Data Mining:

Concepts and Techniques

(3rd ed.)

— Chapter 8 —

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Chapter 8. Classification: Basic Concepts



- Classification: Basic Concepts
- Decision Tree Induction
- Bayes Classification Methods
- Rule-Based Classification
- Model Evaluation and Selection
- Techniques to Improve Classification Accuracy:
 Ensemble Methods
- Summary

Supervised vs. Unsupervised Learning

- Supervised learning (classification)
 - Supervision: The training data (observations, measurements, etc.) are accompanied by labels indicating the class of the observations
 - New data is classified based on the training set
- Unsupervised learning (clustering)
 - The class labels of training data is unknown
 - Given a set of measurements, observations, etc. with the aim of establishing the existence of classes or clusters in the data

Prediction Problems: Classification vs. Numeric Prediction

Classification

- predicts categorical class labels (discrete or nominal)
- classifies data (constructs a model) based on the training set and the values (class labels) in a classifying attribute and uses it in classifying new data

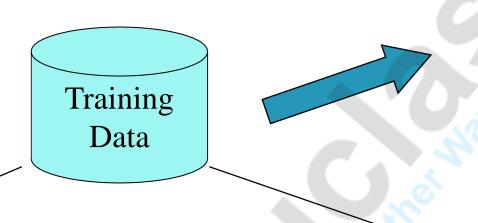
Numeric Prediction

- models continuous-valued functions, i.e., predicts unknown or missing values
- Typical applications
 - Credit/loan approval:
 - Medical diagnosis: if a tumor is cancerous or benign
 - Fraud detection: if a transaction is fraudulent
 - Web page categorization: which category it is

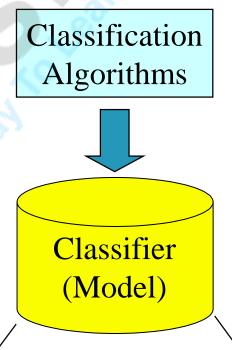
Classification—A Two-Step Process

- Model construction: describing a set of predetermined classes
 - Each tuple/sample is assumed to belong to a predefined class, as determined by the class label attribute
 - The set of tuples used for model construction is training set
 - The model is represented as classification rules, decision trees, or mathematical formulae
- Model usage: for classifying future or unknown objects
 - Estimate accuracy of the model
 - The known label of test sample is compared with the classified result from the model
 - Accuracy rate is the percentage of test set samples that are correctly classified by the model
 - Test set is independent of training set (otherwise overfitting)
 - If the accuracy is acceptable, use the model to classify new data
- Note: If the test set is used to select models, it is called validation (test) set

Process (1): Model Construction

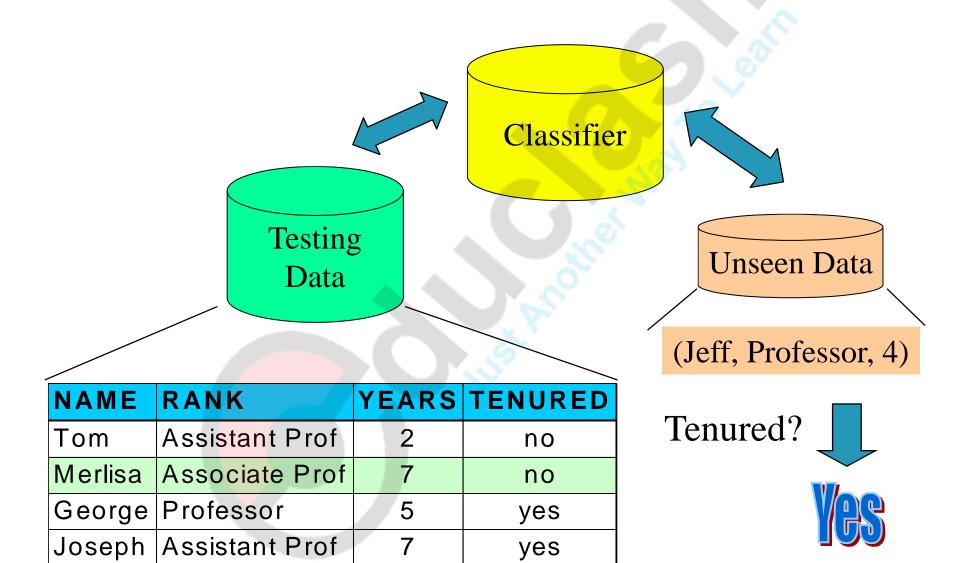


NAME	RANK	YEARS	TENURED
Mike	Assistant Prof	3	no
Mary	Assistant Prof	7	yes
Bill	Professor	2	yes
Jim	Associ <mark>ate</mark> Prof	7	yes
Dave	Assistant Prof	6	no
Anne	Associate Prof	3	no



