Maximizing the use of SAS Shortcuts

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ABSTRACT

Using the point and click method of opening files and datasets may sometimes be tedious especially if you have a lot of files and datasets in the viewer. This paper will explore the different commands available thru SAS DM statements to ease this tedious task; but typing the DM statements may also get tedious as we'll type them to run them. To ease this task, the paper will also explore other shortcuts such as Keyboard abbreviations and assigning function keys to do these DM tasks.
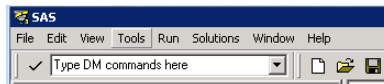
INTRODUCTION

The display manager is oftentimes undervalued because of the lack of the knowledge on how it works and what it can do. Programmers often skip the display manager editor and skip to manually doing tasks that can be easily done. The display manager can help programmers into doing less manual work of some tedious tasks during the development of the program. The paper would focus on SAS display manager's ability to manipulate files and datasets and creating shortcuts for these.

Alongside with the display manager is the keyboard abbreviation function. This will also eliminate a lot of typing of codes, templates, macro calls that are needed in programming. This paper would explore this function as a tool for training for new hire programmers easing their way into using the company's macros and to use for their personal coding shortcuts

DISPLAY MANAGER

The display manager commands can be channeled through the DM editor found by default in the upper left area of the SAS session. Commands type through the editor will execute by clicking the ✓ beside the text editor.

Display 1: DM Editor Screenshot

The syntax of the command would be "<window>; command" some commands would require a syntax of "command *parameter*". Below is the list of most useful commands for the Display manager editor.

Command	Purpose
Log;Clear	Clears the log window
Output; Clear	Clears the output window
Whostedit '*filename.sas*'	Opens the SAS file in the editor window. This would be very useful when dealing with a lot of programs
Open *Libname.Datasetname*	Opens the specified dataset in SAS window. You can use the keyword *VT* instead of *OPEN*
Next viewtable:; end	Closes the last view table open
The following commands will only work in a SAS dataset window	
Keep '*var1 var2*'	The window will only display '*var1 var2*' in order of appearance in the command.
Hide 'var2'	The window will hide '*var2*'
Where *var1=var2*	Works only when in a SAS dataset window. The window will only display observations satisfying the condition specified. Most of the SAS functions will be available

```
KEYS <DMKEYS>          CTL F1
Key        Definition   CTL F2
                        CTL F3
F1    help              CTL F11
F2    reshow            CTL F12
F3    end; /*gsubmit buffer=default*/  ALT F1
F4    recall            ALT F2
F5    wpgm              ALT F3
F6    log               ALT F11
F7    output            ALT F12
F8    zoom off;submit   CTL B    libname
F9    keys              CTL D    dir
F11   command focus     CTL E    clear
F12   vt &syslast.      CTL G
SHF F1  subtop          CTL H    help
SHF F2                  CTL I    options
SHF F6                  CTL J
SHF F7  left            CTL K    cut
SHF F8  right           CTL L    log
SHF F9                  CTL M    mark
SHF F10 wpopup          CTL Q    filename
SHF F11                 CTL R    rfind
SHF F12                 CTL T    title
                        CTL U    unmark
                        CTL W    access
                        CTL Y
                        RMB      wpopup
                        SHF RMB
                        CTL RMB
                        MMB
                        SHF MMB
                        CTL MMB
```

Display 2: Screenshot of Available Keys for assignment

The commands written in the display manager editor can also be coded in the program editor. To invoke these commands we need to add the function *DM.* i.e. *DM 'log;clear';.* These DM commands will prove to be extra useful as these can be mapped to shortcuts such as Shift + F2 etc. These can be mapped by running the following code: DM 'keydef "*shortcut key" "DM command*"';. The full list of the mapped commands can be found via Tools>Options>Keys and the corresponding mapped command.

Macro variables are also evaluated by the commands but in order to apply this properly in the command we should use the macro function %nrstr(&macrovar). It can be done similarly to a shortcut in opening the last created dataset.
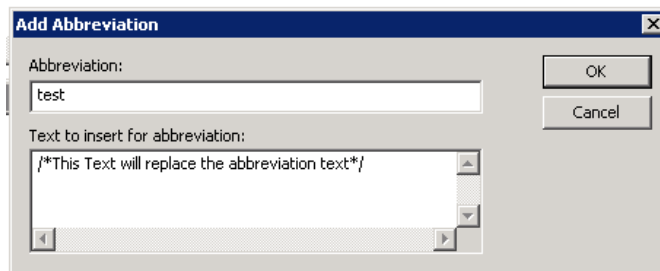
DM 'keydef "f12" "vt %nrstr(&syslast.)"';.

The mapped command will be displayed as *open &syslast.* in the DM key list. Instead of being evaluated prematurely in the command assignment code.
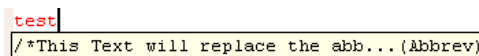
KEYBOARD ABBREVIATIONS

Keyboard Abbreviations is a SAS function that lets you type a chunk of code by only using keywords. These can be setup with the following steps:

1.   Tools > Add Abbreviation

2.   Type the abbreviation. Take note that this is case sensitive

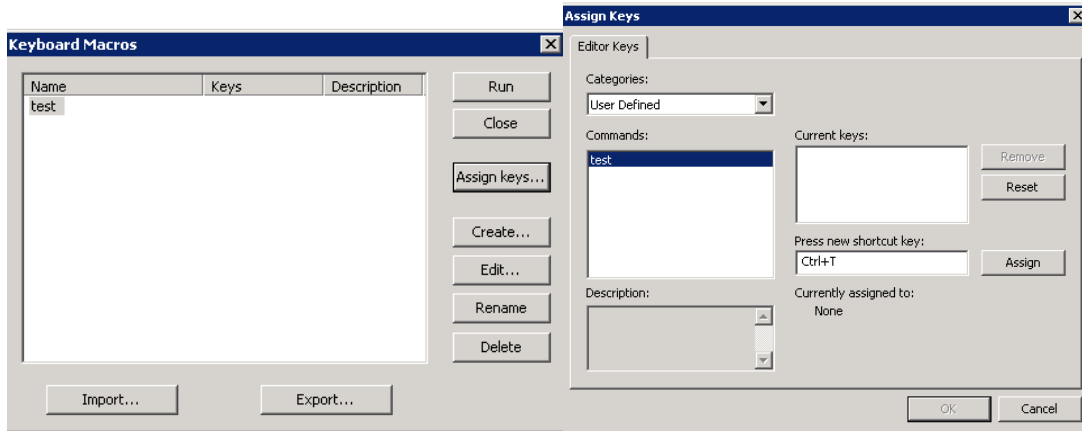3.   Text to insert will be the chunk of code that will be connected with the abbreviation

Display 3: Add abbreviation window pop-up

Programmers can invoke the abbreviated code by typing the abbreviation and pressing Enter when the leading abbreviated code appears. This is shown in display 4.

Display 4: Screenshot of leading abbreviated text

Another way of invoking these codes is by assigning them to shortcuts via Tools> Keyboard Macros > Macros> Assign Keys. The assigned keys will invoke the abbreviated text immediately when pressed.

Display 5: Keyboard macros pop-up windows

These keyboard abbreviations can also exported and imported which provides a way to distribute and implement in different interactive session. In turn, it will provide very useful functions for the programmer.

CONCLUSION

Learning how these tools are setup, programmers can create their own shortcut suite which can be shared to others easily. This will benefit new and seasoned SAS programmers alike. Companies could also use these tools in order to accelerate the training and development of the new hire. It would be very easy to setup their company-macros into shortcuts and abbreviations

CONTACT INFORMATION

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