



## SAS® Solutions for Small and Midsize Business

Data is the heart and soul behind operational and strategic decisions at all types and sizes of businesses. At least, that's how it's supposed to be.

In the real world, business data springs from every imaginable source – emails, audio and video files, sales channels, operational systems and more – faster than it can be collected and interpreted. This is no less true at a company with 50 employees than at a company with 50,000.

### The difference?

Larger companies have bigger budgets and a lot more IT and analytical talent on board than their smaller counterparts. So they have a definite advantage when it comes to quickly and effectively capturing and analyzing their data.

Most small and midsize businesses recognize the value of data and invest significant effort in capturing and storing it. But if you don't have a way to analyze it, you may still have to revert back to intuition and past experiences to make decisions. In today's volatile economy, this approach simply does not work.

Analytics can solve the dilemma – no matter what size your business is. Consider this comment from Tom Davenport, co-author of *Competing on Analytics*: "Business analytics enables people in an organization to make better decisions, improve processes and achieve desired outcomes. It brings together the best of data management, analytic methods and the presentation of results."



As a company that started with just six employees in 1976, SAS understands the special challenges facing small and midsize businesses. We offer a comprehensive, fully integrated suite of business analytics solutions that are specifically designed, built and priced for you.

Our solutions help you answer questions that are crucial to your success, such as:

- Who are our best customers, and what can we do to keep them?
- How can we improve the accuracy of our financial forecasts?
- How can we cut supply chain costs without compromising quality?
- How can we effectively manage risk across the organization?
- How will strategy changes affect our future profitability and revenue growth?



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## Challenges

**Data management overload.** It's easy to be frustrated by the deluge of data. Many SMBs spend up to 80 percent of their time just managing data – when they need to spend that time analyzing it.

**Limited time and IT resources.** SMBs have lots of data and lots of questions – but they lack sufficient time and IT resources to organize and analyze data so they can get answers to support decision making.

**Inappropriate tools.** Most SMBs are too large for all their analytical needs to be addressed by inexpensive, off-the-shelf software; but they're too small to afford or use more full-featured software designed for enterprise customers.

**Lack of analytical expertise.** Most people at SMBs have industry experience, but no knowledge of how to use sophisticated analytics software. There's no point in having software that will do amazing things if you can't use it.

**Budget constraints.** SMBs operate on much smaller budgets than their larger counterparts, making it hard for them to afford the talent and resources they need to compete effectively.

“Forty percent of important decisions are not based on facts but rather on intuition, experience and anecdotal evidence.”

– Jeanne G. Harris, Accenture

## How SAS® Can Help

Only companies that proactively harness their organizational data and use insights gleaned from it to make the right decisions – in a timely manner – can expect to lead today's fast-paced, ever-changing economy into a better tomorrow. SAS solutions for small and midsize business let you access and integrate massive amounts of data, and analyze it to gain predictive insights. Using SAS solutions, you can generate accurate forecasts to help you confidently plan for the future, and you can collaborate with business partners and other stakeholders easily. As a result, you can make faster, better and smarter decisions.

SAS solutions for small and midsize business are based on an integrated framework of:

- Data management.
- Analytics.
- Forecasting.
- Reporting.

### Data Management

With so much data being generated, captured and stored by organizations, data management and data quality are more important today than ever. SAS solutions for small and midsize business let you access data in different formats spread across disparate systems, and then integrate, cleanse and enrich it to get a single, unified view of your business. You can combine structured data with unstructured data – from emails, audio recordings, call centers and social networking sites – to obtain the integrated, accurate information you need to maintain a competitive edge.

### Analytics

Nearly all small and midsize businesses collect some data and perform analysis on it. But most of this work is done manually, or by using standard applications like Excel. The result is often delayed or inaccurate information, or a partial view of information – usually inconsistent with what others in the organization find.

In addition, most analytics solutions available to small and midsize organizations only provide *descriptive* analytics – capabilities like query and reporting, and OLAP drill-down. This type of analysis shows just the historical view of data (what happened, where, and when). To proactively manage your business, you need a predictive view instead.

SAS solutions for small and midsize business include predictive analytics so you can answer questions like: “What will happen next?” and “What is the best that can happen?” Our solutions help:

- Combat fraud by capturing abnormal behavior as close to the time of the transaction as possible.
- Improve product quality by identifying the root cause behind an issue earlier in the production cycle.
- Reduce risk by uncovering operational gaps, vulnerabilities and threats that might otherwise go unnoticed until it's too late.
- Predict the business value of investments you make in marketing campaigns, promotions and new sales channels.
- Increase return on investment by identifying the best offers for individual customers.

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With the most up-to-date, advanced analytics built into our solutions, you can ask forward-looking questions, gain predictive insights to seize new opportunities and make fact-based decisions that produce the best results possible.

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## Forecasting

Due to fast-changing market conditions and volatile consumer demand, past trends are now a poor indicator of the future – and using intuition to determine future demand is very risky. With changes in the economic landscape distorting trends and seasonal variations, existing demand forecasting and planning processes are no longer adequate.

Do you know with any certainty:

- Whether the markets you operate in will grow or shrink in the future?
- What effect economic factors, competitors' actions and other market events will have on future demand for your products and services?
- How your future revenue stream will look?

