

With the wide availability of V8, we thought we would focus on the new software in this issue. If you don't already have a copy of V8e (aka V8.1), ask your SAS sales representative. Has it been worth the wait? We'd like you to tell us what you think of V8. Has it moved the software in the direction that you would have liked? Are the new modules and features useful to you?

And what about the VIEWS conference? The attendance was down on recent years, was it a bad time of year, or do you not think that the event was worth the £50 delegate fee? If you did attend, did you find the multi-stream format to be beneficial? VIEWS is a user group. Your committee relies on your participation in the events. Let us know what you'd like to see; and what you don't want to see. We appreciate the feedback forms that many of you completed at the end of the conference. There's an interpretation in the *News* section.

And, congratulations to Tony Payne (SPS InfoQuest) for being voted Best Paper at VIEWS 2000.

Finally, we have a new set of emails addresses and web site address (see *News*). The web site holds a lot of useful SAS information, including all back issues of *VIEWS News*. We hope you continue to find it of use.

Andrew Ratcliffe (Editor)

The Consultant

If you have a useful hint or tip, send it to the Editor and share it with the VIEWS membership.

Pattern Changes

Q: I've noticed that my graphs are producing solid colours instead of hatched patterns now that I've migrated to V8. Why is this and how can I get my hatched patterns back?

A: SAS decided to change the default for the PATTERN statement. The default pattern for all types of graphs has been changed from hatch patterns to solid fills. As a result, some default outlines and colours also changed.

The V6COMP graphics option lets you request V6 behaviour instead of the new V8 defaults.

Andrew Ratcliffe

Quoting Changes

Q: I've noticed the introduction of some bugs into my code whilst migrating to V8. There seems to have been some change in the way the QUOTE function works, but I can't pin down what's happening. Can you help, please?

A: I think I have your answer. In Version 6 of the SAS® System, the QUOTE function trims trailing blanks prior to adding the quotes around the variable's value. In V8, QUOTE no longer trims trailing blanks prior to adding the quotes around the variable's value.

To get-back the V6 behaviour (and thus remove your "bugs"), nest the TRIM function inside of the QUOTE function.

A little birdie from the Marlow area

New PROC SUMMARY Options

Version 8 of PROC SUMMARY has a couple of interesting new options: LEVELS and WAYS.

LEVELS includes a variable named _LEVEL_ in the output data set. This variable contains a value from 1 to n that indicates a unique combination of the values of class variables (the values of _TYPE_ variable).

WAYS includes a variable named _WAY_ in the output data set. This variable contains a value from 1 to the maximum number of class variables that indicates how many class variables PROC MEANS combines to create the TYPE value.

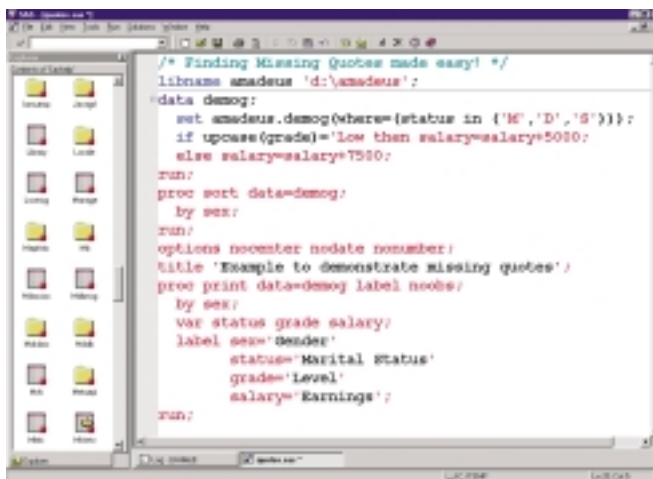
Both of these new output variables can be useful when trying to pick the correct crossing out a non-NWAY output data set from PROC SUMMARY.

Andrew Ratcliffe

'Missing Quotes

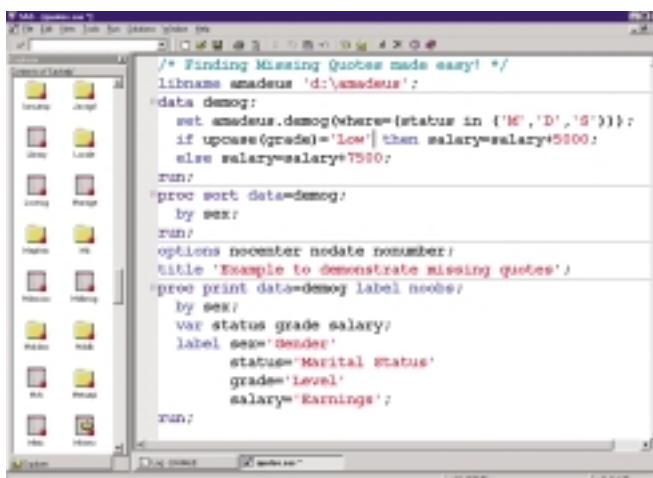
Q: I've heard over-and-over about all the new stuff in V8, but what really makes me tear my hair out with SAS V6 is looking for a missing quote within a SAS program. Go on, make my day, tell me that V8 has solved this problem!

