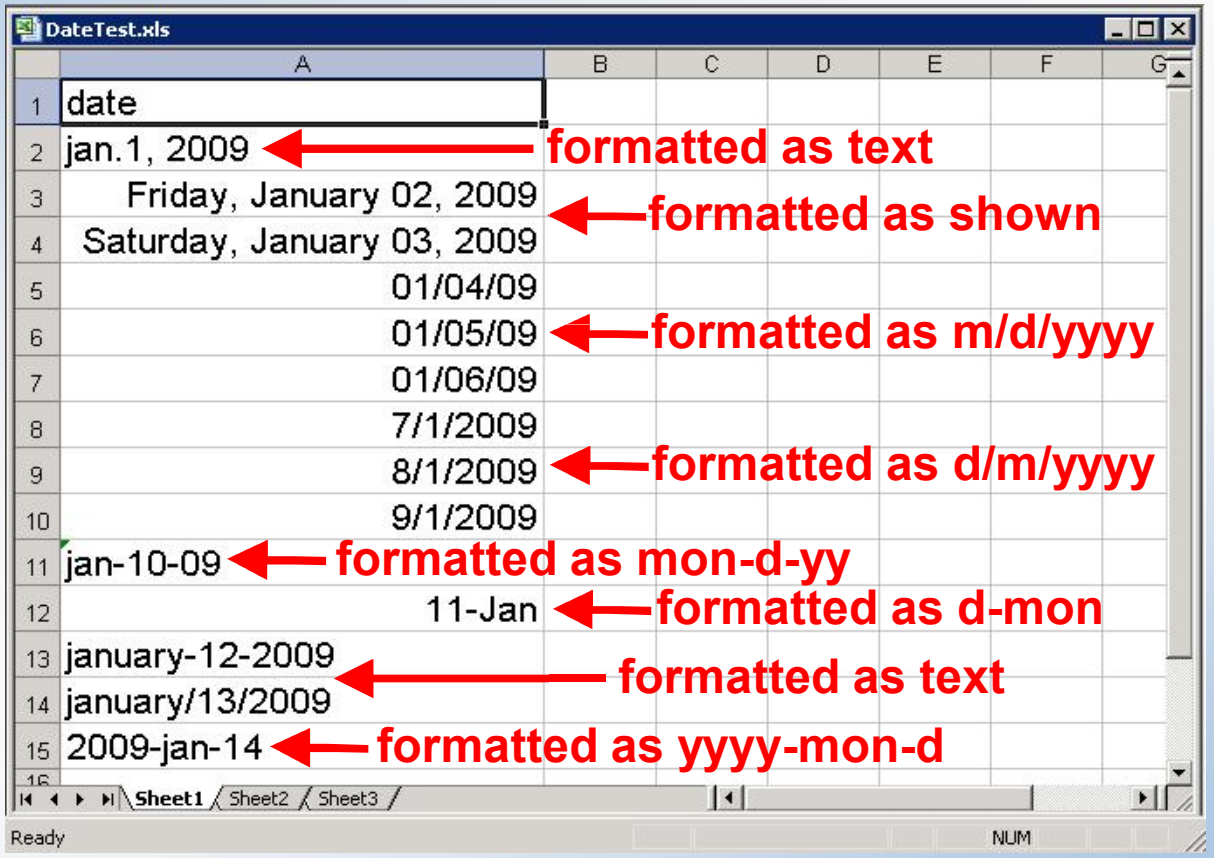
worst, but still usable, data I've confronted

Dr. Arthur Tabachneck
Director, Data Management

December 11th, 2009

suppose you had the following excel file:

