

Annotate: Simply the Basics

By Art Carpenter

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Review by Karol Katz

Annotate: Simply the Basics is an ideal how-to book for users of SAS/GRAPH who wish to enhance the appearance of their graphs by adding text, lines and symbols at specific locations. As its name implies, you can learn the basics, including how to create an Annotate dataset and use it in a SAS/GRAPH procedure to customize a graph.

The examples in the book take you step-by-step through many features of the Annotate facility. The procedure becomes less of a mystery as you run the sample programs that clearly demonstrate how the special variables work. One example, side by side graphs in Chapter 2, shows how the values of the positioning variables XSYS and YSYS control the drawing area. The description also explains how to use this coordinate system to achieve the desired result.

New users of SAS/GRAPH can gain a working knowledge of the Annotate facility by trying the examples as shown and then modifying them for use in their own graphs. More experienced SAS/GRAPH programmers will benefit most from the last two chapters of the book which include a description of building upon an existing dataset to include annotate variables and using annotate macros as shortcuts.

I particularly appreciated a personal response by the author, Art Carpenter, to my question about `style=marker; text='G'`; I know now that it places an up arrow at the assigned position. I recommend this book to all users of SAS/GRAPH who wish to turn ordinary graphs into graphs with a custom finish.