Decision Trees in Decision Analysis

About

Definition

Advantages

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Tools

Decision trees which purpose is to facilitate decision making could easily be drawn **manually** on a piece of paper. However, it could be more convenient for a user to use **computers** because it is easy to make changes or to make some computations. **Simple text editors and table sheets** could serve for that purpose, i.e. MS Word and MS Excel. Additionally, **other specialized software** was developed to support decision making. Once a user learns how to use the software decision trees are quick and efficient. In fact,visual communication can be six times more effective than communication with words only. Nevertheless, we should always keep in mind that the software is only as good as the user. It is not the program that makes decisions because it is simply following user's instructions, thus a user should learn how to give good instructions.

Here is the list of some specialized decision tress tools:

1. Insight Tree

- easy to use if you are familiar with decision trees; it allows you to quickly add branches, optimize sub nodes, use different style sheets; free for personal use
- http://www.visionarytools.com/index.htm

2. Lumenaut

- add-in to MS Excel
- provides a range of tools (Monte Carlo simulation software and Decision Tree analysis software) allowing you to build decision tree models from within Excel
- allows for different types of sensitivity and statistical analysis
- http://www.lumenaut.com/

3. Vanguard Studio

- a standalone program and is described as combining features of artificial intelligence, math applications and spreadsheets
- the decision tree software aspect has a nice wizard which takes you step-by-step through creating the whole decision tree
- it also offers Monte Carlo simulation, another wizard for forecasting, statistical decision tree analysis and other methods

- http://www.vanguardsw.com/products/vanguard-system/components/vanguard-studio/

4. SmartDraw

- popular for business graphics and allows you to quickly and easily draw various diagrams
- http://www.smartdraw.com/

Bibliography

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Last update: **2023/06/19 16:20**