



The *SESUG* Informant

SESUG 2006 - Atlanta, GA Sheraton Atlanta Hotel - October 8-10

Are you new to SESUG? Then you are in for a real treat as SESUG presents its 14th annual conference at the newly-renovated Sheraton Atlanta Hotel in downtown Atlanta.

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If you've attended a SESUG conference before, you already know that SESUG conferences include lots of top-notch presentations and many opportunities to network with other SAS users, along with SAS developers and staff.

4. Food! SESUG provides continental breakfast, and morning and afternoon beverage breaks during the conference. Mixers will be held on Sunday and Monday evenings and Tuesday will include a lunch with an outstanding keynote speaker.

The Top Ten reasons to attend the 2006 conference in Atlanta:



10. Learn something new! Over 60 hours of top-notch presentations by the most-knowledgeable SAS users. Key takeaways for all levels of SAS users from beginning to highly experienced. With an emphasis on practical application, you will go home with ideas that you can apply immediately.

3. Enhance your conference experience as a volunteer! Work at the registration desk or assist as a session coordinator to network with other attendees – plus your badge will be adorned with one of those nifty volunteer ribbons. Visit www.sesug.org to volunteer.

9. Experience what's hot! The Demo Room showcases the latest and greatest in SAS software

2. Attend in-depth training! Low-cost Sunday workshops provide an additional opportunity to enhance your knowledge. Watch www.sesug.org for the weekend workshop schedule to be announced in April.

8. Network! Share your SAS experience with other attendees during breaks, mixers and presentations.

AND – the number one reason to attend SESUG –

7. Get hands-on experience! Attend free hands-on workshops by recognized SAS experts, including SAS staff.



6. Visit a great conference city! Atlanta is easily accessible by plane, train or by car from all points in the southeast and the nation. See all that Atlanta has to offer at www.sesug.org.

1. Great value! SESUG provides tremendous value. When you add up the total package of education and networking opportunities, the SESUG 2006 conference is a great buy. Register early to get the best registration rate.

Visit www.sesug.org for registration details – registration opens in early June.

5. Enjoy southern hospitality! The

- Deborah Skinner & Marje Fecht,
SESUG 2006 Co-Chairs

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Special points of interest:

- New Year, new officers
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- Want to have SAS at home? You can...

Words From the Prez

It's been a while since I got to sit in this chair...

Hi, I'm F. Joseph Kelley, or just "Joe" to all the good people I've had the chance to work with over the years, both with the SAS community, and with the University of Georgia. I've had the good fortune to work with presenters as a section chair at both SUGI and SESUG, and chaired the very best SESUG conference ever (in my opinion, of course *smile*) with my good friend Randy Finch in Norfolk VA, 1998.

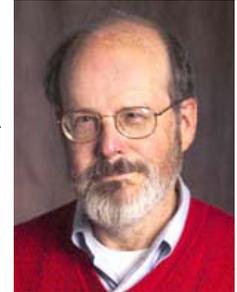
Randy and I continued to work together as members of the SESUG Executive Council, and put our heads together twice a year in the early days of the Informant. I still remember one issue where he told me to feel free and editorialize—I thought he needed to fill space. Then, he fussed at me in print for taking up so much room... *sigh*

But now it's a new crew and new challenges. Most of the people who selected Randy and I to chair SESUG '98 are either Emeritus (semi-active) status, or have left SESUG for other reasons. We still have Deb Skinner with us, who left but returned... goodness, come to think of it, that's it! Dan Bruns is still active, but was not EC back in the day; Gary Schlegelmilch, new Treasurer and Informant editor, didn't come on board until 2002, and

*I've had the good fortune to work with presenters as a section chair at both SUGI and SESUG, and chaired the very best SESUG conference ever (in my opinion, of course *smile*) with my good friend Randy Finch in Norfolk VA, 1998."*

Maribeth Johnson, new Vice-President, joined to chair SESUG2K. Andy Kuligowski still plans our one-day events, Dave Riba is invaluable helping with hotel contracts, Greg Nelson chaired SUGI 30 and still helps with web and publications, and oddly enough, one of the "new kids" probably has the most experience in conferences—Neil Howard, just added to the EC in 2002 for the 2004 conference, chaired SUGI 20!

