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Services R Us

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ABSTRACT

SAS® is known for its world-class support and services. But how do you make the most of the services from SAS? Where do you start? How do you navigate the sea of information available? How do you find the resources that you need to do your job?

This presentation takes you through support.sas.com and gives you practical tips, tricks, and techniques to find exactly what you need to use SAS. Whether you are a new or a seasoned SAS user, you will learn something new that will help you become an even more proficient SAS user.

INTRODUCTION

We have had the good fortune to do a fair bit of travel, from small seaside resort towns, to large metropolitan cities, to mid-size communities in the mountains. At most local hotels, there is a concierge on staff to assist guests in making the most of their stay. We have often thought how much easier it is for a concierge in a small town to assist customers. The fewer attractions, stores, and restaurants certainly seem to make the concierge's job a bit easier. Conversely, we have marveled at concierges in major metropolitan cities who are adept at meeting the needs of a variety of international guests, all while addressing their questions (often in their native language)!

A concierge can influence your trip. Concierges can greatly improve your stay by directly answering your query or by pleasantly surprising you with a tip or a suggestion that enhances your stay.

That's how it is with the service organizations at SAS. We are here to assist **you** in making the most of your investment with SAS.

This paper is primarily targeted at SAS programmers, end users, and managers who are responsible for using SAS to solve business problems. However, the curious director and inquisitive executive might find this overview information useful to better understand the breadth and depth of services available from SAS. The remainder of this paper is organized into three parts. The overview section includes the mission statements, contact information, and high-level overview for, SAS Technical Support, SAS Education, and SAS Publications. The second section dives deeper into each organization and provides tips, tricks, and detailed information that will help you to be more proficient with SAS. Finally, we will focus on support.sas.com (the concierge desk!) where all this information comes together.

OVERVIEW OF SAS SUPPORT

SAS has three major service organizations. Each has a different focus area, but they all have a common goal: to present the company's values to the user community that we serve. At SAS, we strive to be…

- approachable. We are accessible to our customers and business contacts, and we make it easy for them to do business with us.
- customer-driven. We work closely with our customers to understand and solve their business issues, exceed their expectations, and deliver exceptional value.
- swift and agile. By being responsive, flexible, and action-oriented, we seek to reduce complexity in a constantly changing world.
- innovative. We champion excellence by creatively and constructively challenging the status quo.
- trusted. Because we act with transparency and openness and always keep our promises, we inspire confidence and respect.

With these values forming our base, SAS provides the user community with the world-class technical support, education, and publications.

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TECHNICAL SUPPORT

SAS provides live phone (and e-mail) contact to assist you in making the best use of our software products and solutions through effective and responsive support, active advocacy, and a broad and flexible range of self-help resources.

EDUCATION

The SAS Education Division provides training and services that empower users to realize the full potential of their software. With a network of more than 300 accredited instructors and 110 training facilities located in approximately 50 countries around the world, SAS Education offers a broad spectrum of customer training services and events and administers the SAS Global Certification Program.

Training is available in multiple delivery methods:

- classroom training: courses are taught by SAS instructors in real time at SAS training centers or at your location

- live Web classroom training: courses are taught by SAS instructors in real time over the Web

- e-learning: innovative and engaging self-study courses are available online so that you can access them at your convenience

Education also offers the following specialized training and services:

- Analytics Conference: a forum for learning the latest techniques, methodologies, and best practices in the field of analytics

- Business Knowledge Series (BKS): a training initiative between SAS and industry professionals

- Six Sigma and Performance Excellence by SAS: a complete solution for deploying Six Sigma throughout your organization

PUBLICATIONS

The SAS Publications Division provides documentation and books in a variety of formats. SAS Publications develops, publishes, and markets an integrated suite of SAS software support products for a global market. These products include documentation, user-written books, and online Help.

Product	Audience	Delivery Method
Documentation	Programmers Analysts Consultants and systems integrators	HTML (free) PDF (free) Hard-copy book
SAS Press	Programmers Business users Analysts Consults and systems integrators	Hard-copy book e-book
SAS and Wiley Business Series	Business users Analysts Managers C-level	Hard-copy book

Table 1. SAS Publications products

CONTACT US

Technical Support

Telephone	1-919-677-8008
	9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern time (North America)
	Follow-the-sun support for business-critical problems.
E-mail	support@sas.com
	Be sure to include site and contact information, problem description, and any relevant information (logs, and so on) to help with our investigation.

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Online	http://support.sas.com/techsup
	This site links you to the online problem submission form.

