demonstrate the vitality and diversity of the R Project. The continued vitality of *R News*, however, depends upon contributions from readers, particularly from package developers. One way to get *your* package noticed among the 1400 on CRAN is to write about it in *R News*. Keep those contributions coming!

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Contents of this issue: