

# Re: Wow, Python much faster than MatLab

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*Source:* <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Python/comp.lang.python/2006-12/msg03898.html>

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- *From:* "Wensui Liu" <liuwensui@xxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Sat, 30 Dec 2006 22:44:58 -0500
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Sturla,

I am working in the healthcare and seeing people loves to use excel / spss as database or statistical tool without know what he/she is doing. However, that is not the fault of excel/spss itself but of people who is using it. Things, even include SAS/R, would look stupid, when it has been misused.

In the hospitals, people don't pray God. They pray MD. :-)

On 30 Dec 2006 19:09:59 -0800, sturlamolden <sturlamolden@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

Stef Mientki wrote:

- > I always thought that SPSS or SAS where thé standards.
- > Stef

As far as SPSS is a standard, it is in the field of "religious use of statistical procedures I don't understand (as I'm a math retard), but hey  $p < 0.05$  is always significant (and any other value is proof of the opposite ... I think)."

SPSS is often used by scientists that don't understand maths at all, often within the fields of social sciences, but regrettably also within biology and medicine. I know of few program that have done so much harm as SPSS. It's like handing an armed weapon to a child. Generally one should stay away from the things that one don't understand, particularly within medicine where a wrong result can have dramatic consequences. SPSS encourages the opposite. Copy and paste from Excel to SPSS is regrettably becoming the de-facto standard in applied statistics. The problem is not the quality of Excel or SPSS, but rather the (in)competence of those conducting the data analysis. This can and does regrettably lead to serious misinterpretation of the data, in either direction. When a paper is submitted, these errors are usually not caught in the peer review process, as peer review is, well, exactly what is says: \*peer\* review.

Thus, SPSS makes it easy to shoot your self in the foot. In my

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experience students in social sciences and medicine are currently thought to do exact that, in universities and colleges all around the World. And it is particularly dangerous within medical sciences, as peoples' life and health may be affected by it. I pray God something is done to prohibit or limit the use of these statistical toys.

Sturla Molden  
PhD

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<http://mail.python.org/mailman/listinfo/python-list>

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WenSui Liu  
A lousy statistician who happens to know a little programming  
(<http://spaces.msn.com/statcompute/blog>)

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