

## **Fall 2010 OASUS Questions and Answers**

The following answers are provided to the benefit of the OASUS Users Group and are not meant to replace SAS Technical Support.

## **Question 1 : How can I change the order of variables in a SAS Dataset?**

The order of the variables in a SAS dataset is determined when the SAS dataset is created and this is usually based on the order of these variables in the Program Data Vector (PDV). The PDV is the holding area in memory for all the variables being processed in a DATA step.

To permanently change the order of these variables, one has to re-create the dataset while ensuring that the new order is being applied. Two approaches can be used: one with a Data step and another with a SELECT statement in PROC SQL.

In the DATA step, you provide a specific order with the RETAIN or LENGTH statement. The RETAIN or LENGTH statement would need to be placed before the SET statement. Having this code before the set statement compiles makes sure that the variables are ordered as listed by you in that exact order in the PDV(Program data vector). Then the new dataset's variables would be reordered accordingly.

```
/* Reorder the Class dataset using a RETAIN statement */
data NewClass;

    retain weight height age name sex;
    set sashelp.class;

run;
```

The re-ordering of the variable in PROC SQL is in some ways more elegant since the new order is simply specified within the SELECT clause as can be seen in the following example.

```
proc sql;

    create table NewClass
        as select weight, height, age, name, sex
        from sashelp.class;

quit;
```

These techniques are quite useful but require that you-recreate the dataset. What about if you want to maintain different orders to accommodate various users' preferences? In this case, you may want to create a view against the original dataset. This approach has also the advantage of not re-creating the dataset.

Here is an example using a DATA step view:

```
data NewClassV / view=NewClassV;  
  
    retain weight height age name sex;  
    set sashelp.class;  
  
run;
```

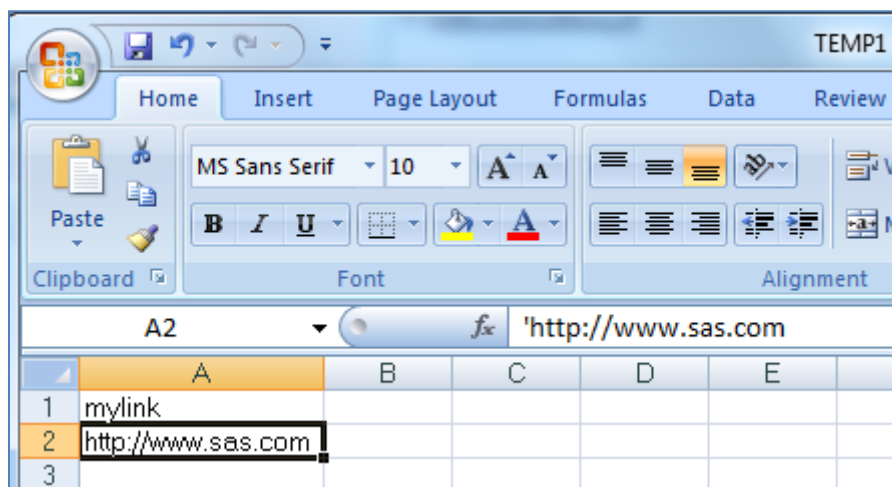
Another example now using the SQL view:

```
proc sql;  
  
    create view NewClass  
        as select weight, height, age, name, sex  
        from sashelp.class;  
  
quit;
```

**Question 2 : When I export character variables that represent a hyperlink to excel, Excel does not automatically recognize the hyperlink?**

The problem with PROC EXPORT is that fields that contain a hyperlink are sent to Excel as character fields. So when Excel receives those fields, it does not try to interpret them. It is possible to force Excel to interpret these fields by opening the spreadsheet and updating each cell one by one (hit F2 and then enter), but this does not happen automatically.

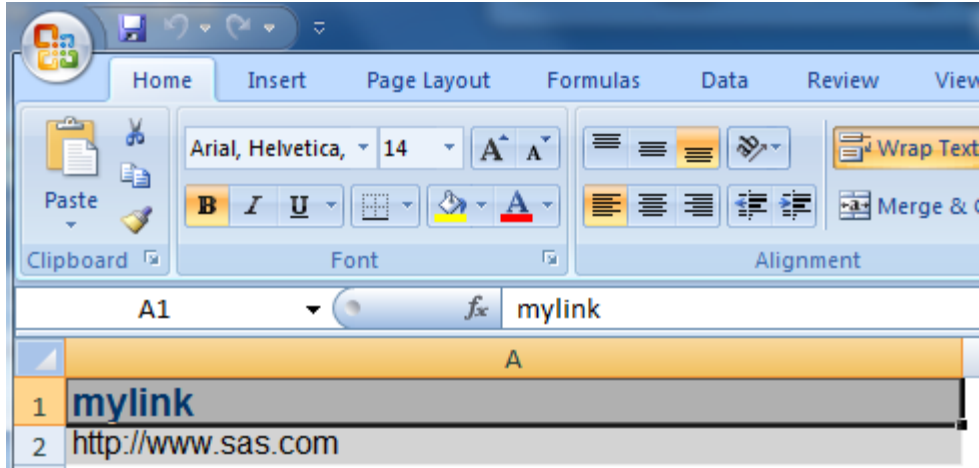
An example of a resulting spreadsheet that contains a hyperlink displayed as text is as followed:



