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Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the
Lambda Calculus*

(in 7 slides)

*But Were Afraid To Ask

Advantages—V

Differential forms become first-class higher-order functions that can be passed to optimizers or PDE solvers as part of an API. This allow one to easily express programming patterns, i.e. algorithm templates, that can be instantiated with different components as fillers. For example, one can construct an algorithm that needs an optimizer and leave the choice of optimizer unspecified, to be filled in later by passing the particular optimizer as a function parameter.

Advantages—VII

In traditional AD formulations, the output of a reverse-mode transformation is a ‘tape’ that is a different kind of entity than user-written functions. It must be interpreted or run-time compiled. In contrast, in our approach, user-written functions, and the input and output of AD operators, are all the same kind of entity. Standard compilation techniques for functional programs can eliminate the need for interpretation or run-time compilation of derivatives and generate, at compile-time, code for derivatives that is as efficient as code for the primal calculation.