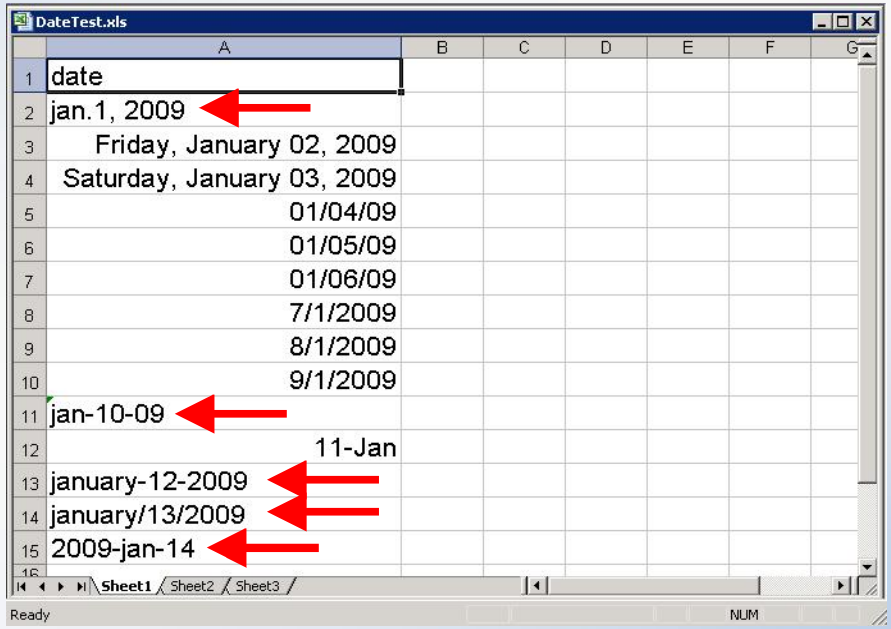


how the file got so bad:

- members of a secretarial pool were asked to enter the data while they were covering the front desk
- they (four different secretaries), obviously, weren't given sufficient instructions
- their task was simply to enter some data, including a date

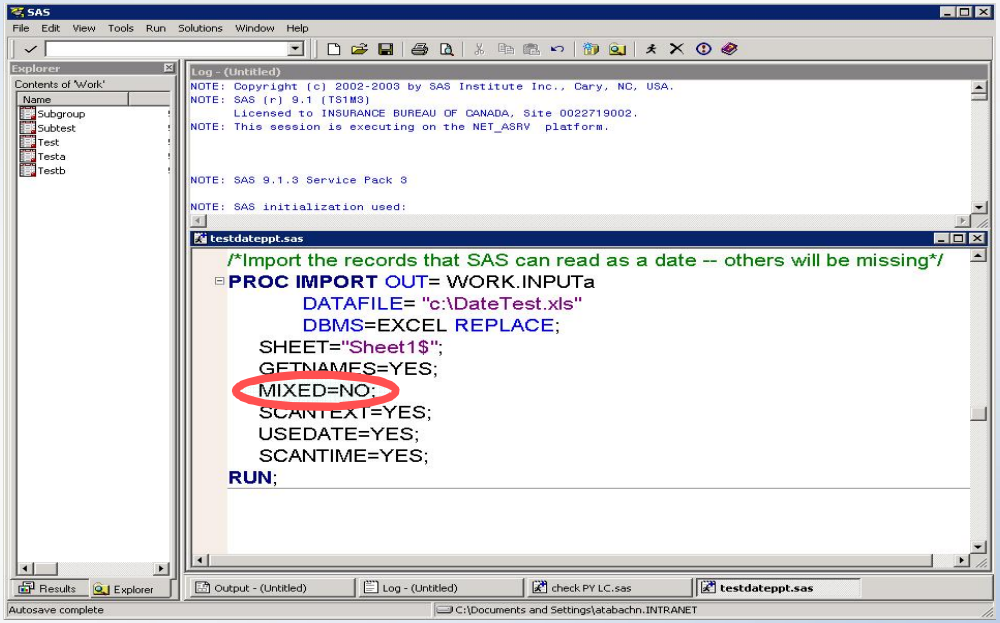
proc import can't do it directly

it will return missing values for the following rows:



