SAS Global Forum 2015 – Days Three and Four

SAS® GLOBALFORUM 2015

The Journey Is Yours
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Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center

This is the final post in big data expert Jim Harbour's three-part series about on-the-ground experiences at the SAS Global Forum 2015, a four-day immersion into everything SAS: education, activities, presentations and workshops.

My third day at the forum was marked by a breakfast meeting with the MIT Center for Information Systems Research on their industry partnerships aimed at researching IS-related topics, such as the advantages of being an information-broker business. The morning session was followed by a real highlight of the forum, a powerful speech from Marcus Luttrell, former Navy SEAL and author of "Lone Survivor."

Later, I attended a round table luncheon chaired by Jill Dyche, SAS Senior VP for Best Practices. The topics centered on innovation, and CNSI was able to provide crucial insight on how to successfully implement an innovation lab. Best practices include securing the approval and input of senior executives and having an initial project in place before the lab is opened to the 'general public' (i.e., the rest of the organization).

As the executive conference portion of the forum ended, I turned to visiting SAS subject matter experts and vendor partners. This included getting information on the capabilities of SAS for text analytics in both large and small scales, and getting more information on the capabilities of their fraud analytics offerings. The day ended with a visit

to their Data Management (DM) User's Group meeting, where we saw a roadmap for the DM offerings for the next year. DM is moving toward a more integrated framework wherein the ability to manage an organization's internal and external data sets becomes more centralized.

On the final day of the conference we heard a surprisingly data-driven presentation given by Jeff Ma, one of the members of the infamous MIT blackjack team immortalized by the book "Bringing Down the House" and the film "21." The underlying message was that you have to trust your data, and not rely on 'gut instinct.' The rest of the day was spent sitting in on sessions related to big data processing and electronic health record sessions centered on analyzing unstructured data to derive meaningful information for analytics of care.

Overall it was a very powerful conference, with plenty to see and learn. Luckily, everything is posted online for access (click here for access). The folks at SAS are very open to conversations about their work, so there will be plenty of collaboration between CNSI and SAS based on the results of the conference over the next few weeks and months. Stay tuned!

Jim Harbour will be writing about the relevant aspects of using data to tell meaningful stories, including why we tell (and listen to) stories, what makes a good story, data analytics, big data, data visualization, data science. Jim has worked in a variety of architecture, analysis, design, development, and operations roles at CNSI and throughout his career. He believes in sharing knowledge and mentoring at all levels, including these blog posts. Follow him on Twitter @[JSilasHarbour.](#)