It's amazing to realize all the history we have here... and we just added to the team with our co-chairs for 2007, Joy Smith and Ed Heaton, and have some inquiries out to chair 2008!



Ah, but before we get to 2008... we need to make sure 2006 in Atlanta is running smooth—and you can help. Come talk to us about SESUG at the Regional User Group booth in the Demo Room at SUGI 31 in San Francisco... or come find us, if you like. I'll be chairing Systems Architecture, Debbie Buck is chairing Tutorials, and Maribeth will be in Statistics and Data Analysis.

And with that, I'll close out there... before I have yet another cranky editor griping at me about taking up too much room...

- Joe Kelley

A Word from SAS®

by David Baggett
Director, Executive & User Events

Greetings from SAS' Users Group Support staff at SAS' World Headquarters in Cary! All of us at SAS are very excited about SESUG '06, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to be with you in Atlanta in October. SESUG '06 conference chairs Marje Fecht and Deborah Skinner, the conference staff, and the SESUG Executive Committee are to be commended on their diligence in planning what's sure to be an exceptional SAS users group event for all of us.

So often SAS users will ask me why SAS values users group conferences. The answer is really very simple. Spending 2-3 days with SAS users provides all of us at SAS with an unsurpassed opportunity to learn, listen, and share. Interacting with and learning from SAS users gives us unique and valuable perspectives that in turn positively influence SAS' products and services. Having the opportunity to meet you, to share the latest information from SAS with you, and to talk with you and to hear what you have to say in Atlanta is something that all of us at SAS are looking forward to!

I'll add that our users group support staff isn't just focused

on conferences. Our team is also available to help local and in-house users groups across the United States form and succeed. If you are thinking about forming a users group at your organization or in your city, contact us so that we can assist you. Or if you're a member of either an active or inactive group, let us know how we can help your group flourish. For your users group meetings, we can help you promote the meetings, and we can provide SAS staff as speakers, SAS giveaways, and more to ensure that your meetings are tremendously valuable educational and networking events for SAS users in your area or your company. Bahram Pelattini is the users group liaison at SAS dedicated to working with SAS groups in the southeast region. Please feel free to contact Bahram at bahram.pelattini@sas.com or at 919.531.9249 for any assistance you may need in starting a users group or planning users group meetings.

SAS users groups are a proud part of SAS' heritage, and all of us at SAS are grateful for the tremendous volunteer efforts that go into planning users group events. This year SAS is celebrating its 30th anniversary, a significant milestone! SAS' success over the past 30 years and into the future hinges on your success and your satisfaction with SAS' products and services. Users groups provide terrific opportunities for continuing and building on that mutual success. So be sure to come be a part of SESUG '06 in Atlanta, and thank you for using SAS!

- David Baggett



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Larry Altmayer has been involved with SUGI, NESUG, SESUG and DCSUG over the years. He is an Information Technology Specialist for the U.S. Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census with several years of SAS programming experience. He can be reached at lawrence.w.altmayer@census.gov.

Product Review: SAS[®] Learning Edition 2.0

SAS Learning Edition (LE) is a recent addition to the line of SAS software, designed for the “person on the street.” SAS software itself has been around for almost three decades, but it has been intended for use by companies, since its annual licensing policy put it out of price range for people at home. More information about SAS software, as well as its history, can be found at the SAS Institute Web site, at www.sas.com. More information about SAS Learning Edition itself is available at support.sas.com/le.

Since the founding of SAS Institute in 1976, its software has gone from being used just for statistical analysis to being used in virtually every type of report writing, and data management,

presentation and analysis imaginable. SAS originally stood for Statistical Analysis System, but at some point during its history, this abbreviation was declared to stand, officially, for nothing, because of the wide range of tasks the software is designed to do.

SAS Learning Edition encompasses Base SAS software, and limited versions of four additional SAS software products: SAS/GRAPH[®] (for graphing), SAS/STAT[®] (for statistical analysis), SAS/QC[®] (for quality control) and SAS/ETS[®] (for time series analysis). Base SAS software is designed for basic data management and reporting. It includes a large set of procedures for this purpose.

