

# Type, Point and Click – A Practical Guide to SAS Enterprise Guide® Prompts

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## ABSTRACT

Your SAS Enterprise Guide project is set up. Processes have been created, linking code in the desired order. Now if only you didn't have to keep changing your code every time your input file name changed or your date range or ....

This paper gives an overview of the prompts available in SAS Enterprise 4.3 and ways to automate your project. We will also touch on the general nature of macro variables, and the various quoting and unquoting functions.

## INTRODUCTION

SAS® Enterprise Guide® is a fantastic tool for visualizing your data and processes. If you are already linking your programs together, you have done the first step of true automation. Now the next step is to make your process truly reusable by letting whoever is running it choose various options such as file names, dates, and even passwords. At the end of this paper, we will set up a practical demonstration, interfacing to a ConnectDirect script (formerly know as NDM) that will let us transfer any file visible to your SAS Enterprise Guide UNIX session to a select mainframe. Although developed for SAS Enterprise Guide 4.3, most of this information will still be valid for earlier releases.

## THE NATURE OF SAS ENTERPRISE GUIDE PROMPTS

All prompts work by passing parameters to a SAS program in batch mode. These are picked up by SAS as macro variables. Since all SAS macro variables are character in nature, any prompts set by SAS Enterprise Guide are character as well. However SAS Prompt Manager has code manipulation behind the scenes that will let us create variables to name file directories, files, numbers and dates. Version 4.3 even acts like Windows Explorer, allowing you to point and click to file names as in our NDM example later.

Several of the prompt options will allow you to select more than one value at run time. These include text , numeric and date prompts. The old Parameters Manager in SAS Enterprise Guide 4.0 and 4.1 would resolve these multiple values as value1-delimiter-value2-delimiter etc. Version 4.2 and 4.3 handle this differently, setting each value into its own variable, plus a variable keeping track of the count. For example, suppose you wanted a prompt that would let you enter a number of last names as a customer search tool. Let's name the macro variable custname.

We'll create the prompt and enter the text we want to see when the prompt is in use (figure 1). We will require at least one value, set here and on the next screen (Figure 3). We will not use the prompt value throughout the project for reasons discussed later. Figure 2 shows how we can set the minimum number of values allowed to one and the maximum to five. The length allowed for each value will range from two to twenty. Note that we also had to specify multiple values in the 'Number of values' drop box:

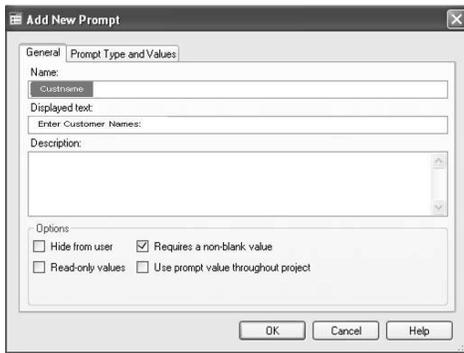


Figure 1: Naming the prompt

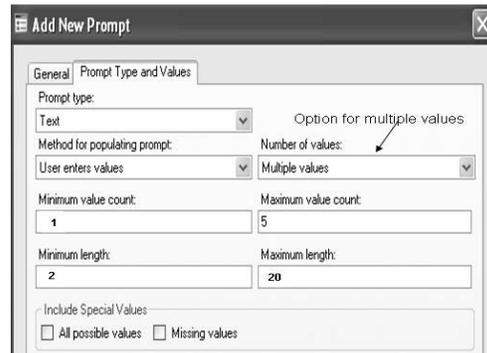


Figure 2: Setting the value and lengths allowed

At run-time:

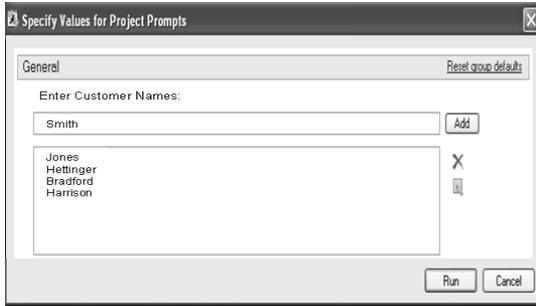


Figure 3: Run-time view for custname

After the last value is entered, Smith, Prompt Manager creates eight macro variables. These are:

custname – Harrison	custname1 – Harrison	custname2 – Bradford
custname3 – Hettinger	custname4 – Jones	custname5 – Smith
custname0 – 5	custname_count – 5	

If only one value was entered, just custname and custname\_count would exist. Referring to custname without a suffix gives us the first value entered, Harrison. Custname0 and custname\_count contain the number of values entered from the screen. The other variables, custname1 through custname5 may be thought of as an array, referring to each customer name by reference. Processing these can be tricky. The appendix of this paper has one example using a macro do-loop and the various masking functions. If we had defined this variable as a text **range** instead, we would have created two variables, custname\_MIN and custname\_MAX.