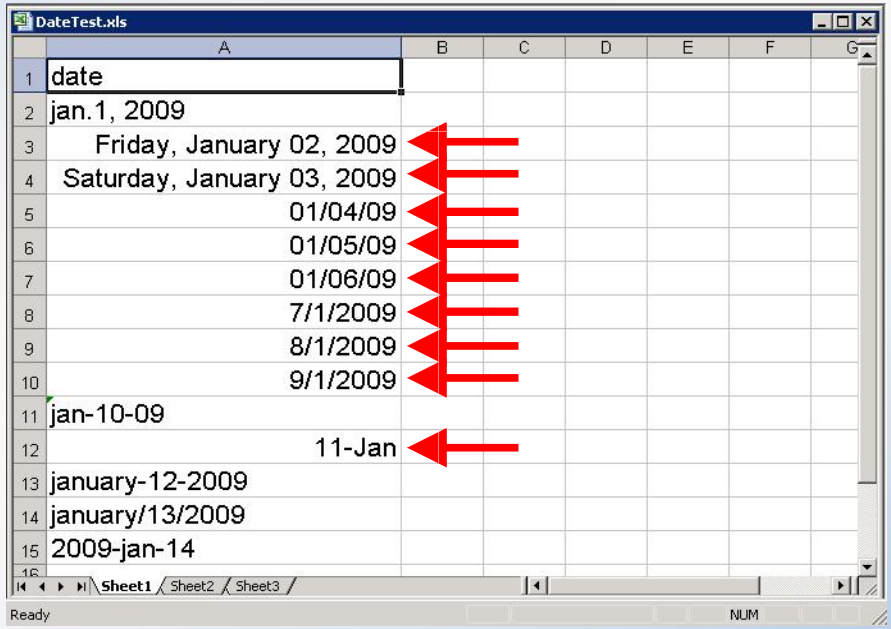
but it can do it in three steps

step 1: use mixed=no



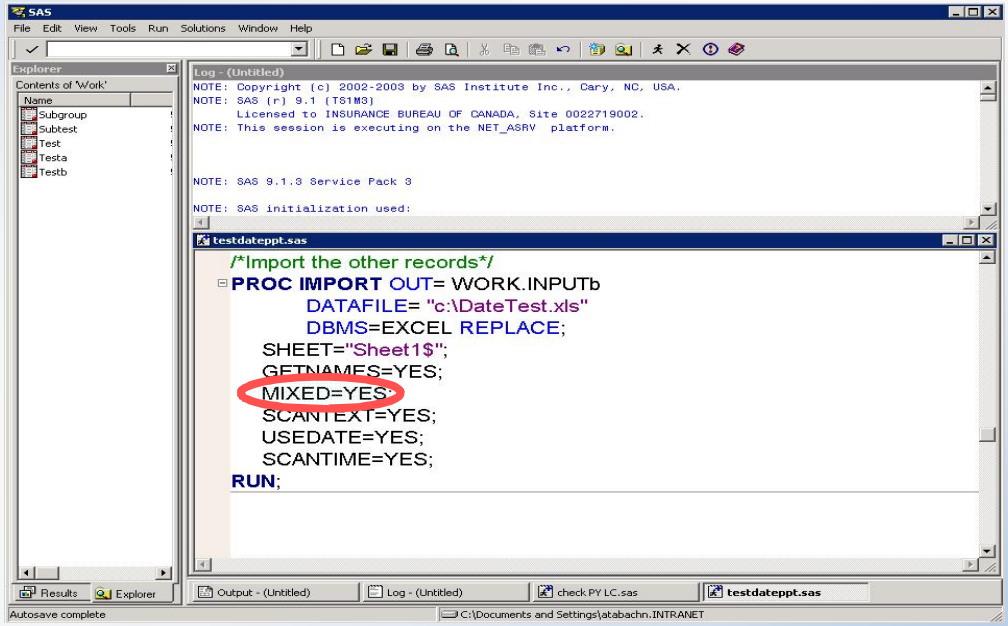
but it can do it in three steps

step 1: imports date formatted cells and assigns missing to other cells



but it can do it in three steps

step 2: use mixed=yes



but it can do it in three steps

step 2: which will import all cells as text

DateTest.xls