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LE is designed to use one of SAS' newer features: SAS Enterprise Guide, a point-and-click-featured software that allows the user to intuitively run many analyses and reports on a set (or combined sets) of data (coming from SAS and/or other sources), while setting up the corresponding SAS program code for the operation of interest. At any point, the user can view this code to see how SAS does the operation. The code is also saved, along with reporting and/or analysis output, in the "project window," one of the main windows in Enterprise Guide.

The Learning Edition book provides easy-to-follow instructions for getting started, including adding data to a project, running tasks on the data, creating reports and modifying output. I had the impression, while going through these instructions, that there were many involved concepts behind the programming being done in the exercises. However, the output results came quickly, and, as said earlier, I could look at the program code at any time to get an idea of how SAS was "doing" the operations involved. Enterprise Guide also has a

"I recommend SAS Learning Edition as a great way to get an overview of what SAS is, and to get a feel for what it can do. "

vast array of options, as expected, to refine output and get the precise visual look (titles, etc.) desired. An example LE screen is shown in Example 1 (on page 7).

For those who would like to see the look of SAS before Enterprise Guide, sometimes called the Display Manager System (DMS), instructions are given in the final Q&A for creating a desktop shortcut to DMS. An example DMS window is shown in Example 2 (on page 7).

In addition to the instructions in the SAS Learning Edition book, there is an online tutorial that covers the same information. There is also an online help feature with table of contents, index and search components. Installation is straightforward, with step-by-step screens to guide you through the set-up process. Product support is available through the SAS Web site, at support.sas.com.

The product performs well, and produced the example output from the Learning Edition book quickly. LE can be used on all Microsoft Windows NT, 2000 and XP operating systems, although not on Windows Server

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Putting a conference together isn't just a matter of hard work—though there's a lot of that! The volunteers of SESUG do their very best; but along with time and effort, it also takes a few extra dollars here and there! So, we'd like to take the time to show a little appreciation for the people who contributed to SESUG in so many ways: sponsoring ads, being a part of the SAS Demo Room, and generally enriching the SESUG 2005 experience for everyone!

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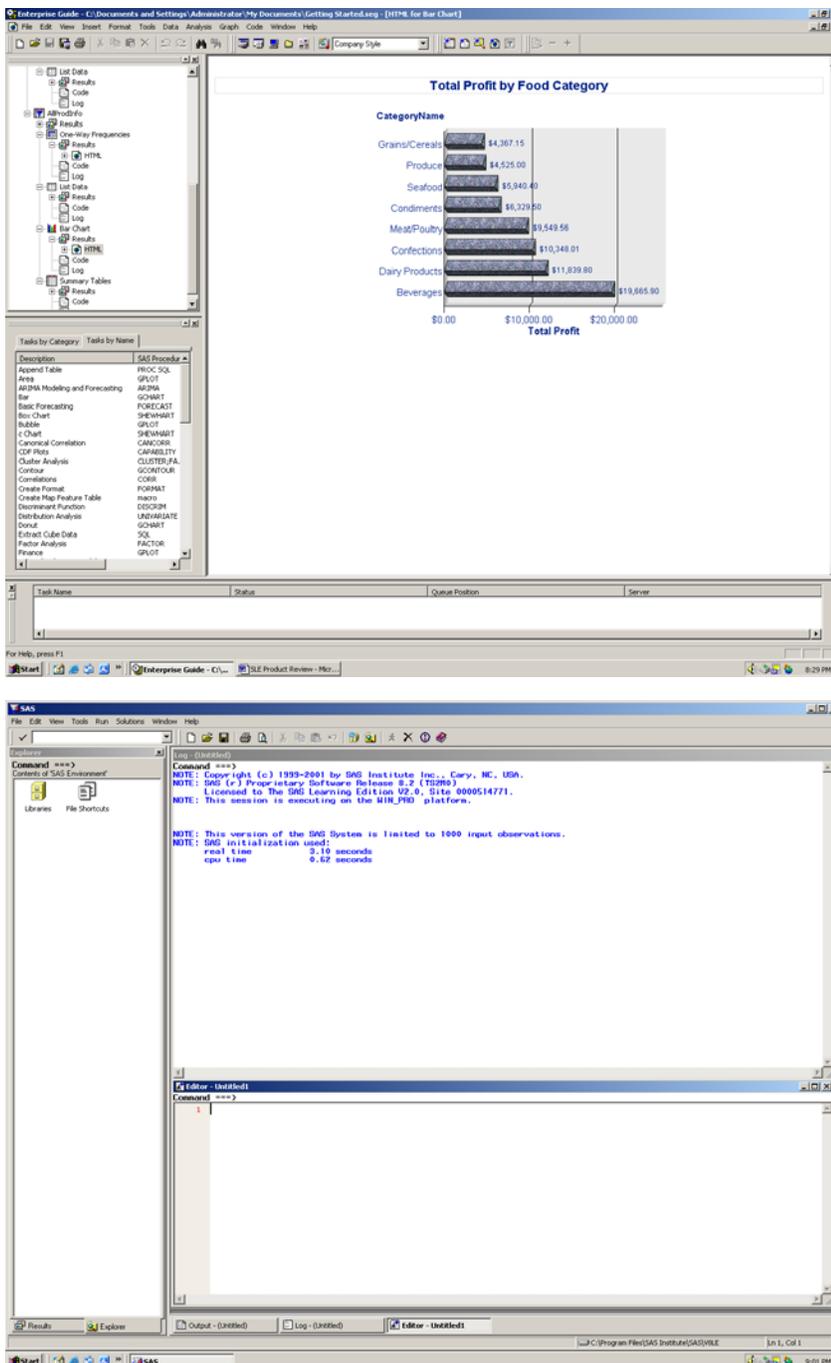
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Example 1—LE Screen.

