

The R Development Process: status and prospects

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R is many things to many people: a software application for getting the work done (and/or for teaching); a statistical programming language with a community of users; an ecology of contributed packages addressing the needs of different scientific communities; communities of developers with different tastes, abilities and desires; and, not least, a value generating vehicle in the software business. Many of the component parts of these roles harmonise, but many do not. The talk will use observations from the development of contributed packages for spatial data analysis in R to cast light on the current status of R development, on the management of contributed packages, and on prospects; particular stress will be placed on the problematic disproportions in the concerns of various user and developer communities with regard to the future capacity of our language and community of choice.