IF rank = 'professor'
OR years > 6
THEN tenured = 'yes'

Process (2): Using the Model in Prediction



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Decision Tree Induction: An Example

income

high

high

age <=30

<=30

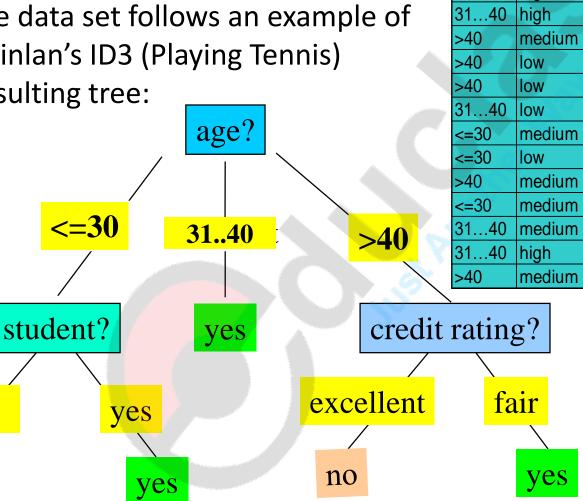


☐ The data set follows an example of Quinlan's ID3 (Playing Tennis)



no

no



student credit_rating buys_computer

no

no

yes

yes

yes

no

yes

no

yes

yes

yes

yes

yes

no

fair

lfair

fair

lfair

fair

fair

fair

fair

excellent

excellent

excellent

excellent

excellent

excellent

no

no

no

no

yes

yes

yes

no

ves

ves

ves

no

yes

no

Algorithm for Decision Tree Induction

- Basic algorithm (a greedy algorithm)
 - Tree is constructed in a top-down recursive divide-andconquer manner
 - At start, all the training examples are at the root
 - Attributes are categorical (if continuous-valued, they are discretized in advance)
 - Examples are partitioned recursively based on selected attributes
 - Test attributes are selected on the basis of a heuristic or statistical measure (e.g., information gain)
- Conditions for stopping partitioning
 - All samples for a given node belong to the same class
 - There are no remaining attributes for further partitioning –
 majority voting is employed for classifying the leaf
 - There are no samples left

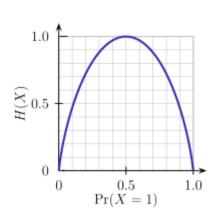
Brief Review of Entropy

- Entropy (Information Theory)
 - A measure of uncertainty associated with a random variable
 - Calculation: For a discrete random variable Y taking m distinct values $\{y_1, \dots, y_m\}$,

•
$$H(Y) = -\sum_{i=1}^{m} p_i \log(p_i)$$
, where $p_i = P(Y = y_i)$

- Interpretation:
 - Higher entropy => higher uncertainty
 - Lower entropy => lower uncertainty
- Conditional Entropy

$$H(Y|X) = \sum_{x} p(x)H(Y|X = x)$$



$$m = 2$$

Attribute Selection Measure: Information Gain (ID3/C4.5)

- Select the attribute with the highest information gain
- Let p_i be the probability that an arbitrary tuple in D belongs to class C_i , estimated by $|C_{i,D}|/|D|$
- Expected information (entropy) needed to classify a tuple in D:

$$Info(D) = -\sum_{i=0}^{m} p_i \log_2(p_i)$$

Information needed (after using A to split $D^{i=1}$ into v partitions) to classify D:

$$Info_A(D) = \sum_{j=1}^{\nu} \frac{|D_j|}{|D|} \times Info(D_j)$$

Information gained by branching on attribute A

$$Gain(A) = Info(D) - Info_A(D)$$

Attribute Selection: Information Gain

- Class P: buys_computer = "yes"
- Class N: buys computer = "no"

$$Info(D) = I(9,5) = -\frac{9}{14}\log_2(\frac{9}{14}) - \frac{5}{14}\log_2(\frac{5}{14}) = 0.940$$

