

TECHNIQUES FOR REMOVING COLUMNS FROM A SAS® DATA SET BASED ON THE CONTENTS OF THE COLUMNS

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ABSTRACT

A recent posting on SAS-L asked the question 'How do I drop a variable in a SAS dataset if all the values for that variable are 0 (zero).' A rather harmless question that seemed at the time should be easy to answer. Well after several solutions were posted, then critiqued, corrected and re-posted, the thread had grown to almost 30 articles. We found that it was more difficult to accomplish the task than initially anticipated. One result of all this was that some excellent code was produced and tested and some of us thought others that do not subscribe to SAS-L might have a similar need and be interested in the techniques that were developed. Since SUGI 22 was approaching, we felt that it would be an ideal forum in which to present the material.

INTRODUCTION

Because of space limitations the paper will not be published in the SUGI 22 proceedings, but will be available as a handout at the presentation. A copy of the paper, which includes a discussion of the various approaches that were submitted, program listings for five of the approaches, and a timing comparison using SAS data sets that contain 10 numeric variables and range in size from 100 observations to 1,000,000 observations, can also be obtained by contacting the author.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Code for the examples in this paper and related programs can be downloaded from the SAS File Contribution Server FTP site at:

<ftp://ftp.uga.edu/pub/sas/contrib>

or by contacting the author.
