

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

What's up at SAS

March proved to be another busy month for SAS with the much anticipated SAS Global Forum happening from the 22 – 25 March in Washington DC. The SAS Global Forum released some exciting announcements, a few of these include the launch of its new SAS Fraud Framework and the announcement that SAS has also spruced up its campaign management software, SAS Campaign Management. SAS and Teradata also announced the availability of two analytic advantage and optimisation service packages.

Back home in South Africa, March saw SAS' Kevin Kemp, head of sales for the commercial division present at the ITWeb BI conference and the ITS Conference at Emperor's Palace making a strong business case for BI at both conferences. Looking forward to April, SAS will be hosting the much anticipated DI/DQ roadshow events happening in Johannesburg and Cape Town on the 2nd and 3rd April respectively. These events are hosting SAS' practice lead for data quality and integration: Antionette van Zyl, alongside Bobby Thoolsi head retail data governance for Nedbank Retail Data Governance Office as keynote speakers and promise to be informative events.

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

SAS Institute highlights the benefits BI could bring to education



Education can benefit dramatically from advanced analytics and business intelligence tools, that will provide them with better student data management as well as predictive modelling for understanding future educational demands.

This is the view of Kevin Kemp head of sales for the commercial division at SAS Institute South Africa, who highlighted the benefits of implementing a Business Intelligence platform in a tertiary education environment, while speaking at the recent ITS conference in Johannesburg.

The conference hosted by ITS at Emperors Palace brought together users, administrators and financial managers from the education sector and focused on the use of software solutions and technology in the future of education. ITS is a software company with a legacy of more than 20 years experience in administration software development for the education sector.

"Implementing a BI solution in an academic environment needs to start with a strong base infrastructure, laying the foundation with data integration and then building intelligent storage and business intelligence on top of that platform," says Kemp.

Above: Lydia Mogoboe and Kevin Kemp at the ITS conference

Case Study

eBucks uses SAS to better understand customers

eBucks is one of South Africa's most popular and successful member rewards programmes, and therefore by its very nature is customer focused. So when the organisation wanted to know more about and better understand its customers, the FirstRand Group company turned to SAS and its industry leading Marketing Automation solution.

Warren Murray, head of Business Decision Support at eBucks, highlighted some of the highs and lows the company has had with the SAS business intelligence solution. With a highly active member base of more than 1.4 million individuals, eBucks is not only one of the largest rewards programmes of its type in the country, it is also recognised as the rewards programme that consumers get the most value out of.¹

"eBucks has vast amounts of data, which presents us with the challenge of how to most effectively communicate relevant information to our members," said Murray. "Our requirement was for a solution that would not only give us greater understanding of and insights into our members, but would also provide maximum marketing ROI. The system also needed to be robust and be able to deliver multiple campaigns quickly."

SAS Marketing Automation gives eBucks a market leading, integrated solution combining comprehensive data management and campaign management. Over and above the solution provided by SAS, eBucks developed its own front-end marketing analysis and reporting application – the first of its kind in the country. This provides the ability to achieve and maintain an integrated view of its members, whilst providing the ability to manage customer lifecycles, improve the effectiveness of campaigns and better understand not only the member, but also the results of marketing activities.

Murray advised the delegates that the eBucks solution was deployed in a phased approach. Phase One, which has been successfully implemented to date, included the ability to track what happened on campaigns, track what actions were taken by eBucks members, what revenue was produced by the members, as well as track the actual uptake of products marketed. Phase Two will involve applying knowledge gained from the processes in Phase One, as well as the virtualisation of the server environment.

Virtualisation of the data environment is the way forward. Not only does it deliver a host of benefits to the business such as server consolidation, physical infrastructure cost reduction, increased application availability and improved business continuity it also dramatically decreases CO2 emissions, which is important to eBucks as the world's first carbon neutral rewards programme².

While the eBucks solution has to date been a successful implementation, Murray also mentioned that the project has not been without its hurdles. Apart from infrastructure problems and significant downtime, the idea of bespoke marketing automation is something of uncharted territory in South Africa, and there is a lack of skill in the field. However, despite these issues the venture is moving forward.

Financial benefits of the SAS solution include savings on unnecessary communications, resource savings due to the automated system, as well as the fact that relevant communications more effectively drive the earn and spend of eBucks. On the non-financial side, the solution provides benefits such as enhanced member experience and time saving on campaign execution.

"eBucks as a business relies on relevant and accurate Business Intelligence in order to optimise the interactions between ourselves and our members as well as our partners. This is made possible by using our SAS solutions," Murray concluded.