A: Well, your hair can start growing again! The simple way to find missing quotes is to open your code within the Enhanced Editor in Version 8. The missing quote should be identified in double quick time due to the colouring of the code.



```
/* Finding Missing Quotes made easy! */
libname amadeus 'd:\amadeus';
data demog;
  set amadeus.demog(wher=(status in ('M','D','S')));
  if upcase(grade)='low' then salary=salary+5000;
  else salary=salary+7500;
run;
proc sort data=demog;
  by sex;
run;
options nocenter nodate nonumber;
title 'Example to demonstrate missing quotes';
proc print data=demog label nodes;
  by sex;
  var status grade salary;
  label sex='Gender'
        status='Marital Status'
        grade='Level'
        salary='Earnings';
run;
```

The section of red code instantly shows that a quote has been missed, and can be rectified easily.



```
/* Finding Missing Quotes made easy! */
libname amadeus 'd:\amadeus';
data demog;
  set amadeus.demog(wher=(status in ('M','D','S')));
  if upcase(grade)='low' then salary=salary+5000;
  else salary=salary+7500;
run;
proc sort data=demog;
  by sex;
run;
options nocenter nodate nonumber;
title 'Example to demonstrate missing quotes';
proc print data=demog label nodes;
  by sex;
  var status grade salary;
  label sex='Gender'
        status='Marital Status'
        grade='Level'
        salary='Earnings';
run;
```

Amadeus Software Consultancy Team

Did You Know?

If you have a useful hint or tip, please send it to the Editor and share it with the VIEWS membership.

Mainframes Play Catch-Up

For OS/390 (MVS), CMS, and OpenVMS VAX, the last major changes and enhancements to SAS were made in the 6.09 Enhanced release. Some changes and enhancements that were implemented for other operating environments in the 6.10, 6.11, and 6.12 releases were not implemented for mainframe platforms until version 7 or 8. Here are some of those additional features.

PROC REPORT now has the Explore window that lets you experiment with your data by applying sub-sets and removing columns. The %SYSCALL macro statement invokes a SAS CALL routine. The %SYSEVALF macro function evaluates arithmetic and logical expressions using floating-point arithmetic. The %SYSFUNC and %QSYSFUNC macro functions execute SAS functions or user-written functions.

Andrew Ratcliffe

Articles from new authors are always welcome. Please send your suggested articles to newsletter@views-uk.org.

The MATCH_ALL Option in Version 8

In Version 8, a variety of procedures, for example PROC MEANS or PROC UNIVARIATE, create multiple objects as output. With the MATCH_ALL option it is possible to create separate data sets for each occurrence. These multiple objects, which will have the same object name, can be created as a result of:-

- By Group Processing
- Repetition of analysis/report on multiple variables

In conjunction with the MATCH_ALL option it is possible to create a macro variable containing the created data set names.

The names are separated by a space and can therefore be used in a macro loop to perform similar tasks to each of the data sets created.

The example below performs a simple PROC UNIVARIATE on four variables and, with use of the MATCH_ALL option, creates separate data sets for the extremes of each of the four analysis variables. Through the use of the macro variable corresponding to the MATCH_ALL option we then create a simple html file of each of the four output data sets.

```
libname amadeus 'c:\amadeus';

* Turn off the listing ods option and send information to a data
set using the match_all option as there will be multiple data
sets created.
Store the information about the data sets created in the macro
variable EXTREME_MVAR. ;

ods listing close;
ods output extremeobjs(match_all=extreme_mvar)=extreme_data;
proc univariate data=amadeus.demog;
  var age weight height salary;
run;
ods output close;
%put &extreme_mvar;

* The macro variable EXTREME_MVAR will hold the names of the
created data sets in the following format:
EXTREME_DATA EXTREME_DATA1 EXTREME_DATA2 ... EXTREME_DATA4
Therefore the number of generated data sets is n+1 ;
data _null_;
  last=1+substr(reverse("&extreme_mvar"),1,1);
  call symput('last', last);
run;
%put &last;
* For each generated data set, create a simple print out and
send to an HTML page ;
%macro printout;
  %do i=1 %to &last;
    %if &i ne 1 %then %do;
      data _null_;
        call symput('file'
                    ,compress('c:\temp\extreme'!!&i-1!!'.html'));
        call symput('ds'
                    ,compress('work.extreme_data'!!&i-1));
      run;
    %end;
    %else %if &i=1 %then %do;
      data _null_;
        call symput('file','c:\temp\extreme.html');
        call symput('ds','work.extreme_data');
      run;
    %end;
    ods html body="&file";
    proc print data=&ds noobs;
    run;

    ods html close;
  %end;
%mend;
%printout
ods listing;
```

