

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

What's up at SAS

August brought the wind, the sunshine and the first signs of Spring! It also brought some busy times for SAS as it hosted numerous events including the third in a series of Credit Risk events, as well as the first in the series of EIP. One of the most exciting projects for SAS this month was the rollout of an Enterprise Intelligence Platform at the office of the Premier, as part of the launch of the Kwazulu Natal Nerve Centre. The EIP promises to bring benefits like improved service delivery and an enhanced citizen focus.

Looking forward to September SAS will be continuing with its informative business breakfasts, hosting one on Risk and another on Customer Intelligence. This month also sees the second leg of the SAS Premier Business Leadership Series kick off in Mumbai, which promises to give extraordinary insight on business from leading global experts, including SAS CEO Dr Jim Goodnight.

Enjoy the sunshine, till next month...

SAS Nerve Centre deployment goes live in KwaZulu-Natal



SAS Institute has completed the roll-out of an Enterprise Intelligence Platform (EIP) at the office of the Premier (OTP) in KwaZulu-Natal, which forms part of phase 1 of the Provincial Nerve Centre initiative launched this week.

The provincial Nerve Centre provides an automated and integrated information management system complete with reporting and analytics, dashboards and geographic information system (GIS) mapping to monitor and evaluate government's key performance indicators and to promote transparency and anti-corruption.

The Nerve Centre allows the Premier or any other stakeholder, such as a Member of Executive Committee, to view how the entire province is performing at provincial, district and local government level, according to the mandate from the National government.

"For example, currently all provinces are mandated to reduce poverty. The Nerve Centre enables the Premier to view progress of all programs to reduce poverty and are alerted to any issues that crop up," says Desan Naidoo, General Manager Public Sector at SAS Institute.

Other benefits of the Nerve Centre include an enhanced citizen focus in the delivery of government services, as well as the strengthening of government to citizen, government to employee, government to business organisations and government to government relationships.

Synovate takes marketing intelligence to new heights with Qinfo and SAS

When South African marketing research specialists Synovate needed a technology solution to improve the efficiency at which it processes its survey data, the company turned to Qinfo a SAS Alliance partner, and a new set of business intelligence tools.

Synovate is a multi-award winning marketing research company that provides customer loyalty intelligence to more than 110 blue-chip clients throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Being an ISO 9001:2001 certified entity; adherence to best-practice methodologies are always top-of-mind for the company.

“Our clients need us to make sense of the noise around their products and services, using our marketing research expertise to do this. Data processing is therefore core to our business, and there is no room for error when we are crunching the data we collect through our research practices, as we look to turn this into meaningful information that will benefit our customers,” says Mirna Wessels head of operations at Synovate.

“While we have used the SAS toolset for a number of years, we hit a real challenge when we decided to move our environment from the then ageing PC-based SAS to a server based environment. We needed a partner that could help us with our infrastructure environment, and it was then that we turned to Qinfo because of their knowledge of the SAS system we were working with.”

Synovate currently uses the analytical capabilities of Base SAS, SAS STAT and SAS Graph to assist it in providing client friendly reports on the research information it collects.

LOCAL NEWS

Credit Environment Risky for Credit Lenders

A recent business breakfast hosted by SAS Institute highlighted the fact that credit lenders and consumers alike are facing hard times.

“On average South Africans spend 80 percent of their disposable income on debt. The current non-payment rate of debtors is at 67 percent, with an average consumer owing to eight credit providers at any one time,” says Dr. Tjaart van der Walt, CEO, at the National Debt Mediation Association.

The situation calls for both consumers and credit providers to take responsibility and return to the basic rules of budgeting and lending.

“Conventional risk models are often not forward looking enough and fall short of risk expectations. With interest rate hikes, sub prime losses at an all time high and recent market moves all contributing to the failure of many credit risk models,” says André Zitzke, solutions specialist at SAS.