age	p _i	n _i	I(p _i , n _i)
<=30	2	3	0.971
3140	4	0	0
>40	3	2	0.971

age	income	student	credit_rating	buys_computer
<=30	high	no	fair	no
<=30	high	no	excellent	no
3140	high	no	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	excellent	no
3140	low	yes	excellent	yes
<=30	medium	no	fair	no
<=30	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	yes	fair	yes
<=30	medium	yes	excellent	yes
3140	medium	no	excellent	yes
3140	high	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	excellent	no

$$Info_{age}(D) = \frac{5}{14}I(2,3) + \frac{4}{14}I(4,0)$$
$$+ \frac{5}{14}I(3,2) = 0.694$$

 $\frac{5}{14}$ I(2,3)means "age <=30" has 5 out of 14 samples, with 2 yes'es and 3 no's. Hence

$$Gain(age) = Info(D) - Info_{age}(D) = 0.246$$

Similarly,

$$Gain(income) = 0.029$$

 $Gain(student) = 0.151$
 $Gain(credit_rating) = 0.048$

Computing Information-Gain for Continuous-Valued Attributes

- Let attribute A be a continuous-valued attribute
- Must determine the best split point for A
 - Sort the value A in increasing order
 - Typically, the midpoint between each pair of adjacent values is considered as a possible split point
 - $(a_i+a_{i+1})/2$ is the midpoint between the values of a_i and a_{i+1}
 - The point with the minimum expected information requirement for A is selected as the split-point for A
- Split:
 - D1 is the set of tuples in D satisfying A ≤ split-point, and D2 is the set of tuples in D satisfying A > split-point

Gain Ratio for Attribute Selection (C4.5)

- Information gain measure is biased towards attributes with a large number of values
- C4.5 (a successor of ID3) uses gain ratio to overcome the problem (normalization to information gain)

$$SplitInfo_A(D) = -\sum_{j=1}^{\nu} \frac{|D_j|}{|D|} \times \log_2(\frac{|D_j|}{|D|})$$

- GainRatio(A) = Gain(A)/SplitInfo(A)
- EX. $SplitInfo_{income}(D) = -\frac{4}{14} \times \log_2(\frac{4}{14}) \frac{6}{14} \times \log_2(\frac{6}{14}) \frac{4}{14} \times \log_2(\frac{4}{14}) = 1.557$
 - gain_ratio(income) = 0.029/1.557 = 0.019
- The attribute with the maximum gain ratio is selected as the splitting attribute

Gini Index (CART, IBM IntelligentMiner)

If a data set D contains examples from n classes, gini index, gini(D) is defined as $gini(D) = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{n} p_{j}^{2}$

where p_i is the relative frequency of class j in D

If a data set D is split on A into two subsets D_1 and D_2 , the gini index gini(D) is defined as

$$gini_A(D) = \frac{|D_1|}{|D|}gini(D_1) + \frac{|D_2|}{|D|}gini(D_2)$$

Reduction in Impurity:

$$\Delta gini(A) = gini(D) - gini_A(D)$$

The attribute provides the smallest gini_{split}(D) (or the largest reduction in impurity) is chosen to split the node (need to enumerate all the possible splitting points for each attribute)

Computation of Gini Index

Ex. D has 9 tuples in buys_computer = "yes" and 5 in "no"

$$gini(D) = 1 - \left(\frac{9}{14}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{5}{14}\right)^2 = 0.459$$

 $gini(D) = 1 - \left(\frac{9}{14}\right)^2 - \left(\frac{5}{14}\right)^2 = 0.459$ Suppose the attribute income partitions D into 10 in D₁: {low, $gini_{income \in \{low, medium\}}(D) = \left(\frac{10}{14}\right)Gini(D_1) + \left(\frac{4}{14}\right)Gini(D_2)$ medium $\}$ and 4 in D_2

$$= \frac{10}{14} \left(1 - \left(\frac{7}{10} \right)^2 - \left(\frac{3}{10} \right)^2 \right) + \frac{4}{14} \left(1 - \left(\frac{2}{4} \right)^2 - \left(\frac{2}{4} \right)^2 \right)$$

$$= 0.443$$

$$= Gini_{income} \in \{high\}(D).$$

Gini_{low,high} is 0.458; Gini_{medium,high} is 0.450. Thus, split on the {low,medium} (and {high}) since it has the lowest Gini index

