Nobelist Sharpe makes retirement income planning software available

By Kerry Pechter   *Thu, Dec 26, 2013*

The free software will gradually become available through Bill Sharpe's blog, Retirementincomescenarios, and through the website, scratch.mit.edu.

William Sharpe, the Nobel Prize winner and co-founder of Financial Engines, has been publishing a blog called RetirementIncomeScenarios. So far, the blog has provided followers with instructions on how to use software that Sharpe has created for income planning.

The blog started last August with Sharpe's simple announcement: "This is a new blog on which I plan to post material on creating and analyzing ranges of scenarios for retirement income using different strategies for investing, spending and annuitizing retirement savings."

In September, Sharpe explained that he's using the Scratch programming language, created at MIT for non-professionals such as schoolchildren, to develop his suite of software tools. Apparently anyone, for free, can go to the Scratch website (scratch.mit.edu), create an account, and try to put Sharpe's software to work.

"Here is my plan," he wrote on September 17: "I will start with an overall structure that allows me to add features as items on a menu. The first release will have only one such feature (a "longevity graph"). Subsequent releases will add other features, all related in some manner to the forecasting and analysis of retirement income scenarios. I invite you to try the programs. Together we will see how far this undertaking can go."

We'll keep you posted on the progress of Sharpe's endeavor. Thanks to Wade Pfau for alerting us to the new blog, and to Dr. Sharpe for creating it.