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A Kinder, Gentler R - An Easier to Install Version of R for the Windows Platform

By Dr. Rich Herrington, Research and Statistical Support Services Manager

Introduction

This month we provide a pre-installed, pre-configured version of R for the Windows platform in a compressed, self-extracting zip file.   The following is an excerpt from the R website http://www.r-project.org:

> *R is a language and environment for statistical computing and graphics. It is a GNU project which is similar to the S language and environment which was developed at Bell Laboratories (formerly AT&T, now Lucent Technologies) by John Chambers and colleagues. R can be considered as a different implementation of S. There are some important differences, but much code written for S runs unaltered under R. R provides a wide variety of statistical (linear and nonlinear modeling, classical statistical tests, time-series analysis, classification, clustering, ...) and graphical techniques, and is highly extensible. The S language is often the vehicle of choice for research in statistical methodology, and R provides an Open Source route to participation in that activity. One of R's strengths is the ease with which well-designed publication-quality plots can be produced, including mathematical symbols and formulae where needed. Great care has been taken over the defaults for the minor design choices in graphics, but the user retains full control. R is available as Free Software under the terms of the Free Software Foundation's GNU General Public License in source code form. It compiles and runs out of the box on a wide variety of UNIX platforms and similar systems (including FreeBSD*

> *and Linux). It also compiles and runs on Windows 9x/NT/2000 and MacOS* (from *Introduction*).

R Installation for Windows Platform

R can be be downloaded and installed from the CRAN website. However, some effort is needed to choose which packages to install; there are helper packages that provide GUI support; and there are some configuration steps that make using R more convenient. Rather than illustrate the installation procedure of downloading and installing packages and configuring the Rprofile and Rconsole files, we have provided a preinstalled/preconfigured image of R in a self-extracting ZIP file. You can download this file from the RSS server at the following location: http://www.unt.edu/rss/R_cd/R.exe . This file is approximately 700 megabytes, so you might want to have a DSL or Cable internet connection. If you don't have an internet connection with a large bandwidth, then you can pick up a CD free of charge at the UNT bookstore (tradebooks - where UNT software is sold).

The R.exe File

The R.exe file is a single file that installs a preconfigured version of R (2.1.1) onto your C: hard-drive in the directory "C:\R". This installation of R includes all of the packages on the CRAN website as of Sept. 2005. Additionally, the "Tinn-R" text editor and "R Commander" GUI are installed and R is preconfigured to start these whenever R is started. To start R, browse to the C:\R directory and click the shortcut icon which appears as a "blue R". Additionally, some other open source statistical software are installed and preconfigured in the R directory as well (e.g. Mx, LEM). In subsequent RSS Matters articles, I will introduce readers to these other open source statistical tools. In the near future, we will have a CD of training AVI training videos that instruct users on using R and other open source statistical software.   As an example, a link is provided below that has an AVI video instructing users how to install the R CD.

Links

An AVI media file that introduces users to the installation of R for Windows.

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