- All attributes are assumed continuous-valued
- May need other tools, e.g., clustering, to get the possible split values
- Can be modified for categorical attributes

Comparing Attribute Selection Measures

The three measures, in general, return good results but

Information gain:

biased towards multivalued attributes

Gain ratio:

 tends to prefer unbalanced splits in which one partition is much smaller than the others

Gini index:

- biased to multivalued attributes
- has difficulty when # of classes is large
- tends to favor tests that result in equal-sized partitions and purity in both partitions

Other Attribute Selection Measures

- <u>CHAID</u>: a popular decision tree algorithm, measure based on χ^2 test for independence
- C-SEP: performs better than info. gain and gini index in certain cases
- G-statistic: has a close approximation to χ^2 distribution
- MDL (Minimal Description Length) principle (i.e., the simplest solution is preferred):
 - The best tree as the one that requires the fewest # of bits to both (1) encode the tree, and (2) encode the exceptions to the tree
- Multivariate splits (partition based on multiple variable combinations)
 - <u>CART</u>: finds multivariate splits based on a linear comb. of attrs.
- Which attribute selection measure is the best?
 - Most give good results, none is significantly superior than others

Overfitting and Tree Pruning

- Overfitting: An induced tree may overfit the training data
 - Too many branches, some may reflect anomalies due to noise or outliers
 - Poor accuracy for unseen samples
- Two approaches to avoid overfitting
 - Prepruning: Halt tree construction early-do not split a node if this would result in the goodness measure falling below a threshold
 - Difficult to choose an appropriate threshold
 - <u>Postpruning</u>: Remove branches from a "fully grown" tree get a sequence of progressively pruned trees
 - Use a set of data different from the training data to decide which is the "best pruned tree"

Enhancements to Basic Decision Tree Induction

Allow for continuous-valued attributes

 Dynamically define new discrete-valued attributes that partition the continuous attribute value into a discrete set of intervals

Handle missing attribute values

- Assign the most common value of the attribute
- Assign probability to each of the possible values

Attribute construction

- Create new attributes based on existing ones that are sparsely represented
- This reduces fragmentation, repetition, and replication

Classification in Large Databases

- Classification—a classical problem extensively studied by statisticians and machine learning researchers
- Scalability: Classifying data sets with millions of examples and hundreds of attributes with reasonable speed
- Why is decision tree induction popular?
 - relatively faster learning speed (than other classification methods)
 - convertible to simple and easy to understand classification rules
 - can use SQL queries for accessing databases
 - comparable classification accuracy with other methods
- RainForest (VLDB'98 Gehrke, Ramakrishnan & Ganti)
 - Builds an AVC-list (attribute, value, class label)

Scalability Framework for RainForest

- Separates the scalability aspects from the criteria that determine the quality of the tree
- Builds an AVC-list: AVC (Attribute, Value, Class_label)
- AVC-set (of an attribute X)
 - Projection of training dataset onto the attribute X and class label where counts of individual class label are aggregated
- AVC-group (of a node n)
 - Set of AVC-sets of all predictor attributes at the node n

Rainforest: Training Set and Its AVC Sets

Training Examples

age	income	student	redit_rating	_com
<=30	high	no	fair	no
<=30	high	no	excellent	no
3140	high	no	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	excellent	no
3140	low	yes	excellent	yes
<=30	medium	no	fair	no
<=30	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	yes	fair	yes
<=30	medium	yes	excellent	yes
3140	medium	no	excellent	yes
3140	high	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	excellent	no

