Preface*

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Abstract

Preface to "A Brief Introduction to Engineering Computation with MATLAB"

In my tenth year at the Institute, I dedicate this book to the BCIT community.

The primary purpose of writing a book and distributing it free-of-charge is to extend my gratitude to BCIT[1] . I am particularly thrilled to do it with this textbook because it is a product of many learning opportunities BCIT has offered me over a period of several years. What follows is a brief background on how this book came to be.

My post-secondary teaching career began on 22 January 2001 at the Pacific Marine Training Campus of BCIT when I logged on to a Unix workstation to instruct in the Propulsion Plant Simulator. That has been a major milestone in many ways in my professional life. While learning inner workings of Unix operating system (OS), I also made a discovery and that discovery profoundly changed my view on how I thought the world operated. The discovery was the GNU/Linux OS and open source software (OSS) movement through several books, most notably Just for Fun: The Story of an Accidental Revolutionary[2] and The Cathedral and the Bazaar[3]. I was convinced that the collective power of connected individuals around the world and the global infrastructure of the Internet had the potential to change the ways the world functioned.

In the last 10 years, BCIT has allowed me to study various subjects through its Professional Development (PD) programs for which I am very grateful. I learned a great deal in PD courses and in one of the recent ones, I had two déjà vu moments similar to my discovery of OSS movement. The first one occurred when I began reading The Wealth of Networks[4] and the second one when I found about Connexions[5] . The former was a confirmation of my 10-year old discovery and the latter is what I am using to write this book. Connexions is a web-based curricular content authoring and publishing technology that I believe has a growing potential for writing and distributing free-of-charge learning materials.

Thus, motivation for this book stems from the notions that were generated by the OSS movement. The book was written to pay a small token of appreciation to BCIT and I hope it will be a contribution to the open educational resources repository.

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[1] http://www.bcit.ca/

[2] *Just for Fun: The Story of an Accidental Revolutionary* by L. Torvalds and D. Diamond, New York: HarperCollins Publishers. ©2001

[3] *The Cathedral and the Bazaar* by E. S. Raymond, Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media. ©1999

[4] *The Wealth of Networks* by Y. Benkler, New Haven: Yale University Press. ©2006

[5] http://cnx.org/