



**Alex Filimon**  
Lecturer  
Dalhousie University

# A SUCCESSFUL MODEL FOR MARKETING STUDENTS

SAS® Data Mining Skills Help Dalhousie University Graduates Succeed

## Industry

Education

## Business Issue

Equip MBA with the knowledge and tools to help businesses analyze and solve critical issues.

## Solution

Students' expertise using SAS Enterprise Miner contributes to 90 to 100 percent employment rate after graduation.

## Benefits

Students' data mining expertise using SAS contributes to extremely high employment rates after college.

Since it was founded in 1818, Dalhousie University in Halifax has grown to become one of Canada's leading universities with established, internationally renowned programs of graduate and professional studies. Today, Dalhousie's master of business administration (MBA) program is one of the top programs in Canada, recognized for graduating students who are equipped with the knowledge and tools to help businesses analyze and solve critical issues.

Dalhousie is the first business school in Canada to incorporate into its curriculum SAS Enterprise Miner, a data mining solution that addresses the entire data mining process through an intuitive point-and-click graphical user interface. "SAS Enterprise Miner is arming the next generation of business leaders with a real, specialized and valuable skill," says Alex Filimon, a lecturer at Dalhousie who teaches one of the two courses that use the innovative SAS software. "There's a real void in the marketplace right now, and Dalhousie is taking great strides to educate students in this sort of technology to fill that void."

### Balancing IT and business skills

Dalhousie has come a long way since George Ramsay, the ninth Earl of Dalhousie and lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia, put up £10,000 to establish a college modeled on the University of Edinburgh near his home, Dalhousie Castle, in Scotland. Dalhousie today has more than 13,000 students, 1,800 faculty and 1,680 non-academic employees. Its MBA program is ranked in the top

10 in Canada, with about 100 students in each year of the two-year program. Another 100 students participate in a special, distance-learning MBA in financial services offered by Dalhousie.

Graduates from Dalhousie's MBA program have an extremely high employment rate. Filimon says that students have both the technical knowledge of data mining techniques and a general business knowledge and expertise that make them highly sought after by Canada's largest companies.

"The unique aspect of this program is that students gain an understanding of both IT and business," Filimon explains. "The feedback we get from employers is really, really good. Dalhousie graduates can be easily shifted around to meet varying needs: Whether it's technical or business expertise, that's OK because that person can do both."

### Data models solve marketing problems

Knowledge Discovery in Databases, taught by Filimon, is a more technical course that covers the major aspects of data warehousing and data mining techniques. Students have the opportunity to use real-life data to build models, create customer lists and profiles, and analyze information to create solutions to marketing problems and opportunities.

Dalhousie has partnerships and agreements with a number of large Canadian organizations to supply data for students to access, analyze and use to create new marketing plans or programs. "What we teach students

“We do a lot more practical work with real data, and we’re happy to say that our students have a 90 to 100 percent employment rate after the program.”

**Alex Filimon**  
Lecturer  
Dalhousie University

in the classroom is not only how to build a model, but also what to do before and after you build one,” says Filimon. “They go through the process of thinking about the data they have and what they can do with it. It’s a really nice combination of business skills, business analysis and understanding the particular problem or opportunity for that company. This is very useful to the students when they go out looking for a job and to their employers.”

### Exceptional support from SAS

Filimon says feedback from students about SAS Enterprise Miner has been very positive. “Not all of my students are going to be data miners,” says Filimon. “But it gives them a good appreciation of what data mining can do and how they can build it into their business strategies, no matter what company they’re working for.”

The university also conducted a trial with another data mining software package. “The difference was in what you could actually do

with the software, what kind of features there were and how big the data set could be,” says Filimon. “And the support wasn’t there, either. With SAS, we always get good support. So why bother with anything else?”

The success of SAS Enterprise Miner has raised the profile of Dalhousie’s MBA program. “When our students get hired, they go out into the business world and talk about Dalhousie and SAS, and more people come to us,” explains Filimon. “People understand that we are a really, really good school for this type of work.”

### Employment rate of 90 to 100 percent

In fact, the success of the SAS Data Mining solution has become well-known throughout the entire university. Filimon believes many other areas within Dalhousie could use SAS Enterprise Miner in the future, such as a new program called Health Informatics that deals with medical database analysis. Other applications for the solution’s new compo-

nent, SAS Text Miner, include the university’s library information system and medical data analysis, specifically for text definitions and names of diseases and medications. “I don’t know if it will be used for other courses in the school of business, but I can see different areas and groups within Dalhousie using SAS Enterprise Miner,” he says.

At the heart of the success of SAS Enterprise Miner is its ability to give students experience applying data mining to help solve marketing problems and issues. “It’s a lot more hands-on than other concentrations in the MBA program,” Filimon explains. “We do a lot more practical work with real data, and we’re happy to say that our students have a 90 to 100 percent employment rate after the program.” You can’t get much better than that.



SAS INSTITUTE INC. WORLD HEADQUARTERS 919 677 8000 [WWW.SAS.COM](http://WWW.SAS.COM)  
U.S. & CANADA SALES 800 727 0025 SAS INTERNATIONAL +49 6221 416-0

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. ® indicates USA registration. Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies. Copyright © 2006, SAS Institute Inc. All rights reserved. 101604\_421079.1206