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[PROC SQL: Beyond the Basics Using SAS](#) by Kirk Lafler

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It was a great pleasure to review Kirk's new book, and I was looking forward to reviewing his "work of art".

As expected, I found his book extremely well written, thorough and thoughtfully organized for a wide range of SAS users: from SQL beginners to Advanced SQL users as well. It contains a number of good examples that are easy to understand and follow. I do hope the tables & data Kirk uses in his book will be made available in some electronic form so readers can practice what they read in this book.

I am not as experienced at using SQL as Kirk Lafler and found his new book very insightful and learned a number of tidbits of very valuable information regarding SQL and Using SAS. After reading his book, I will undoubtedly make more of an effort to exploit SQL in my SAS application developments where appropriate.

The Ten Chapters of his new book:

1. Designing Database Tables – excellent write up and review of Database design very useful for Beginners to Advance Users.
2. Working with Data in PROC SQL – excellent introduction to SQL, Dictionary Tables, and Tables – a must for Beginners to Advance Users.
3. Formatting Output – some very useful tips for the Beginner to Intermediate Users.
4. Coding PROC SQL Logic – excellent examples of SQL that were easy to understand and follow, including in the "INTO" clause for creating a macro variable list of values and creating multiple macro variables.
5. Creating, Populating and Deleting Tables – again, great examples of a variety of tasks when dealing with Tables.
6. Modifying and Updating Tables and Indexes – good explanations of when to use and NOT use Indexes.
7. Coding Complex Queries – Easy to follow examples of using a wide variety of JOINS – equijoins, non-equijoins, reflexive, left, right, full and union outer joins, including Subqueries.
8. Working with Views – an excellent write-up on what VIEWS are and how to exploit them in your SAS application development – a must read section of his book.
9. Troubleshooting and Debugging – as with any new tools, there are bound to be errors as you learn to use them, and Kirk does an excellent job to explain how to troubleshoot and debug your SQL code.
10. Tuning for Performance and Efficiency – since many Databases are very large, Kirk does a very good job at defining ways to increase your SQL coding techniques to increase application performance and efficiency.

I am very pleased I was asked to review Kirk's new book and look forward to getting a copy of it to place it next to my "SAS Guide to the SQL Procedure" so I can exploit the Power of SQL more fully than I have thus far. I strongly recommend to those SAS users who may be afraid or hesitant to use SQL to acquire Kirk Lafler's new book and read it cover to cover, and I am sure you will feel more confident to incorporate SQL in your future SAS application development.

Regards, Charles Patridge, Sr. Consultant, www.SCONSIG.com

Email: Charles_S_Patridge@prodigy.net