AVC-set on Age

Age	Buy_Computer		
	yes	no	
<=30	2	3	
3140	4	0	
>40	3	2	

AVC-set on income

income	Buy_Computer		
	yes	no	
high	2	2	
medium	4	2	
low	3	1	

AVC-set on Student

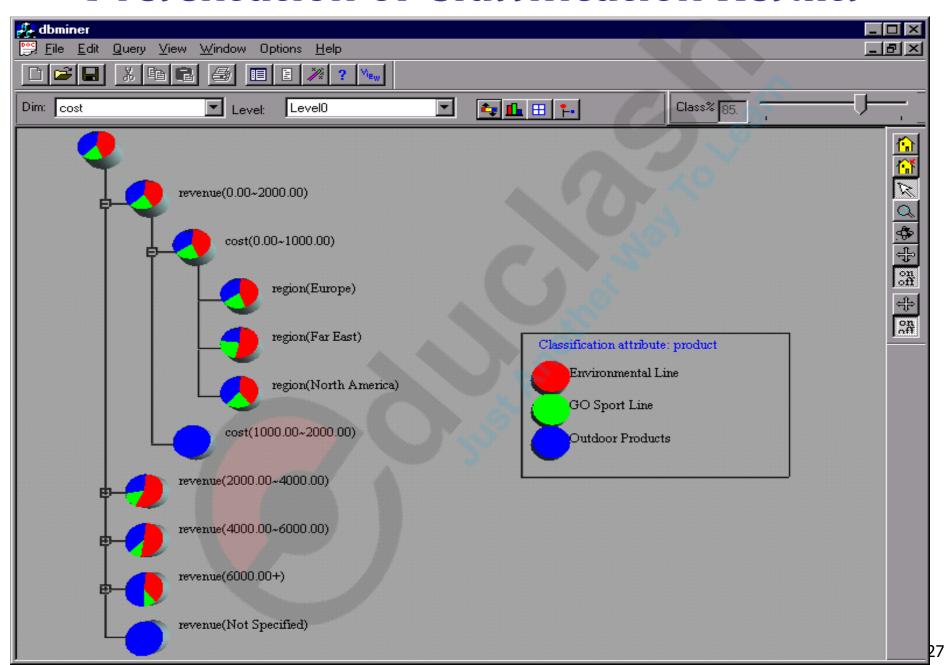
AVC-set on credit_rating

student	Buy_Computer		0 17	Buy_Computer	
	yes	no	Credit rating	yes	no
yes	6	1	fair	6	2
no	3	4	excellent	3	3

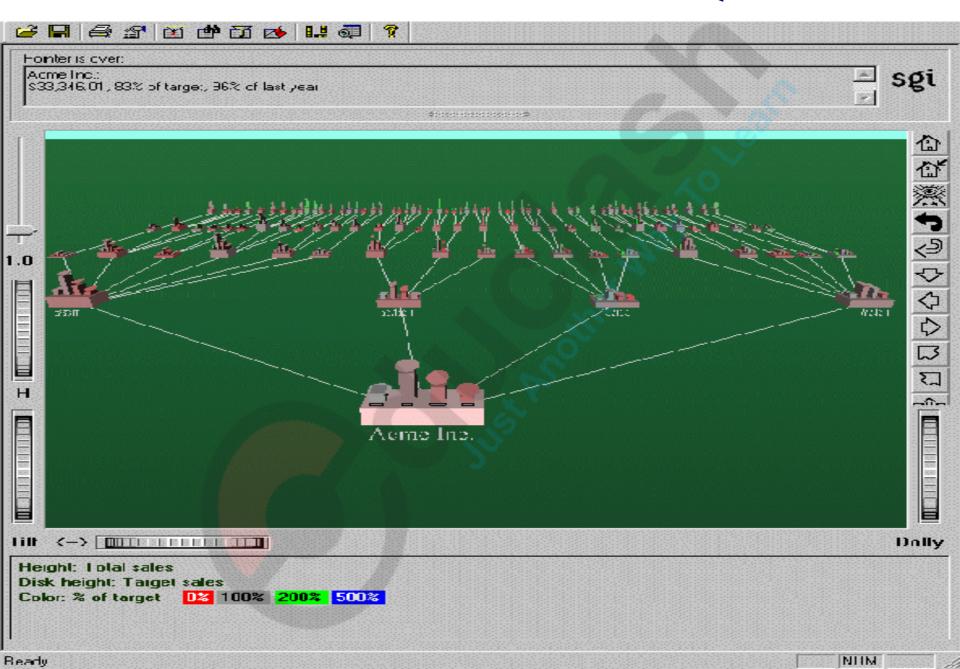
BOAT (Bootstrapped Optimistic Algorithm for Tree Construction)

- Use a statistical technique called bootstrapping to create several smaller samples (subsets), each fits in memory
- Each subset is used to create a tree, resulting in several trees
- These trees are examined and used to construct a new tree T'
 - It turns out that T' is very close to the tree that would be generated using the whole data set together
- Adv: requires only two scans of DB, an incremental alg.

