NASHVILLE technology highlights

Rapid applications delivery with an open, component-based environment

REDUCED applications development and maintenance time

VISUALLY appealing reports

EASY Web enablement

TRANSPARENT data access and management

POWERFUL analytical tools

NEW client interfaces

CD-ROM based online documentation

Applications developers are among the early technology adopters enjoying the Nashville Project's initial release. A new component-based, drag-and-drop building environment makes applications development much easier — reducing both development and maintenance times — and also provides a more Windows look-and-feel for end users.

Deva Kumar, director of SAS Institute's Display Products Division, says, "The world is moving toward a component technology that allows developers to plug and play interchangeable components, such as tables, graphs, buttons, scroll bars, and so on, to create an application. SAS/AF software is object-oriented, which provided a good foundation for where we needed to go."

He says, "We wanted to make sure that our customers who develop applications using SAS software could create a finished product that their end users would be happy with. We wanted to give them a component model and a build environment that was intuitive, easy-to-use, and powerful."

At Qualex Consulting Inc., applications developer and consultant Sarah Mitchell supplies information delivery systems for a wide variety of corporations.

She says, "We loaded Version 7 the first week it was available and we have been using it consistently ever since. I would say there was an initial transition period of about a week, but actually that time was spent learning new features. We are really pleased with the new development environment, and I am finding it is very hard to go back to using Version 6."

Mitchell says some of her favorite features of the new build environment are the graphical objects, the components registry, and the Properties window. She says, "Things like support for dot notation cuts down on verbiage within programs and provides better transitioning between other applications such as VisualBasic or Java. It is very easy to modify attributes. Readability is higher, and that makes

going back to maintain applications much easier."

Qualex Consulting's first Nashville application is an operations performance system being developed for Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Florida. It is set to go production during first quarter of this year, and will be featured in the opening session at SUGI 24. That application also incorporates Release 6.12 of SAS/Warehouse Administrator software.

Mitchell says, "We maintain the code for the data warehouse in Release 6.12 but bring it into the Version 7 application for end user exploitation. We've found that the end users are enjoying using the new Version 7 native Windows interface as well."

More details on the new SAS/AF component model, and tips on using new features such as Attribute Linking, can be found in Product Updates on page 36, and in Technical Tips on page 48.