(Continued from page 5) operating systems. Hard disk space of 390 MB and 128 MB RAM are required. You can obtain SAS Learning Edition through the SAS Web site, at the URL given earlier: <http://support.sas.com/le>. The list price is \$125.00.

The main limitation of LE is that the product processes and displays only the first 1000 observations of a data set of any size. The data, however, can come from any of several sources (e.g., Oracle, DB2 and Microsoft Excel, to name a few). The present version operates through December 1, 2008.

I recommend SAS Learning Edition as a great way to get an overview of what SAS is, and to get a feel for what it can do. Since no SAS experience is assumed, you are guided through the steps of data management and analysis from the start. For those with more curiosity about the various Enterprise Guide tasks that can be done, after installation the sample data is located on your hard drive for your perusal. Have fun!

- Larry Altmayer

Example 2—DMS Window.

Student Offering: SAS Fellowship Program

SAS Fellowship Program Provides Access to SAS For Cutting-Edge Research

Are you a student or do you know a student who is looking to use SAS for cutting-edge research - a thesis, PhD or a special project? The SAS Fellowship Program might be just what you are looking for! This competitive program gives students the opportunity to use the world's leading analytic and business intelligence software for research purposes by granting a free software license. At the end of the fellowship, students will submit their papers to SAS, in order

to increase mindshare in the use of analytics. Students interested in participating need to submit an application to the program and two letters of recommendation. If you are interested in applying to become a SAS Fellowship student, please fill out the online application at: http://www.sas.com/govedu/edu/programs/fellowship_apply.html.

- Elizabeth Ceranowski



Kirk Paul Lafler is with Software Intelligence Corporation. He is a published author on SAS, a frequent contributor to the SESUG Informant, and has presented and taught workshops at local, regional, and SUGI conferences.



Kirk's Korner: Quick and Simple Tips

Copying SAS Datasets and Indexes

SAS users often need to copy or backup one or more SAS datasets. There are several ways to copy a dataset. Unfortunately not all methods are the same and most definitely don't produce the same results. Here's a tip that may provide some help and avoid unsuspected surprises when copying datasets that have one or more indexes associated with it.

The SAS® System provides several ways to copy a dataset, but not all methods are designed to copy a dataset with one or more indexes associated with it. Let's first look at a commonly used approach and one that may not produce the desired results. The DATA and SET statements provide an easy way to copy a dataset by performing a simple process of reading and writing one observation at a time to either an existing or new dataset. Although this approach is convenient at times it is not the most efficient technique

for making dataset copies and more importantly can be dangerous, particularly when the dataset has one or more indexes associated with it. The DATA and SET statements can be used to copy the observations in one dataset to another (or the same dataset), but it has no way of copying indexes that are associated with the dataset. All it does is copy the data minus any indexes. The only real advantage for ever using this approach is for copying datasets within the same library or changing the name of a dataset as it is being copied.

