

David v Goliath:
How to build an R presence in a corporate SAS
environment

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EQUIFAX[®]

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Outline

- 1 Who am I?
- 2 Where Are We?
- 3 What is the Goal?
- 4 How Do We Get There?

Who Am I?

- Currently the Lead Statistician for Equifax's Research and Development Group.
- Nearly 10 years of statistical consulting experience; 5 years of broad analytics, 4 years marketing analytics, 1 year credit analytics.
- Built R presence in 4 companies.
- Director of Atlanta R User Group.

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Where Are We?

- SAS has been growing and gaining market share since 1976.
- In 1991 that began to change as a new competitor, R, was born.
- Now 19 years later R is a viable alternative to SAS, but . . .

There is still resistance in the corporate environment.

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What is the Goal?

There are two goals here...

- 1 Use R to compliment existing software (read SAS).
- 2 Replace existing software with R.

We will focus on the first goal, and keep the second as a long term goal that can only happen after the first goal is achieved.

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How Do We Get There?

- Spread the word.
- Start Small.
- Show the Strengths.
- Show the Value.

Remember, Goliath was toppled by one stone from one small boy... There was an entire army waiting, but the tipping point was one boy.

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Spread the Word.

- Get involved in local R User Groups.
- Play nice!
 - Make friends everywhere, especially in IT.
 - You'd be surprised what a **friend** will do if you simply ask.
- **You** must evangelize.
 - Given any opportunity, talk about R.
 - It may be painful, but become known as "That R Guy/Girl."
 - Organize informational sessions at work.

Most roadblocks in a corporate environment are due to a lack of information. Never let there be a lack of information!

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Start Small.

- Rome wasn't built in a day,
 - and you won't topple SAS in a day.
- Start by getting R installed on your server/workstation LEGALLY. (remember those friends you made in IT?)
- It is sometimes better to proselytize a few than to evangelize to all.

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Show the Strengths.

- Know R's weaknesses.
 - Large data.
 - An existing army of SAS programmers.
- Promote R's Strengths
 - Graphics are a great place to start.
 - Flexibility is another.
 - A growing army of R programmers.
- Use publicly available information and research.
 - [Revolution Analytics Collection of R in the Media](#), for example.

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Show the Value

- R is free!
 - SAS is definitely not.
- Availability of cutting edge methodologies.
- Did I mention that R is free?

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Summary

- You can build an R presence if you follow a few simple steps.
 - Spread the word.
 - Start small.
 - Show the strengths.
 - Show the value.