An alternative is to use the ODS tagsets destination in combination with PROC PRINT (rather than PROC EXPORT). Here is an example that demonstrates this approach:

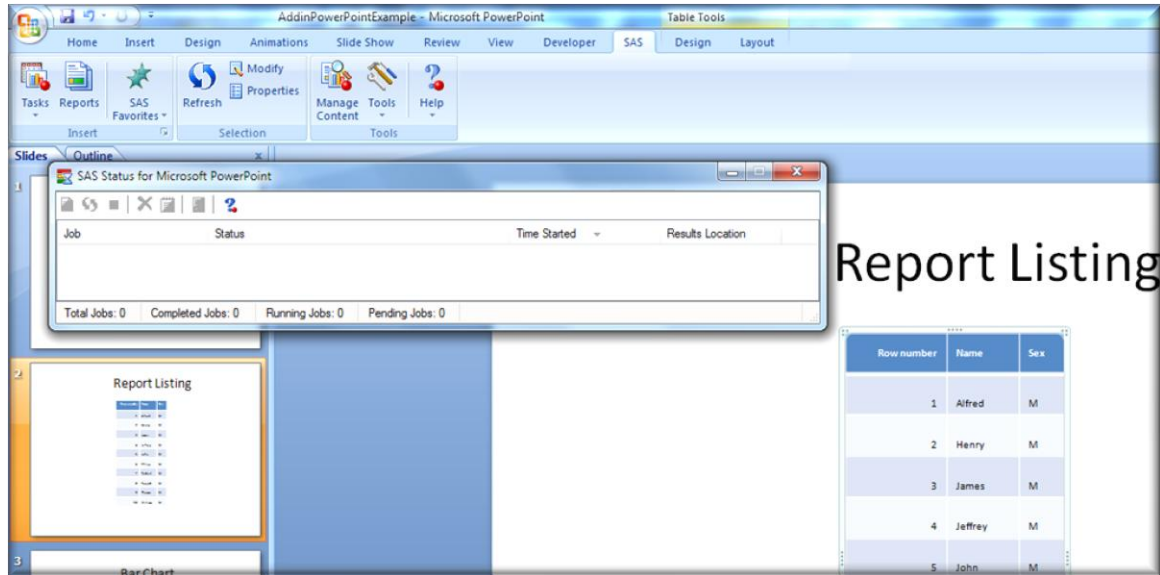
```
ods listing close;
ods tagsets.ExcelXP path='C:\temp'
file="Linktest.xls";
proc print noobs data=temp1;
run;
ods tagsets.ExcelXP close;
ods listing;
```

Here is the resulting spreadsheet:



**Question 3 : Is there, or will there be a way to export directly into PowerPoint? At this point, we use VB as the middleman.**

Yes this functionality exists in SAS. With SAS Add-ins for Microsoft we can accomplish this. This Add-in allows us to harness the power of SAS within Microsoft applications. We can easily share content from SAS into Powerpoint and even run SAS Stored Processes (which are SAS Programs) that output directly into a PowerPoint Slide even open existing reports that were created previously.



***Question 4 : Is OUTREP in SAS EG available as a point and click? Would be a good to allow batch conversion of selected datasets?***

This option can be coded within EG and will work correctly. However, there is no point-and-click option for this within EG. Answer for “Would be a good to allow batch conversion of selected datasets” not entirely sure what is meant by this question and would need further clarification to be able to answer this more appropriately.

***Question 5 : Is there the option to somehow put a break in the code so you can step into it as you execute and troubleshoot?***

Yes, this option and many more are discussed in SAS training courses(programming 1, programming 2, ect). The debugger in a SAS data step allows you to be able to step through the data step execution, line by line. Allowing you to see exactly how a dataset values are created and be able to troubleshoot logic problems.

***Question 6 : Is there a way to include an interactive component (i.e. perform a function using prompted data entry in some short form as opposed to hard coding)?***

This can be done with the help of a Stored Process (SAS Program) on a Business Intelligence Environment. Allowing an individual to create a prompt that receives text from a user and then using those values to run a SAS program. The tool you would need to create in a Business Intelligence Environment is called a Stored Process.

**Question 7 : How can we solve convergence issues in Proc GenMod (Log-binomial regression)?**

Please see these following usage notes which address those issues:

<http://support.sas.com/kb/23003>

<http://support.sas.com/kb/22630>

***Question 8 : What are the goodness of fit diagnostics in Proc GenMod (excepting deviances)?***

There are no overall goodness of fit statistics in GENMOD other than the Pearson and deviance statistics. The fit at the observation level can be assessed using the diagnostic statistics available in the OUTPUT statement.

The answers to many questions can be found in the Samples and SAS Notes in our searchable knowledgebase, <http://support.sas.com/kb>. You can use the search engine there to find the answers you need.