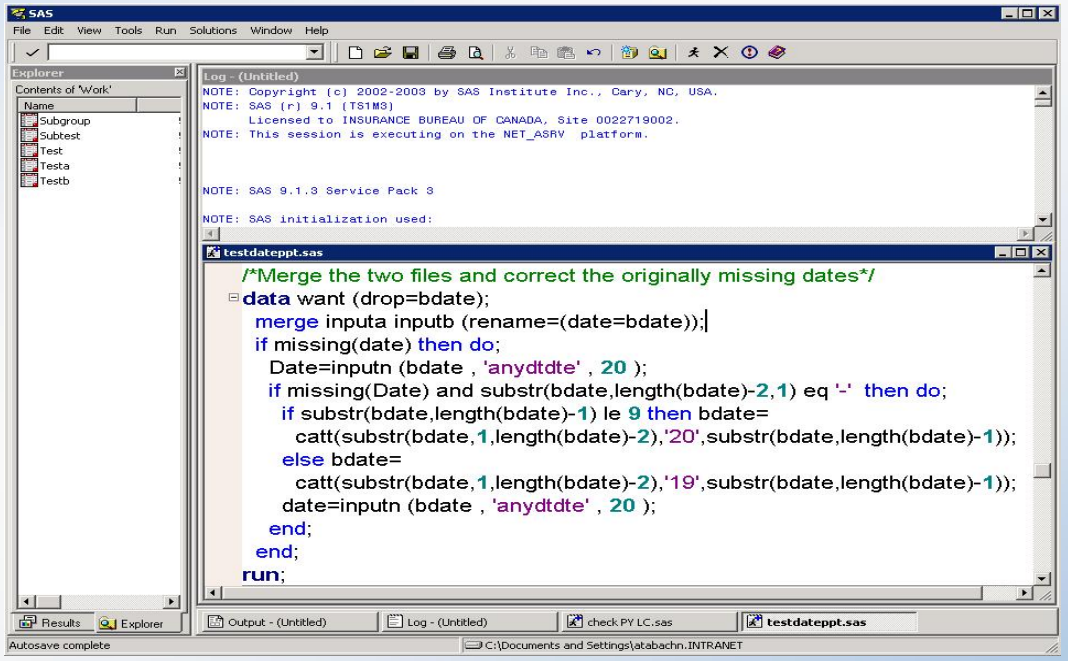
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	date						
2	jan.1, 2009						
3	Friday, January 02, 2009						
4	Saturday, January 03, 2009						
5	01/04/09						
6	01/05/09						
7	01/06/09						
8	7/1/2009						
9	8/1/2009						
10	9/1/2009						
11	jan-10-09						
12	11-Jan						
13	january-12-2009						
14	january/13/2009						
15	2009-jan-14						