¹ Value in Rewards Programme survey, Razor's Edge

² According to The Carbon Standard

LOCAL NEWS

North West University acquires Institutional Wide Licence for SAS

North West University has signed an institution wide license that will give all its students exposure to use SAS software across all three campuses, namely: Mafikeng, Potchefstroom and the Vaal triangle campus and will be renewed on a yearly basis.

The campus wide licence has been implemented at North-West University (NWU) for academic purposes and will provide all students with the opportunity to develop SAS skills that which may prove invaluable in the business world. The SAS software will be of particular relevance to Business Mathematics and Information students and post-graduate students of Medicine Usage in South Africa, in the School of Pharmacy.

Business Intelligence ROI through the economic downturn

Kevin Kemp from SAS presents a BI business case for the current economic times

Speaking at the recent ITWeb business intelligence conference, Kevin Kemp, Sales Manager for the Commercial Division at SAS institute presented on how to make a successful business case for Business Intelligence and how to quantify the return on your investment.

Kemp highlighted that Gartner's EXPO January 2009 report revealed that Business Intelligence is rated as the number one technology priority for the CIO for 2009. This is because now more than ever CIOs need to predict and prepare where their business is going. With budget cuts and scarce resources BI can help optimise spending, cut costs and distribute resources.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SAS ranks in the top three in report on financial crimes risk management systems

SAS, is ranked in the top three in financial crimes risk management by Chartis Research in its Financial Crimes Risk Management Systems 2009 report.

The report evaluates software vendors in regards to "completeness of offering" and "market share potential." Chartis Research noted SAS' strengths in credit risk (particularly retail banking) and operational risk as key differentiators. Also, SAS® software was ranked high by Chartis in several areas including advanced analytics, data management and integration, configurability and support capabilities.

"Chartis considers SAS as one of the leading players in the provision of technology solutions for financial crime risk management," said Helen Townsley, Director of Research at Chartis Research.

New SAS Campaign Management software as a service maximises investment, speed

Software as a service from business analytics leader yields timely, targeted, relevant campaigns

In today's marketplace, marketing campaigns must deliver maximum return on increasingly limited investment. To achieve quick time-to-value with minimal technology support, a new Internet-based software solution from SAS, the leader in business analytics, is a fast path to direct marketing success.

SAS Campaign Management, already offered as licensed software or a custom-hosted solution, is adding a preconfigured solution for rapid creation, modification and management of marketing campaigns ranging from simple to sophisticated, multichannel efforts. Marketers can use this software-as-a-service (SaaS) offering to define more targeted segments, employ SAS predictive models to improve response rates, prioritise selection rules, manage multiple channels, automate "lights out" and triggered campaigns, and report on campaign success.

SAS Appointments

Key appointment made at SAS Public Sector division

SAS South Africa is pleased to announce the appointment of Kroshlen Moodley as the Business Development Manager of its Public Sector business unit.

The division, formed early 2008 with the mandate to exclusively service the SAS public sector clients, has been growing from strength to strength. Moodley's appointment is further commitment by the company to expand the efforts within the government sector and provide clients access to skills and resources that understand their business.





SAS Institute Appoints New industry Executive for Financial Services

This month sees Percy Thaver appointed in the position of Industry Executive for Financial Services as the latest expert to join the SAS Institute staff team.

Joining the team with a post graduate qualification from Wits Business School as well as a certificate in Financial Management and currently completing a B.com degree, Percy brings to the table strong financial management skills gained from nine years at First National Bank and a further seven years at Bytes Technology Group.

SAS Institute South Africa Welcomes Antoinette van Zyl

SAS Institute would like to welcome Antoinette van Zyl to its team of skilled business analytical experts. Taking the position of Practice Lead for Data Integration and Data Quality, Antoinette brings with her a wealth of Business Analytics, Risk and Compliance knowledge as well as 10 years experience working with SAS in financial environments.

"The past year has been a difficult one for many companies and retaining and attracting staff has not been easy in light of the current skills shortage in South Africa. At SAS we are very happy that we are still able to attract such a valuable skill as Antoinette to our team. She has a solid understanding of why businesses require information security, information quality, business intelligence and strategic performance management," says Kerry Evans, General Manager: Commercial Division, at SAS Institute South Africa.



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, but ERP systems 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.

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



Upcoming Events

DI/DQ Event	Johannesburg	2 April 2009
DI/DQ Event	Cape Town	3 April 2009
Old Mutual User Forum	Johannesburg	9 April 2009

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.