Education

Telephone	1-800-333-7660
E-mail	training@sas.com
Online	http://support.sas.com/training
Connect via Social Media	http://support.sas.com/training/socialmedia

Publications

Telephone	1-800-727-3228
E-mail	sasbook@sas.com
Online	http://support.sas.com/publishing
	http://support.sas.com/documentation/index.html
	• Facebook: www.facebook.com/SASpublishing
	• Twitter: http://twitter.com/saspublishing

SUPPORT SERVICES FROM SAS

SAS EDUCATION

Quick Overview

The SAS Education Division strives to provide users with high-quality training and the best customer care possible. The following sections describe just a few of the programs and services we provide to help deliver on that promise.

Curriculum Consulting

SAS Education has more than 150 courses in multiple curricula paths. Our Web site provides curriculum paths for a wide variety of job roles, including paths in SAS Foundation, SAS Analytics, SAS Enterprise Business Intelligence, SAS Data Management, SAS Administration, and SAS Solutions. Visit http://support.sas.com/training to find the path that is right for you.

If you are unsure where to begin or what might be a good next course for you, SAS Education representatives and curriculum consultants are available to assist you. You can reach them at 800-333-7660 or by e-mail at training@sas.com.

Course Assessments

SAS Education's pre-course assessments are designed to help users determine their readiness for a given course. Each assessment contains 10 to 12 multiple-choice questions to help you determine whether the course you are considering is appropriate, given your knowledge and prior experience. The self-assessments can be found on the course outline pages of many of our most popular courses or at http://support.sas.com/training/us/assess/.

Curriculum and Classroom Updates

SAS Education continues to evaluate how our classroom courses are offered. We have made a number of enhancements to improve the learning experience for our users. SAS Education has spent the past several months updating the entire SAS® 9.3 curriculum and aligning offerings around the world. Many of the changes in our classroom delivery methods were driven by customer requests, including more interactivity, an overhaul of the data used in courses, and leveled exercises. Multi-level exercises help engage students with varying levels of knowledge. For example, a student encountering a concept for the first time might decide to focus his or her workshop time on a Level 1 exercise, and an experienced student can extend his understanding of the material by tackling a Level 2 or even Level 3 problem.

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New (and Social) Media

We continue to use new media to expand our delivery channels. We have expanded our multimedia e-courses and short-topic e-lectures to include a number of new offerings. For a complete list of e-learning options, visit http://support.sas.com/training/elearn.

In addition, we encourage customers to engage us through social media channels. We have an active presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, and we communicate with our users through a well-developed video portal and SAS Training Blog site. To learn more about SAS Education's presence on social media channels, visit http://support.sas.com/training/socialmedia.

Extended Learning Pages

Education's Extended Learning Pages provide students in the most popular SAS courses a post-class resource page that combines access to all the course content they received in class (including data sets and practice exercises) with learning tools from a variety of other SAS and user resources.

Although the content of the pages changes depending on the course, all sites allow students to access material from the course for after-class practice, or to repeat course demonstrations and exercises. Students get additional exercises and data for extra practice, and code samples from support.sas.com as well.

Extended Learning Pages also link students to the broader software community by providing a list of recommended readings, blog sites, technical papers, SAS Press books, and documentation relevant to the course content, as well as links to appropriate online discussion forums sponsored by SAS.

SAS OnDemand for Professionals

In January 2012, SAS Education released SAS® OnDemand for Professionals: Enterprise Guide®. This cloud-based software provides easy access to SAS for individuals who want to grow their skills or prepare for SAS certification. The software comes with a good collection of sample data from the most popular SAS courses and SAS Press books, making it easy for students to learn or practice with SAS.

Our Commitment to Our Users

As part of our commitment to growing your SAS knowledge, SAS Education has created a number of programs and services designed to get you the training you need. These include our Guaranteed to Run program and our Customer Satisfaction Guarantee.

Our new Guaranteed to Run program states that any course with at least one registration four weeks prior to the start date will run as scheduled. While the Guaranteed to Run program does have some exclusions (contractual relationships with 3rd party instructors, for example), you can, in general, rest assured that if you register for one of our courses, it will run as planned.

Our Customer Satisfaction Guarantee states that if, for any reason, you are not satisfied with your training experience, you can let us know and we will make it right, either by offering you another course or by providing a full refund.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

SAS Technical Support consultants are committed to providing you with world-class support. Consultants are available to assist site representatives and SAS consultants on a global scale.

A Technical Support "track" is opened for every interaction you have with SAS. Your track is followed to completion and is available for any support consultant to provide you with continuity in solving your issue. SAS Technical Support is a global organization that is headquartered in Cary, NC. From the offices in Cary, Technical Support is a global network that handles customer care in the US, Canada, Latin America, and in more than 40 countries in Europe and Asia Pacific.

With more than 200 staff in the United States and another 150 worldwide, the average tenure of SAS Technical Support consultants is greater than 10 years, and there is less than 4% turnover in the organization. You can expect consistent and experienced assistance with every encounter you have with SAS Technical Support.

