Letter From the Editors

By Mary Pat Campbell and Jennifer Wang

Welcome to the fall issue of *The Modeling Platform*. We have quite the variety of articles for you, including some digital-only content.

DON'T MISS THE DIGITAL COPY

We're experimenting in this issue, trying to take advantage of what may work better in a digital format rather than printed on paper.

Our regular feature describing modeling-related SOA meeting sessions is in only the digital edition, as is the second part of the article "Confessions of an Efficiency Junkie."

There are a few ways you can find the digital copy, but the easiest way is to go to the Modeling Section area of the SOA website and navigate to the newsletter. The link to the newsletter page is *https://www.soa.org/sections/modeling/modeling-newsletter/*.

The first issue we had in digital format was back in the spring; the same content was in both the print and digital editions. We are now trying some digital-exclusive content, which helps us share more information in a more efficient way.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

While we're wrapping up the editing of this newsletter, we're also on the prowl for more authors and more articles for our first 2020 issue. In this issue, Bryon Robidoux shows one method of producing submissions: responding to prior articles. "The Importance of Centralization of Actuarial Modeling Functions, Part 1" continues the conversation started in the spring 2019 issue of two articles on centralization of the modeling function within an insurer. As the title indicates, there are further parts coming, so look for those in 2020.

Other inspirations can be changing standards and regulations, as we see in the articles "Play Ball! Modernizing for LDTI" and "Insights Into Life Principle-Based Reserves Implementation and Modeling Practices." The first looks at upcoming accounting changes for U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and the second looks at a change already in progress.
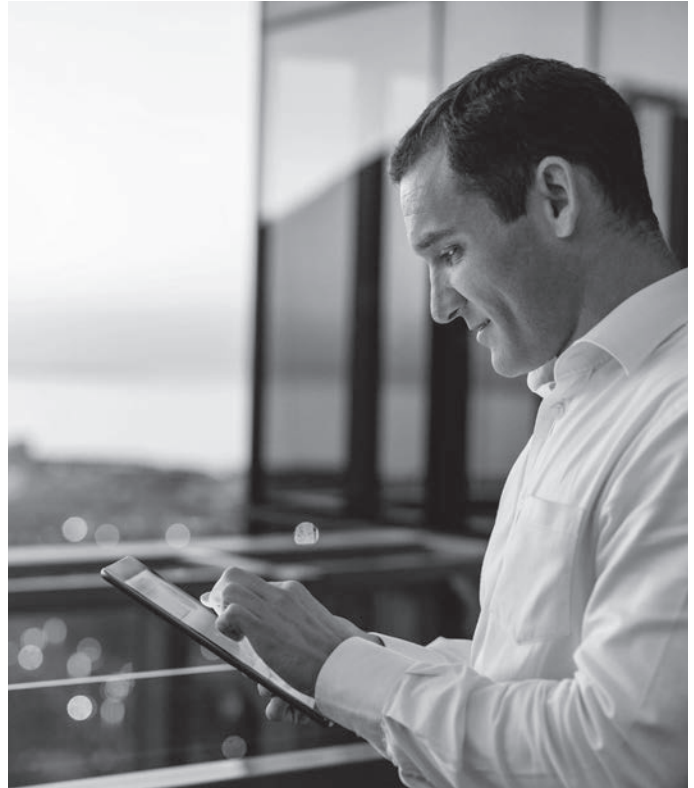
We also see articles coming from experience, with principles and practices the authors have found helpful. "Confessions of an Efficiency Junkie" looks at what is really involved in trying to make processes efficient … and what that even means. Again, don't miss part 2 online. "Writing Effective Model Documentation" looks at not only how to document your models but also what goals one is trying to achieve with this documentation.

Other articles have some high-level principles to keep in mind in modeling. "Key Principles of Actuarial Model Governance" summarizes key goals developed among many actuarial groups. "Economic Scenario Generators, Part I: Motivation for Stochastic Modeling" helps lay out why one would want to model stochastically. Note that's also the first of a multipart series as well—keep an eye out for more articles there.

Finally, a tool that we can use: "An R Package for Experience Studies." The R package described in this article can be seen (and forked) at GitHub. As we write this letter, there are various notes on the code—in GitHub, one can propose fixes and additions to the package author. Please share with the actuarial modeling community (non-proprietary, non-confidential) projects you're working on. With increasing use of R and Python in the world of data science in general, there may be some public repositories one can share. It need not be your

own code, even. There is a growing number of packages and code out there, so "curating" a list of what you find helpful will help the actuarial community.

SHARE THE LOVE

If you enjoy or appreciate an article, please contact the authors and let them know.

Authors have their articles published, and while there is a warm glow of seeing one's name in print, one wonders if anybody is reading the articles, and if they do, what they think about it.

Alas, our digital version does not have a "like" feature (yet), so in the meantime, why not drop a quick note to the authors? With contact emails listed at the end of each article, it's a snap. Go do it. Heck, just copy/paste this line: "I just read your article in the fall issue of *The Modeling Platform*—I really enjoyed it!"

If you didn't like an article, or disagreed with what the authors had to say, why not write your own article with your perspective and send it to us, your friendly editors? Keep the ball rolling. ■

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