

Roy Nutt

Born 1931, Marlborough, Mass.; died June 14, 1990, Seattle, Wash.; one of two non-IBM contributors to the development of Fortran, and the one who introduced FORMAT into the language as part of his input/output section; later founder and vice president of Computer Sciences Corporation.



Education: BS, mathematics, Trinity College, 1953.

Professional Experience: Programming Research and Development, United Aircraft Corp., 1953-1959; Computer Sciences Corp., founder and vice president, 1959-1988.

Upon graduation with a degree in mathematics from Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., in 1953, Nutt joined the United Aircraft Corporation to work in programming research and development. Shortly thereafter United Aircraft received the ninth model of the IBM Defense Calculator (IBM-701), and when the SHARE user organization was created, Nutt became the company representative. Through this organization he designed and developed the symbolic assembly program (SAP) and was invited to join the IBM team led by John Backus which was developing the original Fortran compiler for the IBM-704. Nutt took charge of the input/output facilities and contributed the concept of FORMAT to the field.

Foreseeing the demand for increasingly sophisticated systems software from computer manufacturers anxious to broaden their markets, he joined with Fletcher Jones to found Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) in 1959. The two men, each 28 years old, capitalized the company with \$100 each. Their first major contract came from Honeywell to build a commercial compiler; the result was FACT (Fully Automatic Commercial Translator).

CSC was successful from the outset, largely due to the innovative solutions that Nutt found to solve technical complexities generated by the rapidly advancing hardware technology. His development of a commercial programming language FACT substantially influenced the design of Cobol. Within a few years the young company was called to develop the entire software suite for the new Univac 1107. The company continued to grow, although Nutt steadfastly resisted the management aspects of the work. Fletcher Jones was unfortunately killed in an airplane accident in 1972; Nutt recruited a new president for the company, William Hoover, but Nutt's influence on the technical aspects of their products was never absent.

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UPDATES