Why didn't we want to use these values throughout the project when we set up this prompt (figure1)? If we had, all of the values in the array would have remained except where they were changed. This is despite actually deleting the values we didn't want anymore. So if we decided we simply wanted three values the next time we ran, like 'Patel', 'Whang' and 'Butkovich', the custname\_count variable would have still been five and we would have ran with 'Jones' and 'Smith' again. Not using them throughout the project gives us a clean slate each time

Selecting multiple dates is even more complicated. Figure 4 shows what a date prompt named Pickdates would look like at runtime. You have your choice of picking today's date, some increment backward or forward or a specific date.

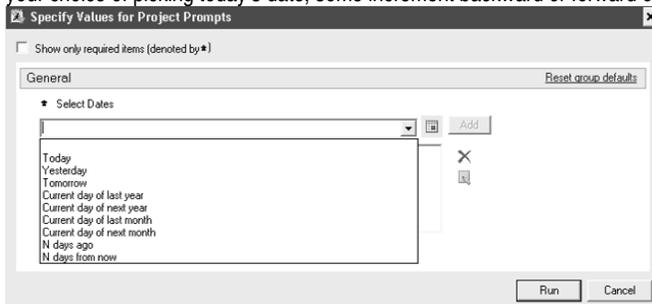


Figure 4: Selecting multiple dates – the choices

If we chose 'Today' and 'Yesterday' when running this on July 7, 2012 and July 20, 2012, even more variables would be created than in the previous example:

PICKDATES_REL3 - D-1D	PICKDATES_REL2 - D0D	PICKDATES_COUNT - 3
PICKDATES0 – 3	PICKDATES - 20Jul2012	
PICKDATES1 - 20Jul2012	PICKDATES2 - 07Jul2012	PICKDATES3 - 06Jul2012
PICKDATES_LABEL - July 20, 2012	PICKDATES_LABEL1 - July 20, 2012	
PICKDATES_LABEL2 Today	PICKDATES_LABEL3 Yesterday	

We've seen the array variables before but what are the REL and LABEL variables? The REL variables refer to the displacement from the run date and the labels may be used in reports and analyses. DOD refers to the current date and D-1D one day prior. You will probably never use the REL variables but the labels would be very useful in a report.

Note that none of the date variables are enclosed with single quotes and a 'd' at the end. 20Jul2012 should be '20Jul2012'd. You will need to put it in quotes and append a 'd' to the end. Sounds simple, doesn't it? PICKDATES1 right off the prompt looks like 20Jul2012. This is not a valid date literal so you decide to enclose in quotes and add the 'd' suffix to get '20July2012'd. However, just setting a variable to '&pickdates1'd results in just that: '&pickedates1'd. You can use the %bquote function to resolve the &pickdates1 and add the other characters as %bquote('&pickdates1'd). The log will show this as '20Jul2012'd but when you try to use it an expression, you will get an error. Unmask the resulting value so that it can be used as a literal in the data step as %unquote(%bquote('&date1'd)).

Another way to get the proper quotes for your dates and text variables is to set them in a data step. You could use a null data set as output as in the example below. Note the single quote is enclosed in double quotes.

```
DATA _null_;
pickdates1 = ""||"&pickdates1"||"'d";
CALL SYMPUT('pickdates1',pickdates1);
run;
```

## ABOUT PASSWORDS

SAS Enterprise Guide versions 4.2 and 4.3 offer some improvements for protecting passwords obtained with a prompt. As figure 5 below demonstrates, you can specify a masked value when selecting how the run-time prompt will look.