In addition to the staff, Technical Support also provides SAS Notes and sample code. SAS Notes are additional sources of documentation for commonly asked questions and can be found on the support site at http://support.sas.com/notes/index.html. SAS Notes also document reports of known problems, and identify circumvention or fix information.

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Technical Support also provides hot fixes, which address software issues for known problems. There is a utility available that enables you to identify which hot fixes have been applied at your site.

PUBLICATIONS

Let's look at the two major product areas in Publications: the product documentation and SAS Press titles.

Most of the SAS documentation library is available to you for free. As previously noted, documentation is available free in HTML and in printable PDF format from the support.sas.com site. Hard-copy books continue to be available for purchase through the SAS Publishing bookstore.

A tip for getting started with the documentation is to be aware that you can find information in a variety of ways. For example:

- Use the full site search to control the extent of the support.sas.com site that you want to search. Select a subsection of the site to narrow your results. You will notice that the search box is consistent through your use of the online documentation.

- Use the Product A to Z list under the SAS Software link in the left navigation pane to find the documentation and other content by the product name.

- Use the Documentation link in the left navigation pane to find documentation by software release. Within the documentation for a specific software release, you have the added option to browse content by topic.

Within your search results, you have display options for your content: HTML, PDF, and hard-copy purchase. The hard-copy purchase option links you to the bookstore, and the HTML and PDF provide you with direct access to the content. SAS Press content is integrated within the search results. Although not freely viewable, you do benefit by knowing that content that you searched for is available as part of the SAS Press series of books. And you can download a free chapter of any SAS Press title, by going to its detail page in the bookstore.

SAS PRESS

SAS Press titles deliver expert advice from SAS users worldwide. Covering an ever-expanding selection of topics and industries, these popular books are invaluable resources whether you are seeking a learning tool, a teaching text, or a long-term reference.

SAS Press titles provide a unique perspective on the use of SAS. Learn from fellow experts how they use SAS in various industries.

For thought leadership, turn to the Wiley and SAS Business Series. These books bring you insights from industry experts and SAS thought leaders to help you address the right questions to make the best business decisions.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Publications is now on Twitter and Facebook and LinkedIn. Wwe are using social media to engage the SAS user community in conversation, provide information about new books, provide customer service, and provide a platform for our authors to speak directly to users. Please join us online and let us know what you think! Visit http://support.sas.com/pubsocial

Here's another tip: Use the recently developed Author Pages in the Bookstore on support.sas.com to find your favorite author, get online code samples from a book, read book reviews, link to the author's podcasts, or get in touch with the author through e-mail or the SAS Publishing pages on Twitter and Facebook.

And don't forget to create a profile on sasCommunity.org, where you can join other SAS users and talk about anything you are interested in!

SUPPORT.SAS.COM: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

With approximately 2 and a half million page views per month and an average of over a minute on the page, support.sas.com is the hub of activity for all support needs at SAS.

We often hear, "I'm a long-time user. What resources do you have for me to assist new SAS users at my site?" The answer is support.sas.com. Using this site as your starting point, you can find information about **all** of the support services available from SAS. Here's how the site is organized, and a few tips for you to highlight and become familiar with.

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Knowledge Base	• SAS Software • System Requirements • Install Center • Third-Party Software Requirements • Product Documentation • Papers • Samples & SAS Notes • Focus Areas
Support	• Submit a Problem • Update a Track • Check Problem Status • License Assistance • Administrator Services • Downloads & Hot Fixes
Training & Bookstore	• Bookstore • Training • Certification • SAS Global Academic Program • SAS OnDemand
Community	• Users Groups • Events • SASware Ballot • E-newsletters • Author with SAS • RSS & Blogs • Discussion Forums

Table 2. Organization of support.sas.com Web site

Some of the most popular sections on support.sas.com are the discussion forums. Discussion forums (found under the Community link in the left navigation pane) are the places to go for peer-to-peer support and discussion. Share your questions and SAS successes with other SAS customers; pitch in and help someone solve a problem; or just read and learn. You will find lively discussions and a great community of SAS supporters. SAS employees occasionally respond to your posts. However, you should not use the forums in place of SAS Technical Support.

You can also opt to take control of the content you see via support.sas.com by using the RSS feeds for the various pages on the site. These feeds are also accessible from the Community link.

Another way to take control of your content is to complete a profile and select the SAS newsletters that you are interested in receiving. "SAS Publishing News" and "SAS Training Report" are produced monthly and highlight new products, new services, and other news from Publications and Education.

Remember to contact us! Take advantage of the **Contact Us** button at the bottom of each page to provide input and suggestions for how to make the support site even more useful to you.

We hope that you have found your stop at the concierge desk helpful! Remember, we are here for you. Let us know what new products, services, and support you need to make the most of your investment in SAS. And last but not least, thank you for using SAS!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged. Contact the authors at:

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