

Name Your Log with the Date & Time on Windows

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a method for launching Batch SAS sessions and saving the log file to a date and time stamped filename. The methods shown are from the Microsoft Windows command prompt.

LAUNCHING SAS FROM THE COMMAND PROMPT

The DOS command used to launch an application is START. The syntax typically used to launch a SAS program is as follows:

```
START "title"  
    /wait  
    /min  
    "path-to-SAS.EXE"  
    -config "path-to-SASV9.CFG"  
    -batch  
    -nosplash  
    -sysin "path-and-filename-of-SAS-program"  
    -log "path-and-filename-of-SAS-log"
```

Where:

title	is the window title of the DOS command prompt
/WAIT	informs the DOS prompt to execute multiple START commands sequentially and wait for each to finish before executing the next
/MIN	informs the application window to start minimised

Note: Whilst the above syntax is displayed by line for clarity, all DOS commands and options are written on a single continuous line.

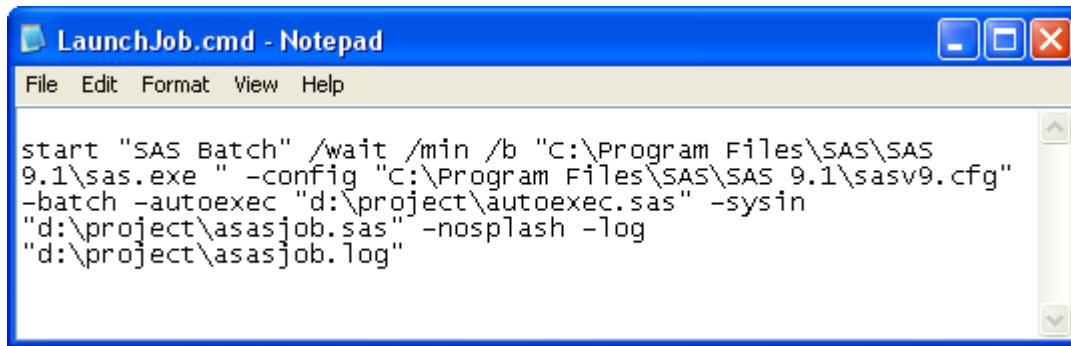
CREATE THE COMMAND FILE

A command file (traditionally known as a batch file) can be created with any text editor, such as Windows Notepad.

It should be saved with a file extension of .CMD (or .BAT for traditionalists) rather than .TXT.

Beware that any commands you have entered will be executed when the file is opened in Windows explorer.

The following image shows a completed START command in a CMD file. This will Batch submit the program ASASJOB.SAS, running an autoexec program and storing the log file into ASASJOB.LOG:



```
start "SAS Batch" /wait /min /b "C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\sas.exe" -config "C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\sasv9.cfg" -batch -autoexec "d:\project\autoexec.sas" -sysin "d:\project\asasjob.sas" -nosplash -log "d:\project\asasjob.log"
```

STORING THE DATE AND TIME IN DOS ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES

The following two lines should be added to the top of a command line. Each line creates an environment variable in Windows containing the current date and time from the PC.

```
for /F "tokens=1-10 delims=/ " %i in ('date /t') do set logdate=%k%j%i  
for /F "tokens=1-5 delims=: " %i in ('time /t') do set logtime=%i%j
```

At first glance the above lines look a little complex. However breaking down their function helps to understand what they do.

Firstly, the command `date /t` is a DOS command to print the current date from the computer clock. Similarly `time /t` prints the current time.

The **FOR /F** statement along with the **IN** keyword request the value returned from the **IN** command is looped over. The values returned are the date and time.

The **TOKEN** and **DELIM** options specify the length of the string to loop over and what delimiter to break the resulting words on.

Finally the **DO** command specifies what action to take with the results.

A **SET** command is used to create an environment variable constructed from the parameters returned by the **FOR** looping. For example, in the case of `set logdate=%k%j%i` the *k*th parameter is the Year, *j*th parameter is the month and the *i*th parameter is the day.

USING THE DATE AND TIME ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES

Using an environment variable in the command line to launch SAS is simply a case of inserting the variable name enclosed in % symbols.

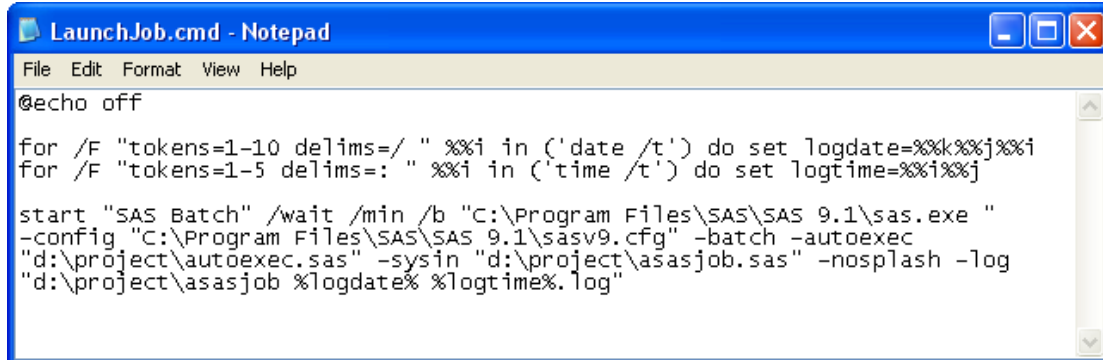
The `-log` configuration option is used to name the log file, resolving the date and time into the filename:

```
START "A SAS Job" /wait /min "C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\SAS.EXE" -config  
"C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\SASV9.CFG" -batch -nosplash -autoexec  
"D:\project\autoexec.sas" -sysin "D:\project\asasjob.sas" -log  
"D:\project\asasjob %logdate% %logtime%.log"
```

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THE FINISHED COMMAND FILE

The finished command file is presented below:



```
@echo off

for /F "tokens=1-10 delims=/ " %%i in ('date /t') do set logdate=%%k%%j%%i
for /F "tokens=1-5 delims=: " %%i in ('time /t') do set logtime=%%i%%j

start "SAS Batch" /wait /min /b "C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\sas.exe "
-config "C:\Program Files\SAS\SAS 9.1\sasv9.cfg" -batch -autoexec
"d:\project\autoexec.sas" -sysin "d:\project\asasjob.sas" -nosplash -log
"d:\project\asasjob %logdate% %logtime%.log"
```

When the command file is launched at 12pm on 6th March at 2008 the project folder contents' appear as follows:



CONTACT INFORMATION

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