A better and more efficient approach that will achieve all of your copying objectives is to use the COPY procedure. Its purpose is to copy datasets quickly and completely with any associated indexes. Although it cannot make copies within the same library or change the name of the dataset as it is copied, these limitations should not be reasons for not using

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this procedure for all your copying and backup needs.

The following syntax illustrates how the COPY procedure is used:

```
PROC COPY IN=libref OUT=libref
          MTYPE=(DATA PROGRAM);
  SELECT dataset1 dataset2 . . .
          datasetn ;
QUIT;
```

The IN= and OUT= parameters specify the input and output locations using the assigned librefs. The MTYPE= parameter, if specified, informs the SAS System to copy only datasets (and indexes) and not any other type of file that can be in a SAS data library. Other values that can be specified for MTYPE= include CATALOG for catalogs, PROGRAM for compiled DATA steps, and VIEW for views. The SELECT statement is optional and if present tells the SAS System what datasets, or files, to copy from the input location to the output location. If SELECT is omitted, the COPY procedure copies all files, including indexes, from the specified input to output location.

Another way to copy datasets and indexes is by using the DATASETS procedure. PROC DATASETS is the

“swiss army knife” of data management tools. This is the procedure of choice for savvy SAS users. The following syntax illustrates how the DATASETS procedure is used:

```
PROC DATASETS LIBRARY=libref
              MTYPE=DATA ;
  COPY OUT=libref ;
  SELECT dataset1 dataset2 . . .
          datasetn ;
QUIT;
```

The LIBRARY= parameter specifies the input location using the assigned libref. The MTYPE= parameter works the same as in the COPY procedure. The COPY OUT= statement specifies the output location using the assigned libref. The SELECT statement works the same as in the COPY procedure.

Contact Information

If you would like more information or have any questions about this tip, please contact: Kirk Paul Lafler, Software Intelligence Corporation at KirkLafler@cs.com. Kirk has been working with the SAS System since 1979 and is a SAS Certified Professional® and SAS Alliance Partner® (1996 - 2002). His company provides custom SAS programming, application design and development,

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specialized consulting services, and hands-on SAS training to clients around the world. Kirk is the author of four books including PROC SQL: Beyond the Basics Using SAS by SAS Institute, Power SAS and Power AOL by Apress, and more than one hundred peer-reviewed articles and papers for professional journals and SAS User Group proceedings. His popular SAS Tips column, Kirk's Korner, appears regularly in the BASAS, HASUG, SANDS, SAS, SESUG, and WUSS Newsletters and websites. Kirk can be reached at:

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If you would like to be a part of the next Informant, we always welcome articles, perspectives, and new ideas. Contact the editor, Gary E. Schlegelmilch, via e-mail at editor@sesug.org. Advertising information is also available upon request; contact Imelda Go at igo@sde.state.sc.us.

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Editor's Afterwords

What is a New Year, really?

Yes, we sit up and watch Dick Clark tell us when the New Year can officially start, drink a wee bit too much, and make resolutions we'll never keep. (I myself have lost 1,000 pounds because of New Year's Resolutions—the same five pounds, about 200 times over the years.) We take down the old calendar, maybe dwell a moment over notes and dates and photos; then put up a fresh calendar, note a few things we want to remember in January—and move on.



Want the best New Year's resolution ever—and one you can easily keep? And feel good about?

Promise yourself to try to learn something new—every day—in 2006.

That's not a hard one. Almost every day, we learn something new; about the world, about our jobs, about our friends and family, about ourselves. But if we make a resolution to do it—maybe it will serve as a reminder each day to try and find something that we can keep.

It would be easy here to go cornball, and recommend all the various ways that SAS, the user groups, and the conferences all provide those learning experiences. But I would equate that to telling you the sky is blue and water is wet. The user groups exist to share knowledge; and SAS has never been shy about giving users opportunities to share with one another as well. You can use those tools for sure; but I would suggest you take it one step further.

All through the day, every day—take the time to listen, just a little bit more. You may be surprised what you'll hear—and how much you can learn.

- ges

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