



The Journal of Statistical Software

<http://www.jstatsoft.org>

1 History

JSS was created in 1996. We first had a small survey on many of the mailing lists to find out who would be interested in following such a journal, and who would be interested to be on its board. We started with a large board, which was weeded out over the years.

Papers came in a very haphazard way, the quality was sometimes questionable, and quite a few were by friends and family members.

During Andreas Buja tenure as editor of JCGS we decided that it would be a good idea to establish some sort of link between JCGS and JSS. That is what we did. At JSM 2000 the JCGS management committee approved some sort of link between JCGS and JSS.

There are indication that this link, however ill-defined it is, does have some effect on both journals. But more work needs to be done towards integration.

2 Motivation

- To provide a peer-reviewed forum for statistical software development, in which not only the documentation but also the software itself is reviewed.
- To have interesting statistical software contributions in a single place. Observe that JRSS C (Applied Statistics) discontinued its software section around this time.
- To promote statistical software that has good documentation (and documentation that has good software).
- (later) To promote R and related open-source projects.
- (later) To provide an outlet for suitable JCGS by-products.
- (always) To increase the visibility of UCLA Statistics.

3 Board

Couldn't do it without them.

Nicholas Cox	Tony Rossini
Mark Hansen	Arnold Stromberg
Wolfgang Hartman	Duncan Temple Lang
Susan Holmes	Luke Tierney
Kurt Hornik	Frederic Udina
Mortaza Jamshidian	Antony Unwin
Roger Koenker	Gregory Warnes
George Michailides	Webster West
Balasubramanian Narasimhan	Yingnian Wu

Observe that reviewing a JSS issue means reviewing the documentation, but also the code. And reviewing the code means running the code. Thus it is potentially a lot of work.

4 Issues

Number of published issues since the start.

1996	4
1997	9
1998	4
1999	6
2000	5
2001	8
2002	13
2003	(6)

Since 2000, i.e. since the association with JCGS, there is a healthy growth. Volume 9 (also 2003) will be a special volume on robust statistics, other special volumes are planned.

5 Interface

Originally, our interface was the standard HTML list structure, with some tags for the various components of the issue.

The papers were done in various formats, an early favorite was perhaps LaTeX2HTML. We now require PDF, and we prefer the pdflatex/hyperref format with, of course, type I fonts. In the future we will not consider MSWord submissions, or PDF documents with bitmap fonts,

Currently, the interface is just a PHP program looking into a mySQL database which has the information about the paper, the author, the reviewing process, and links to the components of the issue.

Recently, each issue has acquired counters and a forum.

There is no page limit and issue limit.

6 Site Search

- The mySQL database can be searched with a search interface that can be expanded.
- We also provide htdig search of all the files on the jstatsoft site (which is a virtual server on our web servers).
- There is a summary page with the review history, which can be searched using the text search that is available in the browser.

7 Formats

The contents of JSS can be accessed in various ways, which make them convenient to work with for indexing, maintaining, harvesting, and so on.

1. JSS exists as an mySQL database, which can be dumped to a textfile with SQL commands. This will reconstruct the database, although not of course the PDF and the code.
2. JSS exists and is maintained as a BibTeX database by Nelson Beebe. See <http://www.math.utah.edu/pub/tex/bib/jstatsoft.html>
3. We maintain a version of JSS in Dublin Core format for harvesting (for instance by Science Direct). See http://maxwell.stat.ucla.edu:8080/oaib/oaib?verb=ListRecord&metadataPrefix=oai_dc
4. We are not (yet) in CIS.

8 Plans

1. More special volumes. I need proposals and guest editors, obviously.
2. Code snippets. Perhaps. This is an old plan, but we (the board) cannot decide on the content and format. Ultimately this will only happen if one person or a small group of persons decides to start this, lobby for it, and manage it. In this respect it is the same as anything else in the world. I am not going to pull this one.
3. Living documents. Perhaps. E-journals have the possibility to think of papers as programs, that can run your data, for instance. You get a document that does not have fixed tables and plots, because they are a function of the input data. A paper can be put together that transforms itself for different audiences. And so on. I would still like to see something that eventually downloads as a complete PDF, and looks like a perfectly respectable journal publication.

9 Administrative

In the future we should strive for

1. an ISSN number,
2. a place on the ASA, IMS, and Interface websites, next to JCGS,
3. the JSS editor is on the ASA editorial board,
4. and gets financial support.

All these items are may not be strictly necessary for the functioning of the journal, but they are a sign of

$$\mathcal{R} - \mathcal{E} - \mathcal{S} - \mathcal{P} - \mathcal{E} - \mathcal{C} - \mathcal{T}$$

10 Other E-journals

I have not looked in detail at many other E-journals, mainly at the ones in Statistics and Probability. Most of them are quite conventional, either with HTML throughout (which I don't like, because it looks bad), or with several different downloadable formats per article (which I don't like, because it does not choose a standard).

Most E-journals are also organized in Volumes and Articles, on yearly basis, which is useful to fit into BibTeX or databases like CIS.