The program will create HTML files for each of the data sets created via the MATCH_ALL option.

```
196 %put &extreme_mvar;
EXTREME_DATA EXTREME_DATA1 EXTREME_DATA2 EXTREME_DATA3
[snip]
206 %put &last;
4
```

Amadeus Software Consultancy Team

Multi-Processing

One of the most powerful new V8 features for reducing job turn-around time is Multi-Process (MP) CONNECT. This allows your SAS jobs to take advantage of SMP hardware and allows parallel processing with remote hosts in your network. By dividing time-consuming tasks into multiple independent units and executing them in parallel, a job can be performed in substantially less time than if each process is performed sequentially.

MP CONNECT allows you to perform multi-processing with the SAS System by establishing a connection between multiple SAS sessions and enabling each of the sessions to asynchronously execute tasks in parallel. The results of each of these tasks can then be coordinated back into the original SAS session. You can also synchronize the execution of one or more of the asynchronous tasks with processing that takes place in the original SAS session.

Read the web documentation for MP CONNECT at service/library/onlinedoc/v8/whatsnew/tw5508/znid-130.htm on the SAS web site. There's a good SUGI paper by Cheryl Garner entitled "Multiprocessing with Version 8 of the SAS System" at techsup/download/technote/ts632.pdf, also on the SAS web site.

Andrew Ratcliffe

Initialising SCL Lists - the easy way

In prior versions of SAS/AF®, creating an SCL list and filling it with hard-coded content has been tedious:

```
lMenu = makelist();
rc = insertc(lMenu,'Open',-1);
rc = insertc(lMenu,'Rename',-1);
rc = insertc(lMenu,'Move',-1);
rc = insertc(lMenu,'Delete',-1);
```

And my example doesn't include error-code checking.

But in V8, the list can be created and initialised in just one statement - the new DECLARE statement (abbreviated as DCL):

```
dcl list lMenu = {'Open','Rename','Move','Delete'};
```

Couldn't be easier! Just make sure you use the correct style of bracket around the menu items.

The DECLARE statement declares an SCL variable of any type. It can be used within a DO, SELECT, or USECLASS block to enforce scope of the declared variable. It can be used before the first labelled section in lieu of a LENGTH statement - in this case it is more powerful than a LENGTH statement because LENGTH statements can only declare character and numeric variables.

Andrew Ratcliffe

Cleaning-Up UNIX

An executable program named cleanwork is supplied with UNIX copies of SAS. This deletes old WORK libraries from SAS tasks that are no longer active. Since WORK libraries are allocated on UNIX with the process ID as part of their name, the cleanwork utility is able to check for the existence of the associated task before deleting the library (if the associated task is not found).

The syntax for the command is simply: cleanwork *directory*, where *directory* is the name of the *directory* in which the WORK libraries are created (often /tmp).

However, beware of using cleanwork on a shared drive where an associated task could be running in a separate system. In this case, cleanwork would not be aware that the associated task is active and it would delete the WORK directory.

Andrew Ratcliffe

Formats, Options, and Functions

The DDMMYY_{xw} and YYMMDD_{xw} formats are new in V8. They write date values in the indicated form and specify separators or no separators between date values.

The FILEONLY graphics option is new in V8. It specifies whether a file or a storage location is the default destination for graphics output.

The SPEDIS function determines the likelihood of two words matching. Useful for cleansing address data, etc.

News

VIEWS 2000

This year's VIEWS conference was held at the Radisson Portman Hotel in London on Tuesday 26th September. 207 keen SAS practitioners attended it.

The VIEWS membership usually likes more technical information about how to use SAS most effectively, and the rankings of the papers from the evaluation forms once again bears this out. For the past three years, Andy Wilcox from Amadeus Software Ltd. has won Best Paper award but this year Tony Payne from SPS InfoQuest comes in first.

Stephanie Penning and Phil Male from SAS, with their opening session, came second, but as that was the sole plenary session - as well as being a SAS one - it would be unfair to count it among the user papers. So Andy Wilcox really came second this year, another great effort.

