

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

What's up at SAS

Welcome to Summer, and to the holiday season of 2008. It has been a tough year for South African in general, with economic downturn and global turbulence as the background for the year, but nevertheless a year that has brought growth and change for all. Looking back, 2008 began with SAS being listed in Fortune Magazine's "top 100 companies to work for" for the 11th time and has ended with a string of successful Risk, Customer Intelligence and EIP events with a busy year ending on the triumphant note of the very successful SAS User Forum in Johannesburg.

Speaking of triumphant notes, the entire SAS team would like to wish Riad Gydien their congratulations on his new appointment as head of Middle East and Africa. Further congratulations are extended to Goran Dragosavac, national product manager Analytical Intelligence at SAS Institute who recently spoke at the local Mining and Manufacturing conference in Johannesburg and to Alexi Sarnevitz senior director of Retail Strategy for the SAS Global Retail Practice, who presented at the annual ECR conference.

If you are travelling over the holiday season, enjoy your travels and be safe. We wish you all the best for the family season and to come back relaxed and ready for the New Year.

SAS appoints Riad Gydien head of Africa and Middle East

SAS has appointed Riad Gydien as the head of operations for the Middle East and Africa region in addition to his duties as the South African country manager.

Gydien has been in his role of country manager of the South African region since 2007, and will assume his new role with immediate effect, reporting directly to Mikael Hagström, Executive Vice President of SAS EMEA and Asia Pacific Operations.

"SAS South Africa has seen remarkable revenue growth in the last several months, and I would like to further build on Riad's proven leadership to help ensure success for the entire region," states Hagström. "I have every confidence in Riad, who will be working with the management team in SAS Africa and the Middle East to improve on the successes we have begun experiencing in the entire region."

Gydien is known in his role as country manager for his hands on approach to the operations of the business, and has established strong relations with SAS' clients directly.

In his new role he will be responsible for guiding the sales strategy as well as operations throughout Africa, Middle East and South Africa, in addition to building and maintaining strong customer relationships, and partner relations.



New features in SAS 9.2 to take BI to the masses

- New version provides enhanced usability and a host of new features

SAS, the leader in business intelligence (BI), unveiled a number of new features customers can expect in the latest technologies becoming available on top of its latest 9.2 release of its coveted SAS Enterprise Intelligence Platform (EIP), at the SAS Forum South Africa.

“Customers around the globe are calling for a solution that is pervasive, easy to use, promotes productivity and that is both easy to maintain and install as well as a good fit for existing IT standards. We believe that the latest technologies becoming available on the SAS 9.2 platform will answer these demands,” states Mark Torr, Director at SAS Global Technology Practice.



In discussing usability enhancements Torr stated that “No matter how much we as technologists say the front end does not matter, it does, and I believe that the latest SAS 9.2 technology will answer calls for improved productivity while delivering the IT benefits of increased interoperability, manageability and scalability.”

The first technologies of SAS 9.2 were launched in March 2008 at SAS Global Forum and the new technologies highlighted by Torr are scheduled for release in late Q1 2009. Some notable enhancements for those who have to install and manage a SAS platform environment will include the ability to download the software electronically and significant improvements to the installation and configuration.

“The old argument that SAS is difficult to use and needs a specialist to run is now one of the past. With 9.2 we are offering functionality coupled with advanced analytics that our competitors are no where near being able to provide,” he says.

“The release will see some of the biggest enhancements ever made to our EIP environment and truly answer the call for a solution that is a lot more user friendly and significantly easier to deploy. With a new, more intuitive front-end, and the ability to now provide proper analytical insights into your data we believe that the enhancements we have made with 9.2, at both its core and at an IT level, has a lot to offer customers looking to make BI a pervasive component of their enterprise systems,” ends Torr.

Understanding your customers

- The importance of customer segmentation in the retail industry

Customers are the core of any retail business, and retailers need to understand their customers, their various needs and what drives them, if the business is to be a success.

According to Natalie McCrae, Principal Consultant from 5one, a specialist consultancy that aims to deliver information-based marketing and trading strategies to retailers, customer have three drivers, namely time, money and emotion. It is how a retailer meets or delivers upon these expectations, or for that matter fails to, that will determine how successful a shopper’s experience is, and ultimately from that, how loyal said customer will be to the retailer.