If your answer is “no,” how do you know whether to ramp up or down on staffing, or stock more or less merchandise? How can you make good decisions related to capital and operating expenses?

SAS solutions for small and midsize business provide robust forecasting tools that enable you to plan for the future with confidence. Use the tools to: accurately forecast demand based on the effect of multiple variables – like seasonality, consumer trends and economic events; perform what-if analyses to test marketing strategies and promotional

plans; and make fact-based decisions that reflect the realities of your business.

Our solutions support a wide range of forecasting methods. These solutions can automatically choose the most appropriate forecasting model, and optimize model parameters for your business situation. As a result, you can generate accurate forecasts without any human intervention.

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## Reporting

To make intelligent, fact-based decisions, you have to be able to get the right information to the right person at the right time. With SAS solutions for small and midsize business, reporting is part of a seamless process for creating and sharing intelligence. While other vendors have multiple interfaces that all serve the same purpose, SAS solutions use a single, Web-based interface for all types of reports.

Our solutions encompass a wide range of reporting needs, from simple, Web-based reports to complex desktop workbenches that help you perform sophisticated statistical analyses. The reports include easy-to-understand graphics so users with varying skill levels can explore data visually to get the information they need. SAS solutions for small and midsize business also integrate with Microsoft Office, allowing users to share findings through a familiar interface. All this helps your decision makers find answers to sophisticated questions faster, present their results in a high-quality, easy-to-understand format and quickly communicate their insight to others.

## Proven Success

**Golfsmith** operates 76 retail stores and has a large Web and catalog following. To cope with high data volumes across multiple channels, and to better understand its customers, Golfsmith chose SAS. Using SAS, the company can segment customers better to deliver more targeted messaging. The results: campaign response rates have risen by 60 percent, data merging costs are down by 50 percent and campaign report preparation time has decreased by 70 percent.

**ACCION (Texas/Louisiana)** lends money to small businesses that might not qualify for traditional loans. Prior to using SAS, the company struggled to identify businesses with lower default probability, which led to long, tedious loan approval processes. With SAS, ACCION quickly and accurately scores applicants – leading to a 15 percent reduction in delinquency rates, a 50 percent reduction in loan applications that require manual review and a faster turnaround time for customers.

**Palo Alto Medical Foundation**, a California-based nonprofit health care provider, needed a data management and analytics solution to consolidate electronic health records so it could study disease trends among less-researched demographic groups. Using SAS, the company improved data quality, streamlined data management and analytical processes, and identified populations at high risk of disease. Palo Alto used this information to educate clinical staff, develop better screenings, improve overall patient care and identify preventative measures for high-risk groups.

## The SAS® Difference

### Integrated, Modular and Scalable

SAS solutions for midsize business are based on a fully integrated framework of data management, analytics, forecasting and reporting capabilities that are designed to work independently, or together. The solutions are built to support your requirements today, but are flexible enough to grow easily when your needs expand. Start by using the capabilities you need right now, and add more as you go – without incurring expensive integration costs later.

### Rich Capabilities, Lower Cost

Our solutions offer a comprehensive, consolidated range of capabilities – so you won't need to purchase complex, piecemeal solutions from multiple vendors to get the full functionality you need. By eliminating maintenance, integration and training costs for multiple applications from different vendors, SAS solutions lower your total cost of ownership – while simplifying your IT environment and freeing IT staff from many tedious tasks.

### Easy-to-Use Interfaces

SAS solutions for small and midsize business include rich visualization capabilities and interactive point-and-click interfaces that allow all types of users to access and explore data for trends and hidden relationships. The solutions are fully integrated with Microsoft Office, so even nontechnical users can use sophisticated data management and analytical capabilities in a familiar environment – and easily share their results.

## Versatile Tools For a Range of Needs

SAS recognizes the talent and skill constraints SMBs face, so we design our solutions to support a wide range of users' needs – from simple to complex. Less-skilled users can rely on prebuilt models and interactive model development to apply advanced analytical techniques without any manual coding. More advanced users can customize existing models or embed their own algorithms, if desired.

### Advanced Analytics Help You Compete

SAS solutions go beyond simple query, reporting and OLAP drill-down capabilities to provide a comprehensive set of advanced analytical techniques, including data mining, forecasting, scenario modeling and optimization. With all these options at your fingertips, you'll have access to the same level of analytical competence as larger competitors.

### Top-Notch Training

SAS Education provides state-of-the-art technical training and professional development to ensure that you get the most out of your software investments. A curriculum of more than 200 SAS, JMP® and statistical courses are offered in a traditional classroom setting, on-site at customer locations, in the Live Web classroom or as self-paced e-learning.

### Customer Support

SAS solutions for small and midsize business come complete with our award-winning support services at no extra charge, including skilled telephone technical support and around-the-clock online technical support. Our online customer support center also provides 24/7 access to a wealth of technical support, reference information, educational resources and communities.

## About SAS

SAS is the leader in business analytics software and services, and the largest independent vendor in the business intelligence market. Through innovative solutions, SAS helps customers at more than 50,000 sites improve performance and deliver value by making better decisions faster. Since 1976 SAS has been giving customers around the world THE POWER TO KNOW®.

To learn more about how SAS helps small and midsize businesses achieve success, visit [www.sas.com/smb](http://www.sas.com/smb).



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