It is interesting to note that Web-enablement and Web-use rate in the top most popular presentations, whereas a couple of years ago we were getting comments about "we do not want to hear about the Web".

We got lots of positive comments in the feedback forms - including food (never something that happened at the Paragon). The multi-stream nature of this year's conference was appreciated too. We knew from the start that room sizes would be a problem at this venue, but had to do the best we could because it was the only place available at the time.

A couple of people commented that they preferred not to pay to attend the conference - well, we all like a freebie, but even at the amount charged, there was a sizeable shortfall which SAS have kindly offered to cover. The days of free VIEWS conferences are over unless we can think of something very innovative. We will try and keep delegate rates as affordable as possible. Delegates may not realise that putting on even a fairly simple event like VIEWS 2000 costs high on £20,000!

A VIEWS conference would not be normal if we didn't have problems with vegetarian food. Each year we ask for the vegetarian food to be set separately and labelled; and each year the hotel manages not to do that. This year we had 70% vegetarian items; perhaps we need a 100% veggie menu.

Someone asked for more user presentations. YES PLEASE! But we need USERS to respond to the Call for Papers. Users do like papers from people in a similar position to themselves. Presenting a paper at VIEWS is not THAT frightening and can be very rewarding for the presenter.

Less presentations from a consultancy? It is important that the VIEWS community realises that, without the support of the SAS Quality Partners, there would be no VIEWS user group. The response to the initial Call for Papers was almost exclusively from QPs and this enabled us to confirm that we would run the event.

What's Nashville?

In case you missed the hoopla about SAS's Nashville Vision, here's a quick summary.

The Nashville Project encompasses several software releases, particularly V7 and V8. It includes rollouts of SAS's business solutions, as well as new client and storage technologies.

SAS's developers have re-architected the product to produce a more open, component-based structure of storage, servers, and clients. The 1st quarter '99 issue of SAS Communications included a number of articles on the Nashville Project. The magazine is available on the SAS web site at service/library/periodicals/sascomm/1q99/sascomm.html.

V7 was never made widely available in the UK, so V8 is likely to be your first opportunity to make use of the foregoing.

New VIEWS Addresses and New Web Site

We've moved! Well, not really, but we have a new unified internet domain. If you think of VIEWS, think [views-uk.org](http://www.views-uk.org). So, our web site is at

www.views-uk.org, and we have a set of email addresses all at the views-uk.org: chair, treasurer, sasliaison, newsletter, events, and webmaster.

We also have a completely revamped web site, so pay us a visit and have a look in our enlarged Resources section. You can also catch-up on all those back-issues of VIEWS News that you missed - they're all there on the web site for you to view, download, or print.

In Brief

- For a valuable discussion of V6 to V8 migration issues, see technical note 628 at techsup/download/technote/ts628.pdf on the SAS web site
- Have you always wanted to use a SAS/AF Text Entry widget for entering secure passwords? Well in V8 you can, easily, by specifying a Mask Character in the widget's properties
- VIEWS News is good(!) but there are other useful SAS publications available too. Try The Missing Semicolon at www.sys-seminar.com
- Look for tips from SAS staff at www.sas.com/service/techtips
- The SCL GETVARF function, new in V8, assigns the formatted value of a SAS table column to a character SCL variable
- Plenty more V8 tips at www.pwcons.com/Tips/v8tips.html
- If you're considering going to SAS Users Group International (SUGI) in Long Beach, California(!) next year, take a look at the web site at www.sas.com/usergroups/sugi and keep a look-out for the online registration form
- To switch-off the window bar at the bottom of your V8 session, use the WWINDOWBAR OFF command
- If you're involved in a data warehouse project you could do worse than take a look at SAS's data warehouse community web pages at rnd/warehousing. These pages include a link to the News On Warehousing (NOW) newsletter
- The V8 SYSUSERID macro variable contains the user ID or login of the current SAS process
- The V8 SYSCC macro variable contains the current condition code that SAS returns to your operating environment (the operating environment condition code)

Diary of Events

Are you organising an event that would be of interest to the VIEWS readership? Let us know, as we are interested in all non profit making events related to SAS software.

January 2001		April 2001	
?	PharmaSIG provisional date	22-25	SUGI 26
?	Statistics subgroup provisional date		Long Beach, California, USA
February 2001		May 2001	
1	VIEWS News 13th edition	29-1st June	SEUGI 19
			Florence, Italy

Views News is published quarterly by VIEWS - the UK's independent SAS user group. VIEWS is a non-profit organisation. Our Mission Statement and Rules can be viewed on our web site together with a list of current committee members.

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