

Macro Programming Best Practices: Styles, Guidelines and Conventions Including the Rationale Behind Them

Don Henderson, Henderson Consulting Services, Olney, MD
Art Carpenter, California Occidental Consultants, Anchorage, AK

ABSTRACT

Coding in the SAS Macro Language can be a rich and rewarding experience. The complexity of the language allows for multiple solutions to many programming situations. But which solution is best, is there even a "best" solution, and how do you decide? Should you choose a technique based on ease of programming or because of the efficiency of the solution? What is the best practice for laying out your code, selecting your statements, and organizing the way you use the symbol tables?

Learn about macro language programming styles, guidelines and conventions and why they are important. Since not everyone always agrees on programming practices, this paper will focus on the rationales behind the techniques so you can make an informed choice based on your environment.

AN ONLINE LIVING BEST PRACTICES DISCUSSION AND DOCUMENT

The content for this paper is a living document and is available online at sasCommunity.org: [Macro Programming Best Practices: Styles, Guidelines and Conventions Including the Rationale Behind Them](http://sasCommunity.org/Macro-Programming-Best-Practices-Styles-Guidelines-and-Conventions-Including-the-Rationale-Behind-Them). Please feel free to join the discussion.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the following sasCommunity.org users who commented on the article as of the time this paper was submitted (March 13, 2012). They are listed in the order of their earliest contribution.

[Mary \(Otterness\) Rosenbloom](#)

[Toby Dunn](#)

[Ronald J. Fehd](#)

[John Hendrickx](#)

[Steve James](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged. You can contact the authors via sasCommunity.org or at:

Don Henderson
Henderson Consulting Services LLC
3470 Olney-Laytonsville Road, Suite 199
Olney, MD 20832
(301) 570-5530

Arthur L. Carpenter
California Occidental Consultants
10606 Ketch Circle
Anchorage, AK 99515
(907) 865-9167

Don.Henderson@hcsbi.com
<http://www.hcsbi.com>

art@caloxy.com
www.caloxy.com

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. © indicates USA registration.

Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies.