

Laurent Bernardin: The World of Maple

11/1/2004

NSERC Synergy Award

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 1:57 pm

Last Thursday, we were presented with the 2004 [NSERC Synergy Award](#), for our long-standing cooperation with the [University of Waterloo](#). We have been funding research projects at the Symbolic Computation Group at UW, as well as at other Universities around the world, for many years, and it has allowed us to keep Maple at the state-of-the-art as well as [a step ahead of our competition](#).

Here's the [press release](#).

[Comments \(0\)](#)

10/14/2004

Finally a Graphical Maplet Builder

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 2:44 pm

Maplets have allowed users to build their own graphical interfaces within [Maple](#) and deploy them over the web with [MapleNet](#), since 2002. Since then Maplets have become extremely popular, as witnessed by the growing collection of [user-contributed Maplets](#) on the [Application Center](#). At the same time we have been using Maplets in order to make Maple easier to use; interactive tutors for education and assistants for common tasks like optimization and visualization have made Maple more appealing to many.

One thing was left to do: Provide an interactive, graphical way to build Maplets easily and quickly. I am very happy to announce that this is now done. The Maplet Builder is available for download from

the [Maple Primes](#) site.

And the competition is still struggling to keep up...

[Comments \(0\)](#)

10/3/2004

[Sushi and Engineering](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 7:40 am

Last night we arrived in Seoul, Korea after a very productive stay in Japan. We visited a number of customers, showing off the new features of [Maple 9.5](#). The main event, however, was the [Maple User Conference](#), organized by our japanese distributor, [Cybernet Systems](#).

Maple today, and more and more people are realizing this, is not just a symbolic computation system. Maple also incorporates industrial strength numeric solvers that don't need to hide behind any numeric systems on the market. This, in addition to a growing number of toolboxes, means that Maple stretches beyond education and academic research. Most of our audience in Japan was from industry and our message, that a strong mathematical engine coupled with an easy to use document authoring environment raises engineering productivity, was very well received, indeed. In addition, our hosts treated us to spectacular local food, every day. Domo arigato, Japan.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

9/22/2004

[Maple 9.5.1](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 4:43 pm

9.5.1 is a maintenance release to [Maple 9.5](#). With this release we now support some of the later Linux versions. Additionally a number of problems that were found after releasing Maple 9.5 got fixed, the

most prominent of which is a problem typesetting certain expressions containing derivatives.

It's a safe upgrade, there won't be any [compatibility issues](#). If you are running Maple 9.5, I'd suggest you get 9.5.1. It's free, too.

Details and downloads on the [Maplesoft Support](#) page.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

9/20/2004

[Online Training](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 10:44 am

Did you know that we provide regular online training sessions, over the web? The next available session is on September 22nd and centers around [Maple T.A.](#)

These online sessions aim to give you more insight into our products and what you can do with them. The sessions are lead by senior members of our team to ensure that you'll get all your questions answered.

We are using [WebEx](#) to deliver these seminars and audio is available on a regular conference phone line. Here's the [schedule of upcoming events](#)

[Comments \(0\)](#)

9/1/2004

[Maple in Japan](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 6:51 pm

We have just [announced](#) the Japanese version of [Maple 9.5](#). Japan boasts a very large community of loyal Maple users and a high proportion of them are non-academic: corporate researchers, engineers,

At the end of September, our japanese reseller, [Cybernet Systems](#) is organizing its annual [Maple Conference](#). Jim Cooper (our president and CEO) and I will be presenting the new release as well as other aspects of our product suite. I'll then go on to Korea where we have a number of seminars lined up. It will be my first trip to Asia and I am looking forward to it.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

8/31/2004

[Teaching a Math Class?](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 4:05 pm

Are you teaching a class where a [numeric](#) and [symbolic](#) computation system like [Maple](#) will be of use? Check out the [Maple Adoption Program](#). By recommending [Maple](#) to your students within the class, you as the instructor get a free home-use copy of Maple as well as some other goodies. Your students get a deep discount on copies of [Maple](#). Everybody is happy.

