

Keeping you up to date on what's happening at SAS

What's up at SAS

July saw another busy month fly by as SAS Institute hosted a series of customer intelligence and risk events in Johannesburg and Cape Town. As we move into August SAS has chosen to shift towards EIP events and will be hosting two such events this month as well as two risk events focused on credit risk.

In a bid to place increased emphasis on its public sector business, SAS Institute locally has formalised the establishment of a dedicated Public Sector business unit, and has appointed Desan Naidoo at the helm of the division. In other local news SAS hosted the Nedbank Analyst Forum this month at its Johannesburg offices, the topic was centred on the property market and how to calculate true value of your property using automatic valuation models. Dennis Dykes the chief economist at Nedbank also added some interesting economic predictions, looking towards some interest rate and economic relief in 2010.

Internationally SAS was recognised as one of the top 5 IT companies to work for in the US based on a survey conducted by Computerworld involving some 31 000 IT employees. SAS was also once again placed in the Leaders' quadrant of Gartner Inc.'s Magic Quadrant for Customer Data Mining Applications, which it considers recognition for its success using descriptive and predictive analytics supporting marketing, sales and service functions to solve business problems.

Well that's all the news for now, till next month...

Customer Intelligence is all about growing your business – Phil Winters

At a recent Customer intelligence event hosted by SAS Institute, Phil Winter global customer intelligence guru revealed that customer intelligence is really about understanding the behaviour, profitability and risk of your customers.

"Customer intelligence for me is all about solving business pains and growing your business using methods that are tailored to your customers and your industry," says Phil Winters, managing senior partner for Customer Intelligence Agenda.

The key is knowing your customers well enough to tailor to their needs. From small things like how your customers prefer to interact with your company whether they prefer using internet, phone or paper forms, and providing them with the methods they want. Cater to your customers needs and they will never go looking elsewhere for the services you deliver.

"The only ways to grow your business are to retain customers, gain customer and up sell and cross sell to your existing customers. Your customers are your greatest asset," ends Winters.



Intelligence – the missing link for preventing retail losses through theft

The retail industry is feeling the pinch of losses through crime, but is also the victim of ineffective and unregulated security companies. Recent statistics released by the Consumer Goods Commission South Africa (CGCSA) show that commercial crime has increased more than 50 percent in the past year.

With this statistic comes the shocking fact that usually around 80 percent of losses are connected to a retailers own employees. It would seem there is a missing link between investing large amounts of money on security solutions and making the solutions work for you.

With this issue in front of them, retailers face two choices, either shoulder the loss by budgeting for it and prevent spending any further money on the issue, or accept the challenge and invest in security solutions. The second option would be the more popular choice if there was not such an existing mistrust in the ROI of implementing security solutions. As Michael Broughton the managing director of (CGCSA) recently mentioned at a local retail conference it is really difficult to understand the value of theft that didn't happen, how do you put a monetary value on something that doesn't exist, a crime that didn't happen?

BI is the key that can provide the intelligence to make security solutions work. The truth is that losses are happening across the entire supply chain, at most levels and almost all the time with the retailer feeling the pinch in the end. Every time products travel and are in contact with people they are at risk, and they travel constantly until they reach a point of consumption.

The key is to know what is happening on the ground, to know every aspect of risk and supply chain logistics inside and out and use strategic implementation to target issues directly. This calls on intelligence, the intelligence that only top analytical solutions that can trawl your data and assist you in identifying where security threats lurk, what they are, and how they can be better managed. Good business intelligence solutions that couple analytics and the more traditional BI tools such as query and reporting can assist you in making your security work for your business.

LOCAL NEWS

Nedbank predicts property market to stabilise by 2010

Speaking at the quarterly Nedbank Analyst Forum hosted by SAS Institute last week, Dennis Dykes chief economist at Nedbank focused on the light at the end of a dim economic tunnel for South Africa.

"Not wanting to focus too heavily on the current slump in our property and economic market I predict some recovery in 2009 and leading towards 2010," says Dykes.

Dykes was joined by two other speakers, Jaco Van den Berg, senior quantitative analyst for Nedbank retail, and Andrew Watt business development director at Lightstone risk management.

