

sci.math.symbolic: Maple vs Mathematica questions: symbolic & MacOS aspects only.

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math.symbolic/2004-06/0020.html>

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*Date:* 06/02/04

Date: Wed, 02 Jun 2004 12:13:59 +0200

Somewhere in the E.U., le 02/06/2004

Bonjour

A long time user of Maple, working under MacOS, I feel the time has perhaps come to change CAS. I am thus looking for information (NOT FLAMES, please) on whether I should now do so.

Briefly, I currently do symbolic computations using Maple, and numeric computations using Matlab. I will keep on using Matlab at this point due to mission constraints, so I am only investigating the symbolic (as opposed to numeric) aspects of the problem.

I am aware that Mathematica is supposed to be much more powerful than Maple where numerics are concerned. I did not look into financial details (is there a price gap between the two?). I am familiar with Maple's possibilities, but not with Mathematica's. The Wolfram Research website does not seem to contain \*detailed\* information of the symbolic capacities of Mathematica. I have not yet downloaded a demo version of Mathematica, but will do so.

There is supposed to be a bridge between Matlab and Maple, but it is not working on the Mac, at least with the versions I have (Maple 5 to 9, Matlab 5.2.1), and I do not own the symbolic toolbox for Matlab (which is always built upon an older version of Maple), so the lack of link (if any) between Mathematica and Matlab would not be an issue. At any rate, the need for such direct link has been fairly low in my workaday existence (and when it did crop up, I went from symbolic to handwritten C++ implementation, to Matlab exploitation of output).

A converter from Maple documents to Mathematica documents would be nice, but not strictly a necessity. Is there one?

How do Maple and Mathematica compare, from a symbolic viewpoint, in term of breadth of field covered (base package, add-ons?), efficiency of solving algorithms, number of prominent bugs? Can any symbolic

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computation carried out under Maple be carried out under Mathematica? If not, which kinds fail? Any important gotchas to be aware of?

From a Mac user point of view, I must say I am sorely disappointed by what I perceive is the lack of commitment (I remember the long dearth of upgrades between 7 and 9) and reactivity of Maplesoft towards my platform of choice (which will \*NOT\* change). I have the impression that Wolfram Research is better in that respect, is this true?

Finally, part of my current dissatisfaction with Maple undoubtedly comes from a feeling that Maplesoft may have been hijacked a couple of years ago by a bunch of marketing bozos out there to milk us for what we're worth, an dissatisfaction culminating with the 9.5 upgrade disgrace. I have heard that Wolfram Research is quite wolfish as well. Would I be changing a blind horse for an unseeing one? Am I completely wrong in my assumptions? Also, there is a community of astoundingly helpful individuals knowledgeable with Maple, is there one as well with respect to Mathematica?

Merci

Hubert Holin