It's been a pretty successful program thus far. We've only been running it for a year and we have over 50000 students signed up.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

8/26/2004

[About compatibility](#)

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 11:49 am

The single most common concern from [Maple](#) users that I have heard over the years is backwards compatibility. It's not just about Maple worksheets that will not work as expected after upgrading to a new release. It is also about the time invested to learn how to use Maple and if that changes in subtle ways, more time has to be spent relearning what used to be trivial.

We have certainly sinned in this domain in the past and upgrading from Maple VR5 to Maple 6 did require much more effort on the user's part than it should have.

More recently, with Maple 7, 8, 9 and now with [Maple 9.5](#) we have taken the issue of backwards compatibility very seriously. We have not stopped making language changes but we are making them in such a way that we provide new functionality without breaking existing code. If we introduce a new package, like LinearAlgebra or Student, the old package (linalg, student) is kept around so that existing worksheets can be updated at the user's discretion. In some case, like Groebner, the old package (grobner) will be kept as a shell, using the new package under the hood.

Being strict about backwards compatibility can be frustrating for our developers. A common comment I hear, is: "It would really be easier to make this command work better, if I would not have to worry about compatibility". This is a good sign. It means the issue is taken seriously at all levels. It also means that we are finding ways to move Maple forward and improve the system without breaking existing user code.

To assist us in the task of ensuring that what works today will continue to work the next day, we use a large body of automatic tests. Over 96000 test cases are run every night, on all platforms that we support and any failures are analyzed the next morning. With every new feature that we add and with every bug that we fix, that test suite is growing. In addition, a suite of, today, over 1000 worksheets gathered from users and from the web is run periodically and any discrepancies between releases is looked at to decide if there is a problem or not. Beta testing, with a select group of users, also helps detect problems before a new release.

Is this process perfect? No, of course not. As careful as we are, new bugs will always pop up for as long as we continue to expand and improve the Maple system. But we will do our best to fix such bugs in a timely manner and we will continue to improve our testing process to make sure that as few problems as possible reach the end user.

Can you help? Absolutely! Please report any bug that you encounter (to support@maplesoft.com). Only bugs that we know about will get fixed. In addition, consider making your worksheets available on the [Application Center](#), giving them a good chance of making it into our test suite. You should also consider becoming a beta tester, if you are not already. Space is limited but please send me an email if you are interested.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

8/24/2004

Toolboxes and E-Books

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 9:56 am

While we are expanding Maple's usefulness in engineering applications by releasing high-grade toolboxes, like the [Global Optimization Toolbox](#) and the [Database Integration Toolbox](#), we are of course not forgetting about our academic customers.

In fact, we just released our first e-book: [The Precalculus Study Guide](#). The aim here is to help students obtain a better grade. Worksheets and Maplets provide insight and opportunities for practicing standard problems over and over. The author is Robert Lopez, whose name some of you might recognize. Robert spent many years teaching at [Rose-Hullman](#). He has moved to Canada a few months ago and is now working with us, helping us better understand our academic market and producing content products, like this one.

The Study Guide is dirt cheap, too: Under \$15. You do need a copy of Maple in order to use this, though. So, if you are taking a precalc class, check it out!

[Comments \(0\)](#)

8/18/2004

Maple and Labview

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 8:09 pm

I am in Austin, Texas this week, attending [NIWeek](#), the annual user conference of [National Instruments](#). We are demoing prototype technology that let's you use [Maple](#) functionality from within [LabVIEW](#). Pretty neat!

It's interesting that most people that stop by our booth know about Maple and have used it either in school or in previous projects, even though LabVIEW users do not fit the profile of a traditional Maple user. We are going to change that...

There is some interesting stuff going on in the exhibition hall. Lots of real hardware (from rc cars with adaptive cruise control to robots entered into a ball-gathering competition), being controlled in real-time. We definitely have to bring some real gear, next year...

[Comments \(0\)](#)

8/17/2004

Getting started...

Filed under:

- [General](#)

— laurent @ 10:00 am

Hopefully I'll be able to make this useful and relate some impressions on what's going on around [Maple](#)

[Comments \(0\)](#)

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