What do mathematicians do now that machines can “do (all) the math”?

For thousands of years, calculation (numerical and symbolic) was the price we had to pay to do or use mathematics. But that is no longer the case. Since the late 1980s, we have had machines that can perform any step-by-step mathematical procedure. These systems can handle far more variables than a human ever could, they never make mistakes, and they do it in a fraction of a second. Moreover, many of those tools are easily available and free. As a result, for the last thirty years, professional mathematicians, or those who use mathematics professionally, have not performed any kind of calculation by hand (except in very special circumstances). So what exactly do the math pros do? And how do we teach the next generation to live and work in this world.

He is “the Math Guy” on National Public Radio. Dr. Keith Devlin is the Director of the Stanford Mathematics Outreach Project in the Graduate School of Education, a co-founder and Executive Director Emeritus of the university’s H-STAR institute, a co-founder of the Stanford mediaX research network, and a Senior Researcher Emeritus at CSLI. He is a World Economic Forum Fellow, a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Fellow of the American Mathematical Society.

7:00 PM Wednesday 15 May 2019
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