Along side van der Walt, the breakfast also hosted Bevan Smith senior manager Operational Risk at IO Business Group, as well as Prof Machiel Kruger, Head of SASLab Centre for Business Mathematics and Informatics.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SAS named as a Leader in Enterprise Business Intelligence Platforms by independent research firm

SAS has been selected as a Leader in the July 2008 Forrester Wave: Enterprise Business Intelligence Platforms, Q3 2008.

“SAS is the best one-stop BI shop that includes high-end analytics from a single vendor,” according to the report from the influential research firm. “We see no reason SAS can’t continue on its amazing track record of uninterrupted 32-year growth.”

“Even though several other vendors realise or are starting to realise the value of providing higher-end analytics tools like statistical analysis and predictive modelling, SAS is pretty hard to beat in this category, especially when it comes to embedding such analytical routines in powerful DBMS engines like Teradata,” said the Forrester report.

Innovation earns SAS Supply & Demand Chain Executive 100 listing

SAS offers customers the next wave of supply chain innovation

SAS, the leader in business analytics and business intelligence, was named to the 2008 Supply & Demand Chain Executive 100. This list of the leading supply chain solution providers was selected by Supply & Demand Chain Executive magazine. SAS stood out as a leading solution and service provider that offers customers the next wave of supply chain innovation.

SAS was recognised for providing customers with unique software and services that address their current and future supply chain challenges. SAS® Supply Chain Intelligence solutions help organisations in many industries deliver quality improvement, customer satisfaction and higher profits.

Performance-Based Budgeting in Government

Desan Naidoo, general manager public sector division at SAS Institute, explains how performance-based budgeting can be successfully achieved by integrating objectives and metrics with people and resources.

Taxpayers are requiring more financial accountability from all levels of government. In response, many government agencies and departments need to find ways to connect services delivered with programme funding through performance-based budgeting (PBB).

In general, PBB is defined as a budgeting process that links an organisation's funding to its goals, strategies, programmes, resources, services and results. Using this approach, organisations create budget requests that take into account the funding that agencies would like to receive, and the outputs and outcomes they expect to produce as a result of that funding.

For governments across the globe, the primary impetus is economics. Budget crises and funding shortfalls are pressuring leaders to measure and demonstrate the results of programmes so they can justify continued or increased funding and avoid funding cuts. PBB offers an objective and credible way to evaluate, proactively improve and report on programme performance by tying specific measures to the budgeting process.

Successful implementations of major budget reforms take time. The budget proposal process is vast and complicated. The existing level of spending, also known as the base budget, reflects a long history of policy decisions by the executive and legislative branches. There is a considerable amount of power and money at stake in the budget process, therefore governments see the importance of balance budget reforms and the long-term impact they will have.

That said emphasis on performance information has had little direct impact on budget allocations. While budget reforms have often failed because they did not prove to be relevant to budget decision makers in the executive branch, they also often did not outlive the administrations that proposed them.

In conclusion, the benefits of performance budgeting are numerous. Foremost, it increases the organisational focus on mission and goals and shifts attention away from scrutinising revenues and expenditures. This approach also improves the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations by allocating resources toward the most critical outcomes.

More importantly, PBB enables decision making to zero-in on the most effective way to use limited resources because it encourages agencies and departments to work together to optimise and best use resources.

SAS Events – August 2008

Leonard Browne at the EIP event - 13 August Bryanston Country Club.



Machiel Kruger speaking at the Credit Risk event -21 August The Campus, Bryanston.

Product in the Spotlight

SAS Solutions for Supplier Intelligence

Some organisations spend as much as 60 percent of revenue to acquire the goods and services necessary to conduct business. Given this number, the pressure for procurement professionals to reduce spending is hardly surprising. How do you move beyond spend reduction to true strategic sourcing?

SAS enables strategic sourcing through an integrated set of data management and analytic applications designed specifically for the procurement professional.



Upcoming Events

Finmaths	Kruger National Park	1 – 6 September 2008
Risk Event	Johannesburg	8 September 2008
Risk Event	Cape Town	9 September 2008
Premier Business leadership Series	Mumbai – India	11 September 2008
Customer Intelligence	Johannesburg	23 September 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.