Conference Report: R in Insurance 2014

by Markus Gesmann, Andreas Tsanakas

Conference summary

The 2nd R in Insurance conference took place at Cass Business School London on 14 July 2014. This one-day conference focused once more on the wide range of applications of R in insurance, actuarial science and beyond. The conference programme covered topics including reserving, pricing, loss modelling, the use of R in a production environment and much more.

The audience of the conference included both practitioners (70%) and academics (30%) who are active or interested in the applications of R in Insurance. It was a truly international event with speakers and delegates from many different countries, including USA, Canada, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Ireland, Argentina, France, Spain and of course the UK. The coffee breaks and conference dinner offered great networking opportunities.

In the first plenary session, Montserrat Guillen (Riskcenter, University of Barcelona) and Leo Guelman (Royal Bank of Canada, RBC Insurance) spoke about the rise of uplift models. These predictive models are used for improved targeting of policyholders by marketing campaigns, through the use of experimental data. The presenters illustrated the use of their **uplift** package (available on CRAN), which they have developed for such applications.

Thereafter, the programme consisted of a combination of contributed presentations and lightning talks, as well as a panel discusson on R at the interface of practitioner / academic interaction. The panel, drawn from academia and practice, discussed the efforts made in bridging through the use of R cultural and communication divides, as well as the challenges of developing collaborative business models that respond to market needs and the incentives of academic researchers.

In the closing plenary, Arthur Charpentier (Professor of Actuarial Science at UQAM, Canada) gave a non-Bayesian's account of Bayesian modelling in R. Bayesian philosophy has a long history in actuarial science, even if it is sometimes hidden. The presenter demonstrated how some standard actuarial methods can be expressed in a Bayesian modelling framework using R.

All conference presentations are available on request, contact: info@rininsurance.com.

Scientific committee and sponsors

The members of the scientific committee were: Katrien Antonio (University of Amsterdam and KU Leuven), Christophe Dutang (Universite du Maine, France), Jens Nielsen (Cass Business School), Andreas Tsanakas (Cass Business School) and Markus Gesmann (ChainLadder project)

Finally, we are grateful to our sponsors Mango Solutions, CYBAEA, PwC and RStudio. This conference would not have been possible without their generous support.

R in Insurance 2015

We are delighted to announce next year's event already. Following two years in London at Cass Business School, the conference will travel across the Channel to Amsterdam, 29 June 2015. Further details will be published on www.rininsurance.com.

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