Sheet1 Sheet2 Sheet3

Ready NUM

but it can do it in three steps

step 3: use data step merge



resulting in the following file

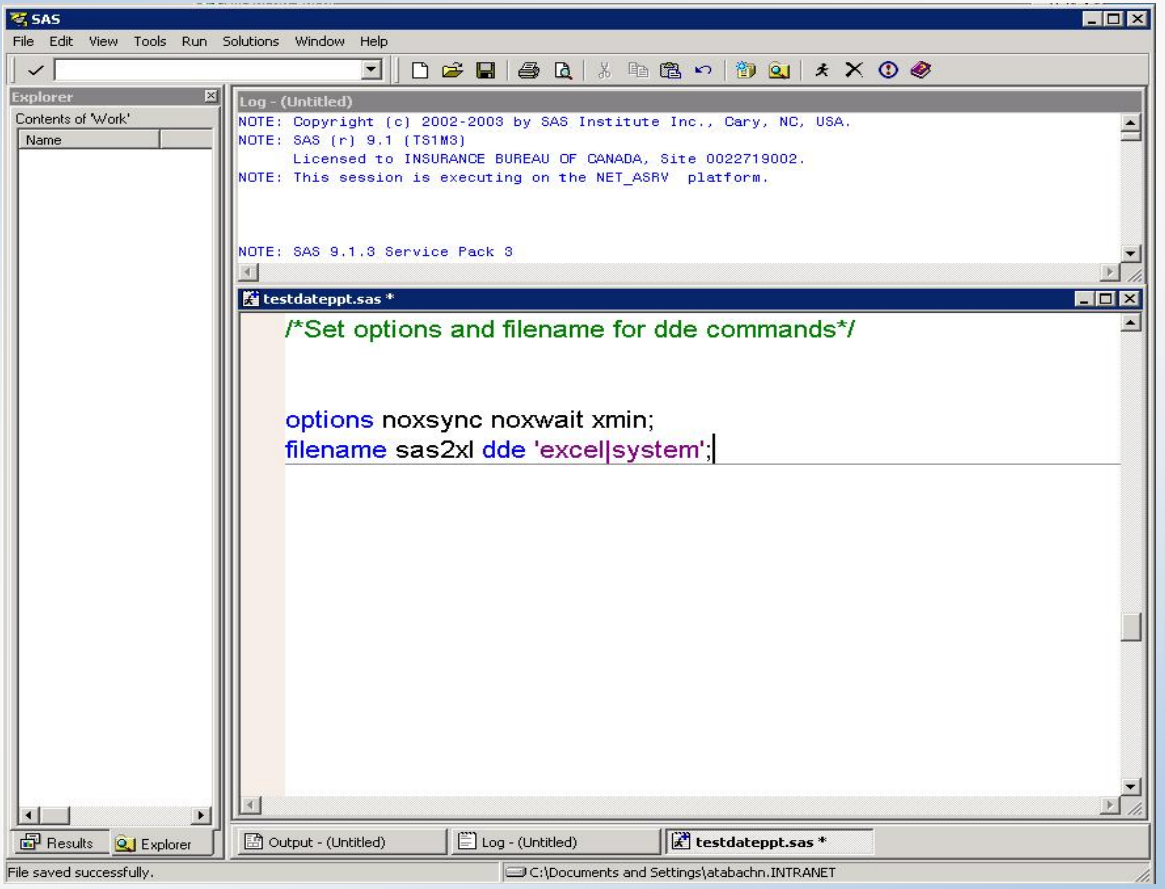
VIEWTABLE: Work.Want

	date
1	01JAN2009
