To all who are interested in Rapp

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Rapp is not just another mathematical/statistical software tool like SAS, Emblem and ResQ. It is freeware. In addition to standard actuarial methods, Rapp implements my published (after peer review) and (if I may say so myself) ground-breaking actuarial methods BICH (Bootstrapping Individual Claim Histories), MVW (MMT Variance estimates under Weak assumptions) and RDC (Reserve by Detailed Conditioning). Rapp is very fast; it is my hobby to trim Rapp to the largest possible speed without sacrificing accuracy. (But understanding the source code might get harder.)

My latest large undertaking has been to develop a sublanguage Mbasic within the language Rapp for floating-point multiprecision computing. You can read about it on the Rapp page. It should be suitable for astronomers and cosmologists dealing with very small and large numbers. I you have friends in those areas, please send them a tip on Rapp.

I was born in 1942, ie I am long past retirement age. I have started with more of customary activities for retired persons, such as chorus singing and volunteering to help immigrants learn Swedish. So I have begun this year to slow down with programming somewhat, after developing Rapp at a furious pace since 1984. The time might now be ripe to try to secure the survival of Rapp.

I have come nowhere with my endeavour to make Rapp Open Source. I give up. There are so many legal and technical complexities, which I cannot master. I am a mathematician and programmer, not a lawyer. I joined the Open Source Initiative, but no one has taken an interest in Rapp. I get a lot of mails concerning other programs though, full with legal intricacies which I do not understand.

An obstacle to using Rapp, particularly in a corporation with strict software standards, is of course worry about future maintenance.

So I am putting Rapp into the Public Domain by simply putting a link to a zip file Rappkod.zip with the source code and explanations on the Rapp page http://www.stigrosenlund.se/rapp.htm of my personal site. I had intended to protect Rapp, through Open Source, from appropriation by some commercial software company, but now I do not care.

As stated in the manual, Rapp.Exe is technically extremely simple, in the sense that input and output files are only simple text files. (Logically it is complex though.) Excel files that Rapp writes and reads are XML files in text format. For creating pdf's from text files, Rapp uses MikTeX or Adobe Acrobat Distiller. Rappmenus.Exe is a Visual Basic program, and as such not very complicated.

Very likely some of you have tried introducing Rapp into your corporation, but you got rebuked by software standard watchdogs. I would say you have a better chance now with the help of the info above.

Apart from correcting bugs, what might need to be done or be desirable to do in the future is adaptation to another C compiler than the free one from Microsoft. I found out with the help of a friend that Microsoft's compiler now makes the fastest Rapp code, but that might change. Also possibly needed are adaptations to changes in Excel or Pdf which affect the ways Rapp must write (and read for Excel) such files. If those changes are not made, then the last Rapp compliant Excel or Pdf versions must be kept on the user's computer. The last very big adaptation I made was to rewrite the code to fit both 32- and 64-bit computers. I do not envision anything like that in the future.

To adapt Rapp to changes in Excel, modify or replace those members of Ckod\Cfuncs in Rappkod.zip which contain xlm in their names. (The names should really contain xml.) I guess that if someone undertakes this, she will make the Rapp/Excel interfaces from scratch rather than try to understand my source code.

I advise those, who are interested in maintaining Rapp when I cannot do so, to contact each other and informally decide on how to do it. Use the guest book on http://www.stigrosenlund.se/rapp.htm to state your interest in this. (Not that I am ill in any way now.) Then you can communicate later on and decide on the Rapp maintenance and where on the internet to put the Rapp package including source code when I am not around. Maybe you can even succeed in making Rapp proper Open Source code.

Alternatively: I got an advice on a programmers forum to try to subsume Rapp under R. If the R group people get interested in this idea, the path to Open Source for Rapp would be clear. I have not pursued this, but perhaps some of you can do it. To get you connected, if several of you are interested, use the guest book. Or write a simple mail to me, and I will connect you. If you are not oriented towards technicalities and programming, please engage friends who are.

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