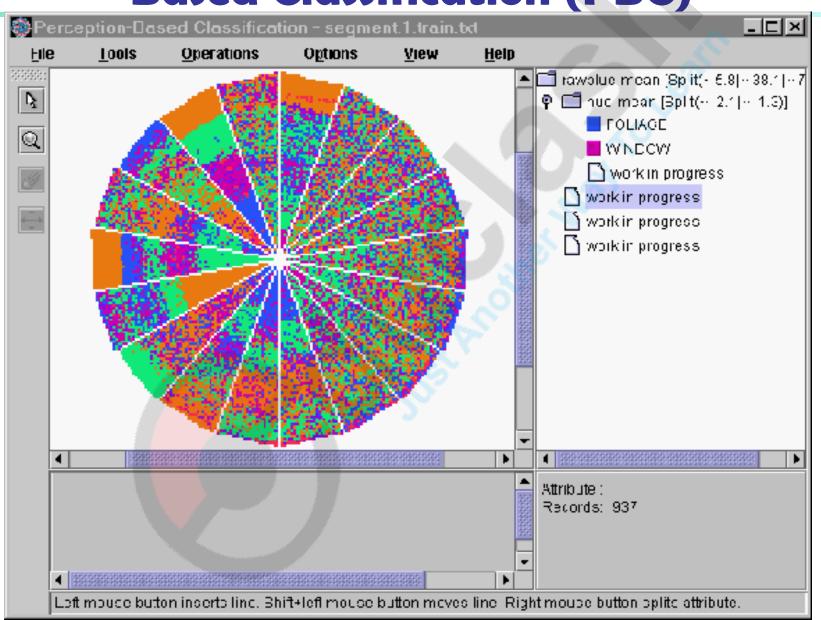
Presentation of Classification Results



Visualization of a Decision Tree in SGI/MineSet 3.0



Interactive Visual Mining by Perception-Based Classification (PBC)



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Bayesian Classification: Why?

- A statistical classifier: performs probabilistic prediction, i.e., predicts class membership probabilities
- Foundation: Based on Bayes' Theorem.
- <u>Performance:</u> A simple Bayesian classifier, naïve Bayesian classifier, has comparable performance with decision tree and selected neural network classifiers
- Incremental: Each training example can incrementally increase/decrease the probability that a hypothesis is correct prior knowledge can be combined with observed data
- Standard: Even when Bayesian methods are computationally intractable, they can provide a standard of optimal decision making against which other methods can be measured

Bayes' Theorem: Basics

- Bayes' Theorem: $P(H|\mathbf{X}) = \frac{P(\mathbf{X}|H)P(H)}{P(\mathbf{X})} = P(\mathbf{X}|H) \times P(H)/P(\mathbf{X})$
 - Let X be a data sample ("evidence"): class label is unknown
 - Let H be a hypothesis that X belongs to class C
 - Classification is to determine P(H|X), (i.e., posteriori probability): the probability that the hypothesis holds given the observed data sample X
 - P(H) (prior probability): the initial probability
 - E.g., X will buy computer, regardless of age, income, ...
 - P(X): probability that sample data is observed
 - P(X|H) (likelihood): the probability of observing the sample X, given that the hypothesis holds
 - E.g., Given that X will buy computer, the prob. that X is 31..40,
 medium income

Prediction Based on Bayes' Theorem

Given training data X, posteriori probability of a hypothesis H,
 P(H|X), follows the Bayes' theorem

$$P(H|\mathbf{X}) = \frac{P(\mathbf{X}|H)P(H)}{P(\mathbf{X})} = P(\mathbf{X}|H) \times P(H) / P(\mathbf{X})$$

- Informally, this can be viewed as posteriori = likelihood x prior/evidence
- Predicts **X** belongs to C_i iff the probability $P(C_i | X)$ is the highest among all the $P(C_k | X)$ for all the k classes
- Practical difficulty: It requires initial knowledge of many probabilities, involving significant computational cost

Classification Is to Derive the Maximum Posteriori

- Let D be a training set of tuples and their associated class labels, and each tuple is represented by an n-D attribute vector X = (x₁, x₂, ..., x_n)
- Suppose there are m classes C₁, C₂, ..., C_m.
- Classification is to derive the maximum posteriori, i.e., the maximal P(C_i | X)
- This can be derived from Bayes' theorem

$$P(C_i|\mathbf{X}) = \frac{P(\mathbf{X}|C_i)P(C_i)}{P(\mathbf{X})}$$

Since P(X) is constant for all classes, only

$$P(C_i|\mathbf{X}) = P(\mathbf{X}|C_i)P(C_i)$$

needs to be maximized

Naïve Bayes Classifier: Training Dataset

Class:

C1:buys_computer = 'yes'

C2:buys_computer = 'no'

Data to be classified:

X = (age <= 30,

Income = medium,

Student = yes

Credit_rating = Fair)

age	income	student	redit_rating	_com
<=30	high	no	fair	no
<=30	high	no	excellent	no
3140	high	no	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	low	yes	excellent	no
3140	low	yes	excellent	yes
<=30	medium	no	fair	no
<=30	low	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	yes	fair	yes
<=30	medium	yes	excellent	yes
3140	medium	no	excellent	yes
3140	high	yes	fair	yes
>40	medium	no	excellent	no

Naïve Bayes Classifier: An Example

- P(C_i): P(buys_computer = "yes") = 9/14 = 0.643P(buys_computer = "no") = 5/14 = 0.357
- Compute P(X|C_i) for each class

$$P(age = "<=30" | buys_computer = "yes") = 2/9 = 0.222$$

$$P(age = "<= 30" | buys_computer = "no") = 3/5 = 0.6$$

P(income = "medium" | buys_computer = "no") =
$$2/5 = 0.4$$

$$P(student = "yes" | buys_computer = "yes) = 6/9 = 0.667$$

P(student = "yes" | buys_computer = "no") =
$$1/5 = 0.2$$

X = (age <= 30, income = medium, student = yes, credit_rating = fair)</p>

$$P(X|C_i)$$
: $P(X|buys_computer = "yes") = 0.222 x 0.444 x 0.667 x 0.667 = 0.044$

$$P(X|buys_computer = "no") = 0.6 \times 0.4 \times 0.2 \times 0.4 = 0.019$$

$$P(X|C_i)*P(C_i): P(X|buys_computer = "yes") * P(buys_computer = "yes") = 0.028$$

Therefore, X belongs to class ("buys_computer = yes")

Avoiding the Zero-Probability Problem

 Naïve Bayesian prediction requires each conditional prob. be non-zero. Otherwise, the predicted prob. will be zero

$$P(X \mid C_i) = \prod_{k=1}^{n} P(x_k \mid C_i)$$

- Ex. Suppose a dataset with 1000 tuples, income=low (0), income= medium (990), and income = high (10)
- Use Laplacian correction (or Laplacian estimator)
 - Adding 1 to each case

$$Prob(income = low) = 1/1003$$

Prob(income = high) =
$$11/1003$$

 The "corrected" prob. estimates are close to their "uncorrected" counterparts

Naïve Bayes Classifier: Comments

- Advantages
 - Easy to implement
 - Good results obtained in most of the cases
- Disadvantages
 - Assumption: class conditional independence, therefore loss of accuracy
 - Practically, dependencies exist among variables
 - E.g., hospitals: patients: Profile: age, family history, etc.
 Symptoms: fever, cough etc., Disease: lung cancer, diabetes, etc.
 - Dependencies among these cannot be modeled by Naïve Bayes Classifier
- How to deal with these dependencies? Bayesian Belief Networks (Chapter 9)

Model Evaluation and Selection

- Evaluation metrics: How can we measure accuracy? Other metrics to consider?
- Use validation test set of class-labeled tuples instead of training set when assessing accuracy
- Methods for estimating a classifier's accuracy:
 - Holdout method, random subsampling
 - Cross-validation
 - Bootstrap
- Comparing classifiers:
 - Confidence intervals
 - Cost-benefit analysis and ROC Curves

Classifier Evaluation Metrics: Confusion Matrix

Confusion Matrix:

Actual class\Predicted class	C ₁	7 C ₁
C ₁	True Positives (TP)	False Negatives (FN)
¬ C ₁	False Positives (FP)	True Negatives (TN)

Example of Confusion Matrix:

Actual class\Predicted	buy_computer buy_computer		Total
class	= yes	= no	
buy_computer = yes	6954	46	7000
buy_com <mark>puter = n</mark> o	412	2588	3000
Total	7366	2634	10000

- Given m classes, an entry, $CM_{i,j}$ in a confusion matrix indicates # of tuples in class i that were labeled by the classifier as class j
- May have extra rows/columns to provide totals

Classifier Evaluation Metrics: Accuracy, Error Rate, Sensitivity and Specificity

A\P	С	¬C	
С	TP	FN	Р
¬C	FP	TN	N
	Ρ'	N'	All

 Classifier Accuracy, or recognition rate: percentage of test set tuples that are correctly classified

