

Now that SAS Version 9 has been announced, described and demonstrated in Orlando and Paris, we now have an opportunity to demonstrate that we are still using SAS Versions 8, or 6.12, with another collection of hints and tips. In this issue we would like to warmly welcome some new contributors to *VIEWS News*.

If you would like to contribute an article, or discuss the possibility of doing so, please send an email to me at newsletter@views-uk.org. A list of possible subjects for your articles can be found on the VIEWS web site, and anyone is very welcome to add to that list by sending emails with your own questions to newsletter@views-uk.org.

Philip R Holland (Newsletter Editor)

Membership of VIEWS is **free** and you can register for notification of all future VIEWS events by emailing us at membership@views-uk.org, making certain you include your name, email address and postal address, so that we can email you a free copy of the quarterly *VIEWS News*.

The Consultant

This part of *VIEWS News* is where you can get your technical questions answered. Send your questions to the Editor.

Processing Adjacent Records

Q: How can I process adjacent data records?

A: The lag function may be used to process adjacent records.

Below are two examples:

```
data test1;
  input x;
  y = lag(x);
  z = y + x;
  cards;
2
4
6
8
;
run;
```

The output for test1 is as follows:

Obs	x	y	z
1	2	.	.
2	4	2	6
3	6	4	10
4	8	6	14

Function **lag1(x)** produces the same result as **lag(x)**, however **lag2(x)** will produce a result from the x value read from the record before the preceding record as shown in the next example:

```
data test2;
  input x;
  y1 = lag(x);
  y2 = lag2(x);
  z = y2 + y1 + x;
  cards;
2
4
6
8
;
run;
```

The output for test2 is as follows:

Obs	x	y1	y2	z
1	2	.	.	.
2	4	2	.	6
3	6	4	2	12
4	8	6	4	18

Mike Johnson, UKAEA Fusion / EFDA JET.

Setting the Default Folder for Saving Files

Q: How can I change default directory from within SAS?

A: [SAS 8 + 6.12] There are several methods to change the default directory for saving SAS files:

(1) Double-click on the "Change Current Folder" area of the SAS AWS (bottom left). This invokes a dialog box to enable a directory to be selected. Alternatively, issue the **dlgcdir** display manager command to invoke this.

(2) Issue the Windows/UNIX command **cd** to change directories. This has the advantage of being able to change the directory without requiring user interaction, e.g.:

```
x 'cd d:\temp';
```

(3) [SAS 8] The configuration option **-SASINITIALFOLDER** can also be used, but this only takes effect at SAS System start-up.

Andrew Cathie, Modelink Solutions Ltd

Did You Know?

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

File Extensions: SAS7BDAT versus SD7

[SAS 8] Normally SAS Version 8 data sets have a long extension name, **SAS7BDAT**, but occasionally they are produced with only a short extension, **SD7**. The difference can occur when the data sets are produced on different file systems.

If you have a directory that contains data sets with both long and short file extensions you may encounter a problem accessing the data sets with the short extension via the **libname** statement. The **V8** engine in the **libname** statement can still fail to identify both types of data sets.

To guarantee that SAS will access both types of file extension the **SHORTFILEEXT** option will be required within a concatenated **libname**.

For example:

```
libname short 'c:\v8_data' shortfileext;  
libname long 'c:\v8_data';  
libname combine (short,long);
```

Amadeus Software Consultancy Team.

Formats, Options, and Functions

This section is devoted to the description of useful, or unusual, SAS Formats, Options, and Functions.

When reading numeric data from an IBM platform on a Windows or UNIX platform, SAS provides a large number of informats to help you, e.g. **S370FPDw.d** (packed decimal), **S370FZDw.d** (zoned decimal), **S370FIBw.d** (integer binary, or fixed-point numeric) and **S370FFw.d** (native standard numeric). There are also formats of the same name to give you the facility to write numeric data back to the IBM platform to be read there.

[SAS 8] The **DATASTMTCHK=** system option prevents certain errors by controlling the SAS keywords that are allowed in the DATA statement. There are 3 allowed values. **COREKEYWORDS** (default value), prohibits certain words as one-level SAS data set names in the DATA statement: MERGE, RETAIN, SET and UPDATE. **ALLKEYWORDS** prohibits any keyword that can begin a statement in the DATA step (e.g., ABORT, ARRAY, INFILE) as a one-level data set name in the DATA statement. **NONE** provides no protection against overwriting SAS data sets.

[SAS 8.2] The **LAG** function has been altered in the way it functions between SAS Versions 8.1 and 8.2. In Version 8.1 it was creating a temporary 50 byte variable, however in Version 8.2 this variable is 32 Kbytes. This could improve its functionality, but can result in programs becoming considerably slower.

News

SeUGi 20 - News from Paris

SeUGi 20 (Paris, June 11-13) both echoed and amplified SUGI news. Many product announcements from SUGI were repeated here for the benefit of a European audience (see *VIEWS News* 18 for details). To these were added announcement of Intelligence Solutions – vertical packages of SAS analytics and applications, initially for Telco and Banking businesses with more to follow. It seems the market demands more end-to-end delivery and SAS is happy to respond. This year's opening session was shorter – but complemented by a technology-based 'closing plenary' on the forthcoming Version 9. SUGI's news on this was updated with a release timeline that has a few 'development partner' customers this year, moving through 'early adopter' towards 'general availability' in mid-2003. We can look forward to hearing about early adopters' experiences at next year's SeUGi in Vienna.

