Article from

CompAct

April 2017
Issue 55

Letter from the Editors

By Mark Africa and Sean Hayward

Welcome fellow members of the Society of Actuaries Technology Section to the first edition of *CompAct* in 2017. As you can tell, this edition arrived in your mailbox, not your inbox like last year. While it may seem counter-intuitive for a technology section to move back to paper newsletters, the feedback we've received from our members is that you are more likely to read the newsletters if they are paper vs. digital. As noted in the last issue of 2016, we are moving to two issues a year, approximately six months apart. This allows our contributors time to continue with their high quality articles, without overburdening them while they do their day jobs.

In addition to our excellent contributors, Mark and I would like to extend a thank you to Paul Ramirez for his work on *CompAct* over the past year. Paul has served his term as editor, helping to round-up articles and working to ensure that our members receive valuable, insightful content. We also congratulate Paul on the role as Technology Section Chair and look forward to his leadership this year.

Mark and I welcome feedback on *CompAct* from all of our members, both related to content as well as the changes to our delivery mechanism and timing. We encourage any of you to reach out to either of us with ideas for potential articles, or if you have an interest in authoring an article. We can be reached at *mark.africa@aig.com* or *sean.hayward@ fisglobal.com*.

In this latest issue of *CompAct*, we have five articles. One is a continuation of a recurring series, and we have four new contributors.

POWER BI

Following up on last issue's Power Query article, Tim Heng's latest article delves into the capabilities of Power BI, a suite of business intelligence tools that can be used to create live dashboards and drill down capabilities into data without the need to be a database expert or to constantly export results manually to spreadsheets.

DEALING WITH LARGE CSV FILES IN R

Adding to the recent theme of R related articles, Jeff Heaton from RGA has provided an insightful article on how R can be used to manage large datasets in a CSV file, including tips and tricks for navigating some of the potential memory limitations that can arise from such use.

DRIVERS FOR THE DIGITALIZATION OF INSURANCE

Harmut Schroth from SAS joins the list of new contributors with an article outlining some of the considerations involved in maximizing the use of data collected by insurers through the use of digitalization. Bringing together the myriad of data gathered across an insurer to better understand customers and risks provides insurers with a great opportunity, but requires additional consideration around data management practices that are highlighted nicely in this article.

## CODING STANDARDS AND THE EFFICIENT MODEL

Brody Lipperman from FIS has contributed a well-articulated article outlining the need to consider more than pure speed when assessing the efficiency of a financial model. Given the significant investment insurers make in the human capital associated with their financial modeling platforms, the author states transparency, ease-of-use and maintainability need to carry significant weight as well.

WEARABLE WELLNESS: FIVE QUICK TAKEAWAYS FROM RGA'S FITNESS TRACKER STUDY

Finally, Chris Falkous from RGA has provided an interesting summary of the latest trends and considerations around the use of wearables in the insurance industry. Both drivers for usage as well as potential limitations around their inclusion in a wellness program are considered. ∎

Mark Africa, ASA, MAAA, is an IT actuary at AIG. He can be reached at *mark.africa@aig.com*.
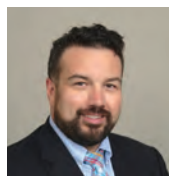
Sean Hayward, CFA, FSA, MAAA, is a software development actuary with FIS. He can be reached at *sean.hayward@fisglobal.com*.