

User Publishing with SAS Institute: A Valuable Exchange

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Abstract

As the largest private software company in the world, SAS Institute Inc. is dedicated to providing quality documentation of its software to the millions of users around the globe. While we have in-house technical writers who produce manuals, CD-ROMs, and online documentation, SAS users also hold extremely valuable knowledge about using the software. SAS® software users are the people who are working with the code and procedures and SAS language daily; these folks see first-hand what the software is capable of producing and how successful a product can be when SAS software is involved. Through SAS Institute's User Publishing Program, SAS software users have the opportunity to publish their work using the Institute as a resource for expert technical support, production support, and marketing support. In return, the Institute is able to offer to our users a unique approach to using our software -- a user's approach. We believe this is a valuable exchange, and we invite you to consider publishing with us. This paper presents the publishing opportunities available through SAS Institute.

User Publishing Program

Through the User Publishing Program, SAS Institute recruits knowledgeable users of our software to write articles and books about our software. In return, the Institute provides many attractive benefits, including free software and documentation; expert technical reviews and support; professional editorial, production, and design support; complete marketing support; and competitive royalties. There are two options for publishing with the Institute: we accept book proposals for books to be published through the Books by UsersSM program as well as article submissions to be placed in *Observations*®, our online technical journal. If you enjoy the results of using SAS software and if you enjoy writing, you should consider becoming an author with the Institute.

Books by UsersSM

The Books by Users (BBU) program began in 1990, and now, 7 years later, we are proud to have a library of over 50 titles. The books in this program are extremely popular with our users, and why wouldn't they be? The authors of these books are SAS users with first-hand knowledge of and experience with using SAS software on a daily basis. The BBU authors are intimately aware of the power of SAS, and they pass on the secrets and tricks of the trade to other users in these books. Books by Users authors have mastered certain aspects of the SAS System, and they share this knowledge in their publications.

Observations®

Observations is the online technical journal for SAS Institute. This technical journal has been in publication since 1991, and until recently has been a traditional hardcopy journal with a subscription rate. Fortunately for its users, SAS Institute is on the leading edge of technology, and we are taking our technical journal along for the ride. This year, we unveiled our version of the journal for the World Wide Web. Not only will users have unlimited access to this wealth of information free of charge, but now for the first time, users will have fantastic search capabilities to help them find the right article to help with a specific issue, as well as a complete archive of all the previous online articles right at their fingertips. You can find *Observations* on the Web at www.sas.com/obs.

How Do I Get Started?

If you are interested in writing for our User Publishing Program, you will need to submit a proposal for either a book or an article. If you have not gotten as far as making the decision to submit a proposal, perhaps you'd like to discuss a topic idea or connect with another potential writer to become a co-author for a book or an article. You can contact the User Publishing Program with any questions or concerns; one of our acquisitions editors will be more than happy to work with you to help you decide on a topic and formulate your ideas or to help you connect with another co-author.

If you think you might like to write for the User Publishing program, but you aren't quite ready to get started, you can request to receive our *Authorline®* newsletter. This newsletter is for our authors, potential

authors, and those just interested in our program and what we have to offer. The complimentary newsletter is distributed quarterly both in hardcopy form and online on the World Wide Web at www.sas.com/authorline. *Authorline* contains writing tips, information on our program, interviews with authors, and news about books that are in progress and books that have been published most recently. Further, from the online copy of *Authorline*, you can register in the Co-Author's Registry, if you would like to connect with a co-author, or the Reviewer's Registry, if you are interested in serving as a reviewer for one of the BBU manuscripts in your area of expertise.

If you are ready to get serious about writing, please get in touch with us and request an Author's Packet. This packet of information provides you with valuable information about our program, including specific instructions for submitting a proposal.

What Should I Write About?

If you are an expert in a certain area of the SAS System, consider writing a book or an article on that subject. Many SAS users have a varied amount of expertise in several different areas of SAS software, and if this is you, you may want some guidance in how to narrow down a topic. The User Publishing Program is very interested in receiving proposals on any area of SAS or on JMP® software. Additionally, we are actively recruiting authors to write about the following areas:

- data warehousing
- SAS/ACCESS® software
- FRAME and SCL
- mapping (graphics)

- multivariate statistics
- data mining
- SAS/IML® software
- SAS and the World Wide Web
- cluster analysis
- the GENMOD procedure
- topics in the area of clinical trials and clinical research.

Submitting a Proposal for Books by Users

Once you have decided on a topic for your book, you are ready to submit a proposal to the User Publishing program. The most critical parts of a complete proposal are the Author's Questionnaire, the Information Release Agreement, and a detailed outline of your book.

A Complete Proposal

The Author's Questionnaire asks you for information that will help our review board understand the motivation for and the scope of your proposed book.

Additionally, it helps us determine your areas of expertise and gives us insight into how you are using the SAS System. The Information Release Agreement is a mandatory piece of your proposal; we can't evaluate a proposal until we have the original signed agreement.

The review board evaluating your proposal will use your outline to understand the content of your proposed book. For this reason, your outline needs to be as complete and as detailed as possible. In your outline, please: break your book topic into chapters, title each of your chapters with a meaningful title, provide a summary of the content of each chapter, and include the main headings and subheadings for each chapters. It is to your benefit that you provide a complete outline; the review board can determine

from a complete outline if the book is overlapping with another Books by Users book, which could result in lower sales for your published book. Further, if there are big gaps of important information, our review board can inform you of the missing information so that you can include that information for the users.

Sample Chapters

We do not require that you send in complete sample chapters with your proposal. However, if you have draft chapters or other relevant writing samples that you'd like for us to read as we're evaluating your proposal, please include those. The more information we have to support your proposal, the better we can evaluate your proposal.

Submitting a Proposal for *Observations*

If you have decided on a topic, but you don't have enough information for an entire book, consider submitting your proposal for inclusion in *Observations*. Or perhaps you have a topic that would lend itself better to a series of articles instead of appearing in a book format. Writing for *Observations* is a relatively quick way to get your valuable knowledge published, as well as making a name for yourself in the SAS user community. Writing an article instead of a book is a wonderful option for those who cannot afford to spend more than a short amount of time on a writing project.

When submitting a proposal for *Observations*, you (and your co-author, if applicable) will need to send your completed Author's Questionnaire, the signed Information Release Agreement, and a full draft of your proposed article. As with the proposal for the Books by Users program, these pieces comprise a

complete proposal for *Observations*, as well, and are necessary for us to properly evaluate your proposal.

Tips for Developing Your Proposal

Your book proposal defines the goals for your book and should be detailed enough to help you structure and write your manuscript. A good proposal will help you during the writing phase as much as it helps us during the proposal review phase. Develop your proposal carefully so that it reflects the thorough planning of the topics and the types of information you want to present. Since your proposal will be reviewed by a team of experts in the field, it is important that you present it in such a way that others understand it and see its potential as clearly as you do.

Conclusion

Now that you are familiar with the User Publishing Program and what you need to do to submit a proposal for either the Books by Users Program or for *Observations*, you can begin brainstorming! SAS Institute offers you many wonderful incentives and benefits to become an author with us, not to mention the credibility and notoriety you will be certain to receive within the SAS user community. The Institute could not ask for a better pool of potential authors than you--the knowledgeable users of SAS software. As potential authors, you could not ask for a more credible, professional company to publish your manuscript or article than the very one that develops the software you are writing about. Consider becoming a part of this valuable exchange!

You can contact the User Publishing Program at:

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