Accuracy = (TP + TN)/All

Error rate: 1 - accuracy, or Error rate = (FP + FN)/All

Class Imbalance Problem:

- One class may be rare, e.g. fraud, or HIV-positive
- Significant majority of the negative class and minority of the positive class
- Sensitivity: True Positive recognition rate
 - Sensitivity = TP/P
- Specificity: True Negative recognition rate
 - Specificity = TN/N

Classifier Evaluation Metrics: Precision and Recall, and F-measures

 Precision: exactness – what % of tuples that the classifier labeled as positive are actually positive

$$precision = \frac{TP}{TP + FP}$$

- Recall: completeness what % of positive tuples did the classifier label as positive?
- Perfect score is 1.0
- Inverse relationship between precision & recall
- F measure (F_1 or F-score): harmonic mean of precision and recall, $2 \times precision > 2$

recall,
$$F = \frac{2 \times precision \times recall}{precision + recall}$$

- $\mathbf{F}_{\mathcal{B}}$: weighted measure of precision and recall
 - assigns ß times as much weight to recall as to precision

$$F_{\beta} = \frac{(1+\beta^2) \times precision \times recall}{\beta^2 \times precision + recall}$$

Classifier Evaluation Metrics: Example

Actual Class\Predicted class	cancer = yes	cancer = no	Total	Recognition(%)
cancer = yes	90	210	300	30.00 (sensitivity
cancer = no	140	9560	9700	98.56 (specificity)
Total	230	9770	10000	96.40 (accuracy)

$$Recall = 90/300 = 30.00\%$$

Evaluating Classifier Accuracy: Holdout & Cross-Validation Methods

Holdout method

- Given data is randomly partitioned into two independent sets
 - Training set (e.g., 2/3) for model construction
 - Test set (e.g., 1/3) for accuracy estimation
- Random sampling: a variation of holdout
 - Repeat holdout k times, accuracy = avg. of the accuracies obtained
- Cross-validation (k-fold, where k = 10 is most popular)
 - Randomly partition the data into k mutually exclusive subsets, each approximately equal size
 - At i-th iteration, use D_i as test set and others as training set
 - <u>Leave-one-out</u>: k folds where k = # of tuples, for small sized data
 - *Stratified cross-validation*: folds are stratified so that class dist. in each fold is approx. the same as that in the initial data

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Summary

What Is Prediction?

- (Numerical) prediction is similar to classification
 - construct a model
 - use model to predict continuous or ordered value for a given input
- Prediction is different from classification
 - Classification refers to predict categorical class label
 - Prediction models continuous-valued functions
- Major method for prediction: regression
 - model the relationship between one or more independent or predictor variables and a dependent or response variable
- Regression analysis
 - Linear and multiple regression
 - Non-linear regression
 - Other regression methods: generalized linear model, Poisson regression, log-linear models, regression trees

Linear Regression

<u>Linear regression</u>: involves a response variable y and a single predictor variable x

$$y = W_0 + W_1 x$$

where w_0 (y-intercept) and w_1 (slope) are regression coefficients

Method of least squares: estimates the best-fitting straight line

$$w_1 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{|D|} (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sum_{i=1}^{|D|} (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \qquad w_0 = \bar{y} - w_1 \bar{x}$$

- Multiple linear regression: involves more than one predictor variable
 - Training data is of the form (X_1, y_1) , (X_2, y_2) ,..., $(X_{|D|}, y_{|D|})$
 - Ex. For 2-D data, we may have: $y = w_0 + w_1 x_1 + w_2 x_2$
 - Solvable by extension of least square method or using SAS, S-Plus
 - Many nonlinear functions can be transformed into the above

Nonlinear Regression

- Some nonlinear models can be modeled by a polynomial function
- A polynomial regression model can be transformed into linear regression model. For example,

$$y = w_0 + w_1 x + w_2 x^2 + w_3 x^3$$
convertible to linear with new variables: $x_2 = x^2$, $x_3 = x^3$

$$y = w_0 + w_1 x + w_2 x_2 + w_3 x_3$$

- Other functions, such as power function, can also be transformed to linear model
- Some models are intractable nonlinear (e.g., sum of exponential terms)
 - possible to obtain least square estimates through extensive calculation on more complex formulae