2	02JAN2009
3	03JAN2009
4	04JAN2009
5	05JAN2009
6	06JAN2009
7	07JAN2009
8	08JAN2009
9	09JAN2009
10	10JAN2009
11	11JAN2009
12	12JAN2009
13	13JAN2009
14	14JAN2009

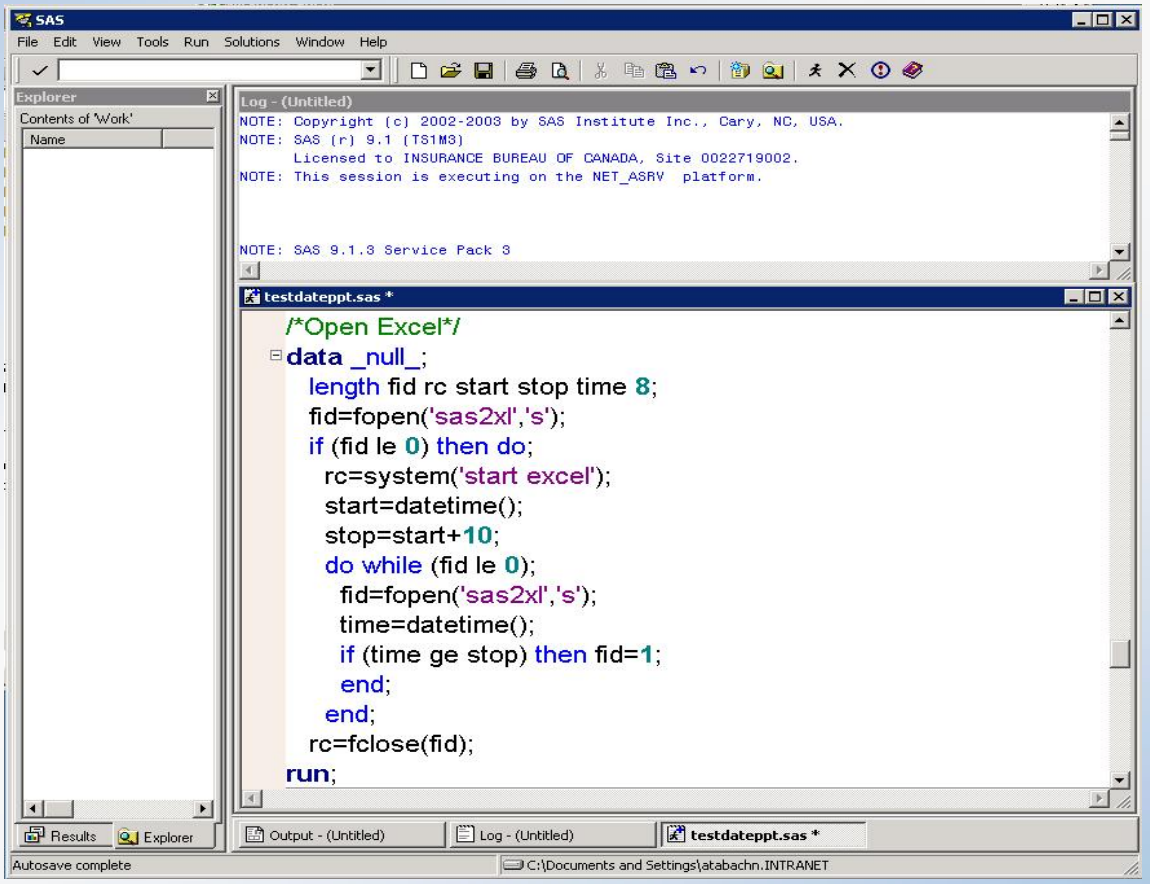
Questions?

