News and Resources

New Techniques for Transferring Data and Results between SAS and Excel

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If you use SAS and Excel every day, then you know that transferring complex data between SAS and separate Excel worksheets can be a daunting task, especially when SAS isn't installed on a Windows platform. The new XML support features in Base SAS®9 can help. In his SUGI 29 paper,"From SAS to Excel via XML," SAS Systems Developer Vincent DelGobbo shows how to simplify the following tasks:

- exporting analytical results or large amounts of SAS output to separate worksheets in an Excel workbook
- importing multi-sheet Excel workbooks into separate SAS tables
- preserving the look-and-feel as well as the integrity of the data
- running jobs dynamically from a Web browser.

"The title of the paper is a bit of a misnomer," says DelGobbo, "because it covers importing Excel workbooks into SAS tables in addition to exporting SAS output to Excel. Using the techniques and sample code in this paper, you can transfer data and analytical results between SAS and Excel without writing a lot of code."

SAS Features and Functionality

Perry Watts, an independent consultant affiliated with the Population Studies Facility at the Fox Chase Cancer Center, shared these comments about DelGobbo's paper: "Vince provides easy, step-by-step instructions for using SAS®9 and ODS to transfer and format SAS data in Excel. Using the new SAS®9 XML support features, it is no longer necessary to decipher XML code to transfer data between SAS and Excel. As an added bonus, his paper also lists the strengths and limitations of the new technology."

The following topics are discussed in the paper "From SAS to Excel via XML":

- instructions for using a new ODS tagset to generate SAS output that, when opened with Excel, is rendered as a multi-sheet Excel workbook
- techniques for correcting common formatting problems when exporting SAS output to Excel
- a brief discussion about importing arbitrary XML data into SAS tables by using the LIBNAME Engine and XMLMaps
- instructions for easily importing Excel workbooks into SAS tables by using an XMLMap and the XLXP2SAS macro that are provided by SAS
- examples that contain the complete source code and sample data for all the techniques that are presented in the paper.

"From SAS to Excel via XML" has generated very positive feedback since SUGI 29. A SAS customer from a "Big Four" accounting firm was very impressed with how the XLXP2SAS macro imports complex financial data from Excel spreadsheets. He told DelGobbo that this might be the single, most important feature of SAS®9 that would influence his company to migrate from SAS 8 to SAS®9.

Opportunities to Learn More

To read more about these useful techniques, you can download and print a copy of From SAS

Read DelGobbo's SUGI papers

- Moving Data and Analytical Results between SAS and Microsoft Office (*.pdf*)
- From SAS to Excel via XML (*.pdf*)
- A Beginner's Guide to Incorporating SAS Output in Microsoft Office Applications (*.pdf*)
- Techniques for SAS Enabling Microsoft Office in a Cross-Platform Environment (*.pdf*)

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to Excel via XML in PDF format. The source code and sample data are available from the SAS Presents Web site.

DelGobbo will present his paper at NESUG in November. He will present a modified version in the Hands-On Workshop section at SESUG in October. If your registered in-house or local SAS users group would like to request this presentation as your annual SAS presentation at an upcoming meeting, please submit an online User Group Request Form at least eight weeks in advance.

The techniques in this paper are optimal for working with multiple Excel worksheets. To export SAS data to a single worksheet or to Microsoft Word, you can use ODS and Base SAS®9 to create HTML output. Refer to DelGobbo's SUGI 28 paper for instructions.

SAS continues to work toward better integration with Microsoft Office products in both its current and future releases. Look for more sources of information in the References and Further Reading sections of these papers.