Meeting Report: STAT-HAWKERS at the JSM-2014, Boston, USA

In this forward, we attempt to recall some memories annotated with appropriate photographs from the booth STAT-HAWKERS at the Joint Statistical Meeting (JSM)-2014 held in Boston, USA during August 2–7, 2014.

Cheon-Sig Lee, Oluseun Odumade and Sarjinder Singh setup the booth on August 2 and 3. Figure 1 shows front side of the booth and a tall tower. It was a challenge to fix the tower, which was 10 feet high. It was also decorated by blinking LED lights. The booth was decorated by two banners from the front and right sides showing the flyer “Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School” and the image of a T-shirt which was especially designed this year to promote the
journal, “Model Assisted Statistics and Applications.” LED lights were incorporated into the decoration around the booth. On August 3, four types of animals were employed to promote the booth. These animals included Elephants, Horses, Monkeys and Zebras. In addition two persons, Supermen and Spidermen were also very active in attracting people to visit the booth. The attendees seemed more inclined towards Monkeys rather than Elephants. We also had flashing lights, goggles, scales, white boards, bouncing balls and pens to distribute as promotional materials, although those are not visible in the picture.

Oluseun was very excited to distribute the promotional material very fast, although often reminded him that one professor, Stephen Sedory, in my department suggested that we do not distribute everything in one day. Oluseun could not control his sentiments, and as per my nature, I did not stop him. Ultimately, Oluseun and Cheon distributed all 72 elephants, 50 horses, 50 monkeys, 50 spidermen, 50 supermen and 100 zebras. In Figure 2, both Oluseun and Cheon are shown filling and adjusting animals. It seems that at this time we were already out of Spidermen and Supermen. Figure 2 shows that right hand side of the booth, where three books and two journals by the IOS Press were displayed.

Fig. 2. Oluseun and Cheon are busy in adjusting animals.
As seen in Figure 2, there was a doll who was singing songs and attracting people. There was also an elephant train running around a track. This year a new item was displayed a handmade “Partapa” which is a kind of balance and can stand on one leg or can dance. It can balance on your one finger. A big poster advertising the journal, “Model Assisted Statistics and Applications” with pictures of Stan Lipovetsky, Stephen Horn and Sarjinder Singh, was also displayed. This year Stan could not make it to attend the conference, but his picture was there. Another poster of the same size advertising the monograph “Advanced Sampling Theory with Applications”, was also posted.

This year, the most attractive promotional materials was T-Shirts bearing the logo “Model Assisted Statistics and Applications” on the front and at the back, “Thinking Statistically: Elephants Go to School.” In the mean time, one of Oluseun’s friend Augustus Jayaraj from Cornell University also joined the booth and was involved in the activities. A total of 180 T-shirts were distributed, and out of these 60 T-shirts were for kids. The cost of T-shirts distributed at the booth alone was one thousand two hundred and forty five dollars ($1245/-).

On August 4, Oluseun and Cheon tried to find more toys from China Town, Boston, but they could find only 44 toys, which includes inflatable hammers and dora beach balls. In the evening of August 4, we asked to Augustus to drive car for us to a party shop. Next day, we had more promotional material at the booth, Parrots, crabs, monkeys and fish etc. In addition, there was always, as usual, some chocolate and candies for the booth visitors. The promotional material sent by IOS Press, The Netherlands was also distributed, which included CDs, hard copies of the journals, and sticky pads etc.. In a nutshell, we kept our booth busy for most of the time. Later, I
had a special encouraging e-mail from Judy-Anne Chapman, PhD, P.Stat., PStat® (ASA) about praise of the booth activities in that this was the first time she knew of where a commercial group offered a benefit (free t-shirt) for overtly proclaiming to be accredited as an ASA PStat.

Fig. 4. More promotional material on the booth.
One of the major outcomes of the booth was that we had a great opportunity to have a picture with the 100th president of the American Statistical Association, Dr. Fritz Scheuren. It was very nice to talk to him. The journal entitled, “Statistical Journal of the IAOS, where he is an Editor-in-Chief, was also promoted at the booth.

Fig. 5. Dr. Fritz Scheuren, Cheon-Sig Lee and Sarjinder Singh

Whatever we spent on the booth, it was returned back in one moment as soon as I saw Prof. James Alan Fox, from Northeastern University. He is the lead author of the pioneer monograph on randomized response sampling entitled, “Randomized Response: A Method for Sensitive Surveys” which is one of the SAGE Publications, published during 1986.

Figure 6 provides evidence that five guys in the US are not only cooking burgers; there is another group of five guys who is cooking randomized response models. We had the chance to chat about the future of randomized response techniques. He was so kind that he also attended both my joint presentations of the contributed papers by Cheon-Sig Lee and Augustus Jayaraj. We also showed Prof. Fox that we are collecting data utilizing the crossed model with two-decks of cards.
Figure 7 shows a respondent participating in the survey while responding to a sensitive question after drawing a card from a deck of cards.
This was very much right time to meeting Prof. Fox because we are publishing a special issue celebrating the Golden Jubilee year of the Warner’s randomized response model. The Guest Editor for the special issue is Prof. Arijit Chaudhuri, Applied Statistics Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, 203 B.T. Road, Kolkata, 700108 West Bengal, India who has published three monographs on this topic. His first monograph was published in 1988 jointly with Rahul Mukherjee by Marcel Dekker, the second monograph was published in 2011 by Taylor & Francis, where he is the sole author and the third monograph was published in 2013 jointly with TC Christofides by Springer. This year seems to be so fortunate having all these experts around us when it is very much right time to celebrate the Golden Jubilee Year 2015 of the Warner’s randomized response model which he had published during 1965 in the Journal of the American Statistical Association.

One thing certain is that this year not many pictures of children who visited the booth were taken. Figure 8 shows a little girl with pink glasses and a colorful ball who visited the booth Stat-Hawkers. These activities remain in the minds of kids, and should be done at a higher level so that kids could take interest in statistics conferences.

![Fig. 8. Children at the booth, STAT-HAWKERS 2014](image)

I will be completely mistaken if I will not acknowledge the help from Paul and Rasjel, IOS Press in promoting the journal: Model Assisted Statistics and Applications: An International Journal.

Thank you for your time in reading my little invented story.

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