McCrae spoke at the recent SAS Forum South Africa 2008, along with Laura Taylor, who is the Head of Analysis at 5one, around how proper customer segmentation is essential in helping retailers to better understand their customers.

“Every time a customer makes choices in our stores, they are telling us something about themselves,” says McCrae. “By analysing shopping over time, we can look at what motivates customers to shop. For this we develop customer lifestyle segments.”

LOCAL NEWS

Alexi Sarnevitz Tracks the Evolution of the Retail Industry in the 21st Century

The retail industry has evolved over the years, in the late 20th century retailers depended on supply chain and operational efficiency to keep ahead of the pack, but looking at 21st century there has been a shift towards retailers relying on the effective use of business applications and predictive technology to get back to the traditional idea of serving the customer.

This was the message delivered by Alexi Sarnevitz, senior director of retail strategy for SAS' Global Retail Practice, when he spoke at the SAS Business breakfast event held in Johannesburg recently.

MMP Conference looks at how technology can help Mining and Manufacturing industries survive

In this competitive world, companies can no longer rely on low prices, high quality and on-time delivery alone to keep them on top. While we were able to rely on these factors a decade ago – they are now just requirements to stay in the game.

This will be the key message provided by Goran Dragosavac, national product manager Analytical Intelligence at SAS Institute, when he presents at the inaugural Mining, Manufacturing and Process (MMP) conference.

The conference will kick off on the 12th and 13 November at The Forum in Bryanston with the aim of enlightening delegates to the knowledge of key global trends in technology, and how they can profit from practical application of best technology practices.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SAS named NC Green Company of the Year *North Carolina Technology Association recognises SAS for solar farm, sustainable construction and SAS® for Sustainability Management software*

SAS, the leader in business analytics, has been named Green Company of the Year by the North Carolina Technology Association. The award, presented Nov. 13 at the association's annual banquet held in Cary, NC, recognised SAS for its sustainability activities undertaken in 2008.

"We're very pleased to be honoured for our green efforts," said SAS CEO Jim Goodnight, "but we're even happier that this category has been created. It's the right thing to do for our future, and in many ways, companies can see a bottom-line benefit from adopting sustainability principles."

New version of JMP explores and visualises data through drag-and-drop interaction

Among other new capabilities of JMP 8 are uncovering consumer preferences and analysing product reliability

SAS, the leader in business analytics, today released the latest version of its JMP statistical discovery software, unveiling a groundbreaking new way to explore and visualise data. Users of JMP 8 get instantaneous visual feedback as they use the new Graph Builder to explore data and construct graphs. They also can design and analyse choice studies to find out which product features consumers value most; use new platforms that provide immediate, visual representation of product reliability; and experience even better integration with SAS® products.

"Exploring and learning from data should be an interactive process – a process you drive and steer – and JMP 8 lets you do that better than ever," said John Sall, SAS co-founder and Executive Vice President.

Product in the Spotlight

IT Management with SAS IT Intelligence

SAS IT Intelligence is a comprehensive solution that helps you optimize IT resources, services and financial impact, all in support of strategic business goals. It provides powerful tools to anticipate and align the right mix of physical and virtual IT resources to meet business demands, and assess IT performance and costs across your infrastructure. From every vantage point you can increase the business value of IT, ensuring high quality of IT services as you manage risk and minimise the cost of delivery.

The SAS Difference:

- Accesses and integrates IT performance measurements from virtually any data source; transforms these metrics into analysis and report-ready performance data.
- Industry-leading forecasting and analytic capabilities provide foresight into planning scenarios for IT resource demand and capacity.
- Delivers business intelligence capabilities of SAS in ad hoc query and reporting; reports can be published through Web portals, scorecards and Microsoft Office-based applications.
- Supports a range of accounting methodologies to make reliable cost information available for proper allocation and cost recovery/chargeback, based on actual consumption of resources in a shared IT environment. This capability can be delivered in a customized solution enabled by SAS Profitability Management and SAS Activity-Based Management software.