"With the economy in its less positive state it is not only bond payers who need to assess their future. The need for banks to manage their credit risk has also become more important," says André Zitzke, Solution Specialist at SAS.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SAS Business Intelligence Helps IBM Win Technology ROI Award

Nucleus Research recognises IBM for realising a 386 percent ROI with its IT deployment

SAS institute, the leader in business intelligence software and services, announced that Nucleus Research selected IBM as a 2008 recipient of its Technology ROI Award for its implementation of SAS business intelligence software.

This award recognises companies whose skilful deployment of IT solutions has produced a positive, bottom-line financial return on investment (ROI). Deploying SAS BI software enabled IBM's semiconductor facility to realise a 386 percent ROI within a payback period of less than four months.

SAS among top five companies to work for in IT

Analytics giant offers employees flexibility and work/life balance

SAS has been ranked by Computerworld magazine the No. 5 employer in information technology. The 15th annual "Best Places to Work" survey is published in the June 30 issue of Computerworld. Computerworld gathers information from some 31,000 IT employees to score the top 100 work environments for technology professionals. Survey categories include benefits, diversity, career development, training and retention. This year, employee responses accounted for approximately one-half of the total score, with the remainder based upon company benefits and other programs.

Can Powerful Analytical Technologies assist the Government in Service Delivery?

While the potential application and need for analytics in the private sector are many, the reality remains that the applications that can be used within the public sphere by government departments are potentially as wide, if not wider than that of the private sector.

The pressure for government agencies to improve on service delivery is driven not only from taxpayers and from government departments themselves, but also from those most deprived sectors of society who are fully dependant on government's ability to deliver on its promise.

So, for the first time, coupled with a need and willingness to improve, there is now a set of technologically enabled components using analytics that are aimed at assisting governments with in their service delivery. Government and municipal engineers need to make decisions quickly, these decisions need to be accurate and based on fact – there is simply no room for assumption when you have to move quickly and efficiently.

How can analytics help?

It is with this that there are already some provinces such as Kwa-Zulu Natal who are currently in the process of building powerful knowledge management hubs and provincial intelligence platforms, designed to assist them in making fact-based decisions. The ultimate goal of which is to be able to generate accurate reports on a fresh and clean data, by simply pressing a button, and having this information displayed in the format requested by the user.

When deployed an analytical intelligence platform, with the right data quality, data cleansing and master data management tools, can significantly improve the proactive decision making process of local and provincial government agencies. In our experience, once, such a system is in place, it will take municipal engineers and decision making personnel a fraction of the time to extract the valuable intelligence they need, from a variety of sources, that will then support fact-based decisions needed to delivery better, more proactive services to their publics.

SAS Events – July 2008



Jennifer Meyer and Lidia Fourie at the Risk Dashboard Event – 17 July

Simon Marland CIO retail banking at Nedbank spoke at the Customer Intelligence Event – 10 July

Product in the Spotlight

SAS Solutions for Small to Medium Businesses

Focused on the bottom line and containing costs?

Improving product quality, analysing late payments/defaults and financial reporting are key topics that drive SMBs to effectively control expenses. Traditionally, SMBs have invested in ERP solutions to manage inventory and expenses. However, ERP systems can only provide a view of where your organisation has been – not where it needs to go. Implementing a business intelligence solution gives organisations the power to plan for the future by providing the data needed to better understand costs and detect trends. As a result, you can make informed decisions to satisfy your short- and long-term goals.

Flexible, affordable solutions to meet your business intelligence needs

SAS offers an integrated set of business intelligence software and services that can be customised to meet your existing needs – and budget:

- Improve the quality of information – immediately.
- Control costs by getting a solution that addresses what you need today – while having the flexibility to handle future needs.
- Increase access to valuable information to empower good decision making.
- Reap the benefits of analytical insights.
- Reduce the costs and risks associated with managing information.
- Extend the value of your existing IT investments.

For more information please visit: http://www.sas.com/technologies/bi/query_reporting/index.html

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Upcoming Events

EIP Event	Johannesburg	13 August 2008
EIP Event	Cape Town	14 August 2008
Credit Risk Event	Johannesburg	21 August 2008
Credit Risk Event	Cape Town	22 August 2008

The bit at the end

We hope you enjoyed this edition of SAS Talk, if you have any suggestions for improvement, comments or interesting SAS info, please email marketing@zaf.sas.com.