But what if I don't license SAS/Access for PC Files?

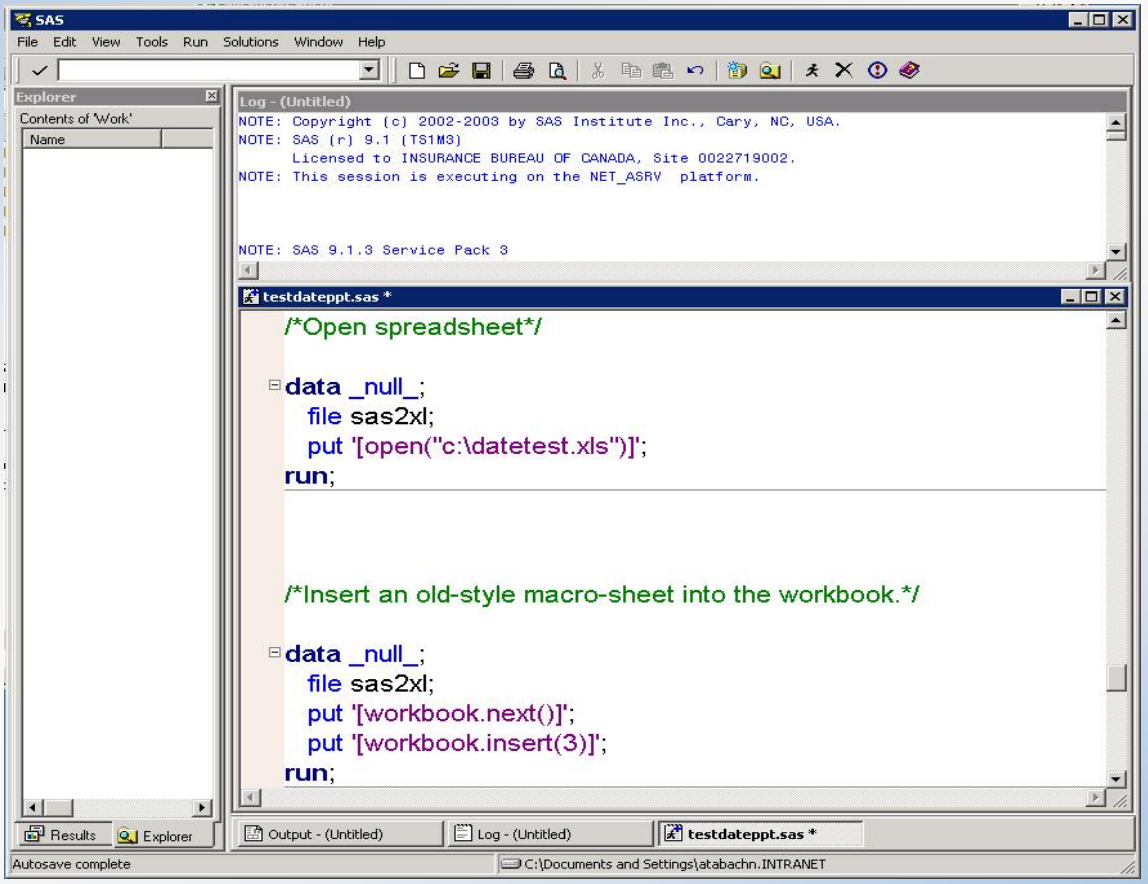
you can do it with DDE



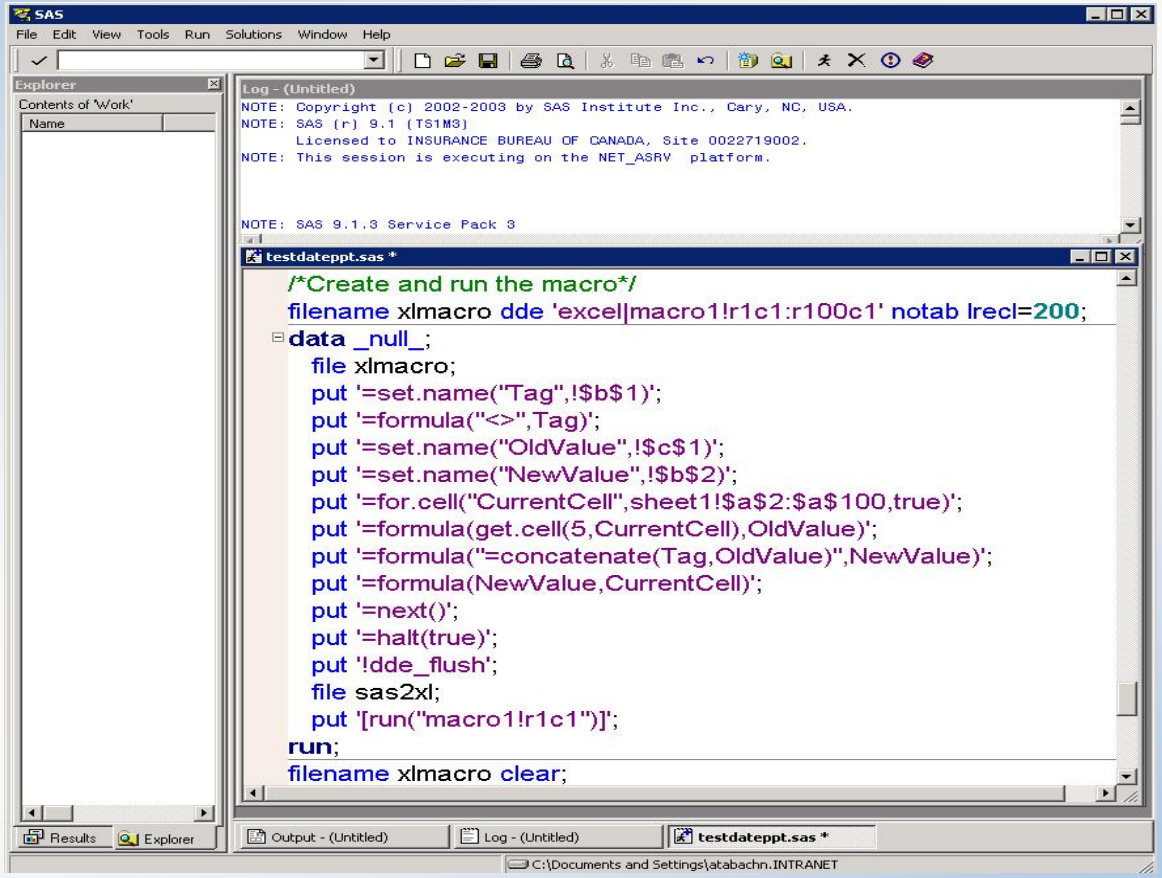
a dde import that does the job quite nicely