Steve Morton, Applied System Knowledge Ltd.

complementSoft's ASAP™ Version 3.0

complementSoft's ASAP™ Version 3.0 has now reached general availability with some significant changes and enhancements.

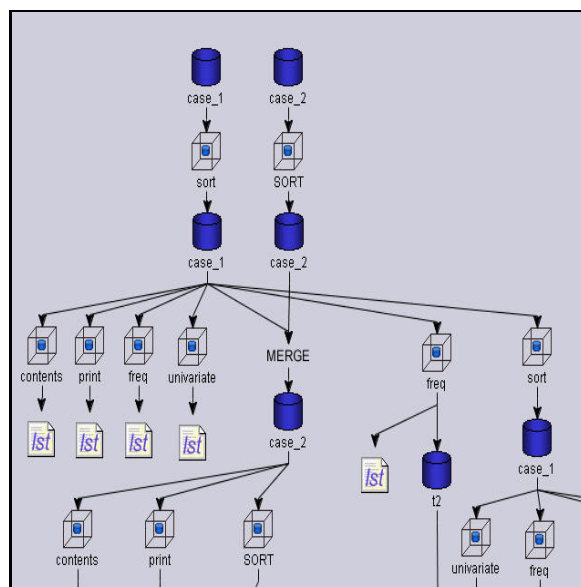
ASAP™ is a software productivity tool and Integrated Development Environment for SAS users and programmers. ASAP™ allows you to visualise, edit, transfer, and debug your SAS programs. ASAP™ automatically generates program and data flow diagrams, which can then be printed for documentation purposes, and will also aid you when error checking and editing your SAS code.

The parser in ASAP™ 3.0 now fully supports all of the PROCs within SAS/STAT, SAS/ETS and SAS/GRAPH. The syntax templates have also been enhanced slightly.

Another feature of Version 3.0 is that there are now two versions of the product: ASAP™ Standard and ASAP™ Visualiser. The Visualiser edition will be the same as Standard, but only the Visualiser and the Document Manager will be enabled for loading programs into the Visualiser. You can print and export, but there are no editing capabilities.

The prices for ASAP™ Standard will remain unchanged; prices for ASAP™ Visualiser are 75% of the Standard prices.

If you would like further information, or would like to receive a free 15-day trial of ASAP™, please contact Amadeus Software at info@amadeus.co.uk.



Reminiscences of 20 years of SEUGI

SeUGi 20, and my 20th SEUGI – and how far we've all come since then. From a conference of nearly 200 mainframe customers (the only kind there were back then), mainly CPE analysts and some statisticians to 3,000-plus delegates from all walks of IT and business. Wherever there's data it seems SAS is in there analysing, adding business value, supporting decision makers – desktop, server, web... If it can display information it seems SAS is able to be there. And I recall a piece of paper from 20 years ago, entitled "Why SAS can only run on an IBM mainframe"! In 20 years SAS has matured, come out of the data centre and into the business – all the way from laboratory to boardroom.

Many organisations – and conferences – would struggle to last 20 years and yet still be full of fresh ideas. But somehow SAS and SEUGI have managed it. Of course we're all a little older, maybe wiser, and certainly earlier to call it a night – so it was perhaps best that SeUGi was only two full days this year.

Certainly last time we were at the Palais de Congrès we had more late mixers! (1990 - was it really that long ago? Yes, I checked!)

Back in 1990 one of the best paper awards was for Brian Cobb's "CICS CPE using MXG Software", OS/2 was still the future and some of us had experienced using UNIX workstations. Now with SAS Version 9 we find Java, XML, Portals and other new technologies at the forefront of SAS – and yet you can still run the same DATA Step / PROC FREQ / PROC CHART code that I wrote as my first SAS program nearly 21 years ago. Crystal-ball-gazing is dangerous, especially in IT, but SAS looks ready for many years to come. Another 20? Who knows...

Steve Morton, Applied System Knowledge Ltd.

In Brief

- Back issues of *VIEWS News* are available from the VIEWS web site.
- Amadeus Software are running a series of free seminars throughout 2002 on popular topics at their offices near Witney in Oxfordshire (see **Diary** below). There are only a maximum of 16 places at each seminar, so early booking is recommended. The seminars, with all the handouts and refreshments, including lunch, are free of charge! For more details, and a complete and up-to-date series list, go to **Technical_Seminars.html** at **www.amadeus.co.uk/Events**. Note that this web address is case-sensitive.

Diary

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.

September 2002

5 Tricks of the Trade (SAS Tips and Techniques),
Amadeus Software

This is a free seminar! See **In Brief** for contact details.

26 Tricks of the Trade (SAS Tips and Techniques),
Amadeus Software

This is a free seminar! See **In Brief** for contact details.

October 2002

10 Communicating with SAS Software (Web, Internet, SAS IT and VB), Amadeus Software

This is a free seminar! See **In Brief** for contact details.

November 2002

1 VIEWS News 20th edition

29 Data Warehousing Explained, Amadeus Software

This is a free seminar! See **In Brief** for contact details.

February 2003

1 VIEWS News 21st edition

March 2003

30-April 2 SUGI, Seattle, Washington

The SAS User Group International (SUGI) Conference is held each year and focuses on the technical aspects of SAS software.

May 2003

1 VIEWS News 22nd edition

June 2003

17-19 SeUGi, Vienna, Austria

The European SAS User Group International (SeUGi) Conference is held each year and focuses more on the commercial aspects of SAS software.

All VIEWS event information will be posted and/or emailed to registered members of VIEWS, and will include an event application form. Please send your queries about any VIEWS events to **events@views-uk.org**, and don't forget to look at the web site for the latest news.

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