Analytics

Official newsletter of the Analytics Section of INFORMS

e-Newsletter: June 27, 2012

jmp Analytically Speaking featuring Peter Goos and Bradley Jones on optimal DOE — Watch July 18 Webcast

Wimbledon math wonks: What would Federer do?

When asked what he thought about the practice of allowing professional tennis players to challenge umpire line calls via a video replay system, six-time Wimbledon champion Roger Federer famously once said, "I have a very strong opinion. I'm absolutely against it."

What would Federer or any other player in this year's Wimbledon now underway do if scientific analysis demonstrated that optimal decision-making in regards to replay challenges could improve a player's chances of winning by 9 percent in an otherwise even five-set match?

At the professional level, players on certain courts at certain tournaments, including the four Grand Slams, potentially have the opportunity to challenge every point and ask for a video replay, but in order to keep the match from becoming bogged down in a series of time-consuming disputes, each player is limited to three such challenges per set (unless a challenge is upheld, in which case the challenger retains his or her existing number of challenges). Thus, the question players face is: With a limited number of challenges, under what circumstances should I challenge a line call if I want to optimize my chances of winning not just the point, but the set and ultimately the match?

Professors S.R. Clarke and J.M. Norman address the question in "Optimal challenges in tennis," a technical paper scheduled to appear in the August 2012 issue of the *Journal of the Operational Research Society (JORS).* Federer and friends would be wise to read it.

— Peter Horner, editor, Analytics Magazine

Crowdsourcing, competition and corporate strategy

The cover story of the upcoming July/August issue of *Analytics* magazine, scheduled for release the week of July 9, focuses on "crowdsourcing," a concept that, in this instance, turns complex analytical problems into a competitive sport open to analysts, astrophysicists or anyone else who cares to submit a solution. As Margit Zwemer notes in her article, the concept is not new; as far back as the 18th century, the British government offered more than £100,000 in prize money to anyone who could come up with simple and practical methods for measuring longitude to assist maritime navigation. The 2009 Netflix Prize, which offered $1 million to anyone who could improve the company's movie recommendation algorithm by 10 percent, is credited for turning crowdsourcing into a mainstream corporate strategy. For an advanced look at Zwemer's article, click here.

IBM surveys marketing industry

IBM's new survey of the marketing industry finds that chief marketing officers and chief information officers must join forces in order to connect with today's consumer across new channels including mobile devices and social networks. Fully 60 percent of marketers point to their lack of alignment with the company's IT department as the biggest obstacle to reaching today's consumers. Read more.

Final announcement: Innovation in Analytics Award

Nominations for the second annual Innovation in Analytics Award, sponsored by the Analytics Section of INFORMS, are due July 15. Read more.

Bank robbery econometrics: Crime doesn't always pay

Contrary to images of unimaginable wealth in the movies, the proceeds from the average bank robbery are small, according to a recent report published in Significance, the magazine of the Royal Statistical Society and the American Statistical Association. Indeed, they often appear to be lower than the cost of installing some security devices designed to deter them. Read more.

Predictive analytics help Charleston P.D. reduce crime

The Charleston Police Department in South Carolina is working with IBM to assist the city's more than 400 police officers to more accurately evaluate and forecast crime patterns. The department is using IBM predictive analytics software to better allocate its resources and identify criminal hot spots to prevent crime and increase public safety. Read more.

Big Data adoption is slow as analytics gap looms for insurers

A new research report from advisory firm Novarica reveals that insurers have been tepid in their adoption of Big Data to date, but a significant minority are planning to build a specialized infrastructure for it within the next 12 months. Read more.

U.C. Irvine offers Google Analytics Certification online

University of California, Irvine Extension has introduced a new online course titled "Google Analytics Certification 2." The course aims to prepare professionals for the Google Analytics Individual Qualification (GAIQ) exam and will cover aspects of the Google Analytics platform. Read more.

Major multi-line beverage wholesaler gets better with 'age'

When Milt Odom began selling bourbon, liquor, coffee, tea, meats and candy in Anchorage, Alaska, in 1933, he probably didn't even imagine that the company he created that still bears his name would one day be the premier beverage wholesaler in the Pacific Northwest and one of the largest privately held companies in the area. Today, Bellevue, Wash.-based Odom Corporation stocks 9,800 SKUs from 480 suppliers across seven major warehouses. Read more.

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Big Data & Predictive Analytics

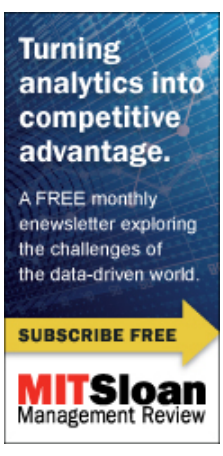
The volume and variety of data is rapidly increasing. As a result, big data analytics has become a hot topic.

The use of big data is becoming a key basis of competition and growth for companies. And companies that compete with analytics are seeking new technologies to advance their strategic objectives. Watch this video series sponsored by Angoss Software to learn of recent industry research and information your organization needs to formulate effective big data strategies.

White Paper from SAS Institute Inc.

Drive Your Busines with Predictive Analytics

Find out what smart companies already know direct effect on the bottom line by targeting prospects better, streamlining business decisions, increasing customer profitability and more. After defining predictive analytics, this paper walks readers through data management and modeling; marketing, operations and risk applications; and the enterprisewide role everyone plays in creating a culture of analytics. Click here.



Recent Job Postings

Babson College – Assistant Professor, Statistics/Analytics – (Babson Park, MA) – (June 22, 2012)

FedEx Ground – Operations Research & Analysis Engineer III – (Pittsburgh, PA) – (June 14, 2012)

SignalDemand, Inc. – Senior Optimization Scientist – (San Francisco, CA) – (June 6, 2012)

US Airways – Manager, Ops Planning – (Pittsburgh, PA) – (June 1, 2012)

More Employment Opportunities...

Post Employment Ads...

Upcoming Analytics Conferences

Disney Analytics & Optimization Summit 2012, Aug. 30-31, Lake Buena Vista, FL

Predictive Analytics World for Government, Sept. 17-18, Washington, DC

INFORMS 2012 Annual Meeting, Oct. 14-17, 2012, Phoenix, AZ

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