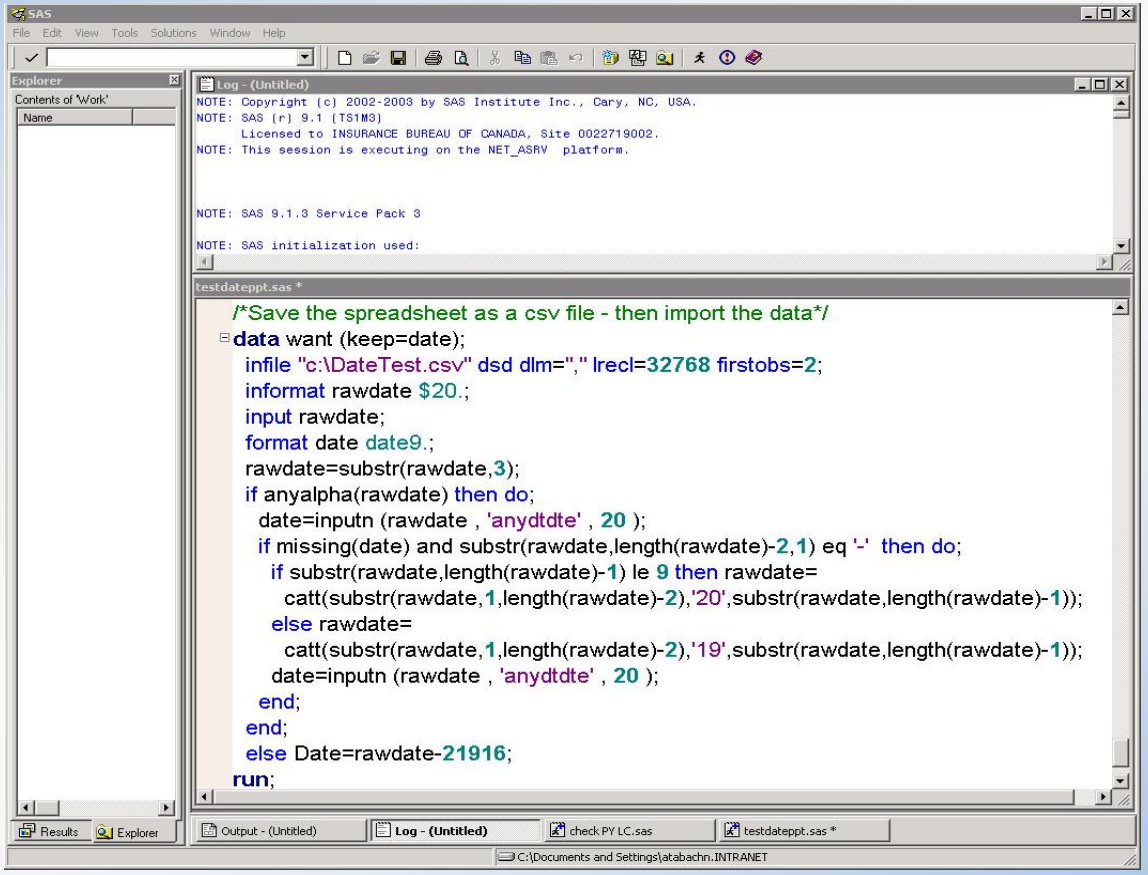
a dde import that does the job quite nicely



a dde import that does the job quite nicely



a dde import that does the job quite nicely



resulting in the following file

VIEWTABLE: Work.Want

	date
1	01JAN2009
2	02JAN2009
3	03JAN2009
4	04JAN2009
5	05JAN2009
6	06JAN2009
7	07JAN2009
8	08JAN2009
9	09JAN2009
10	10JAN2009
11	11JAN2009
12	12JAN2009
13	13JAN2009
14	14JAN2009

Questions?

Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged.

Contact the author:

Dr. Arthur Tabachneck
Director, Data Management
Insurance Bureau of Canada
Toronto, Ontario L3T 5K9
Email: atabachneck@ibc.ca