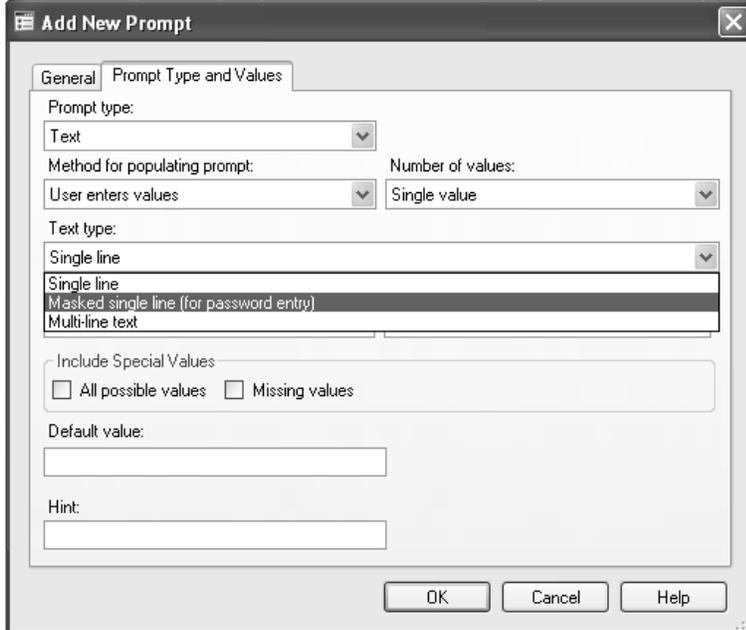


Figure 5: Masking a password

If you select this, a message will pop up that this will be considered a password only if the suffix of the variable is named `_PASSWORD`. If you do this, it will ask how you want the password encrypted. You will still see the encrypted value in the log. Plus if you are going from one operating system to another, you may find no encrypted value works. In fact, the file transfer application whose build is discussed later in this paper has this issue with the password. Since you don't want your password in the log, do two things. One is to uncheck the 'Use prompt throughout project' box when adding the password prompt. The other has to do with your SAS Enterprise Guide settings. Uncheck the 'show generated wrapper code in SAS log' which is one of the Results General options. This may be found by selecting 'Options' under the Tools menu bar. If you do not uncheck this, everything set by a prompt will be clearly visible in the log, including your password. There is nothing you can do code-wise to suppress this unless you run a separate program first that turns off the log altogether. This would be one line of code:

```
Options nosource nosymbolgen;
```

## A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION – SETTING UP A FILE TRANSFER PROGRAM

You might have wondered why so many SAS job requirements specify being able to write UNIX shell scripts. This is because, believe it or not, there are some things involving the system environment too complicated for SAS to, as in this example. We will interface to a Korn shell calling ConnectDirect aka NDM. The shell sends a file from a UNIX box to a mainframe selected from a list. See the appendix for the full code. SAS will be used to set up a GUI interface and to do some editing on the front end. Keep in mind that mainframe files are considerably more complicated than UNIX ones. We have an `irecl` as we do on UNIX but we also have various record formats like variable, fixed, variable block and fixed block. Our file we are creating on the mainframe will need the record format and `irecl` specified but the Korn script will do some rudimentary block size calculations where appropriate.

First we'll select Prompt Manager from the SAS project view in figure 6:

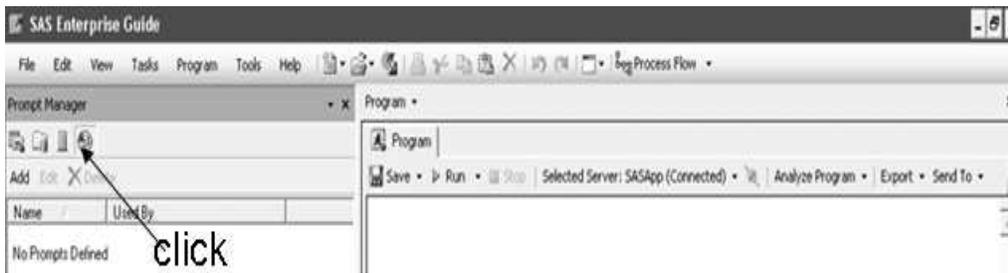


Figure 6: Prompt Manager

The first prompt we will need is one for the UNIX file to be transferred. Enterprise Guide 4.3 lets us set up a prompt that will look much like MS/Windows in selecting a file. We will call our first prompt UNIXFILE. The displayed text will read 'Enter UNIX File to be Sent:' and it will be set up like Figure 7:

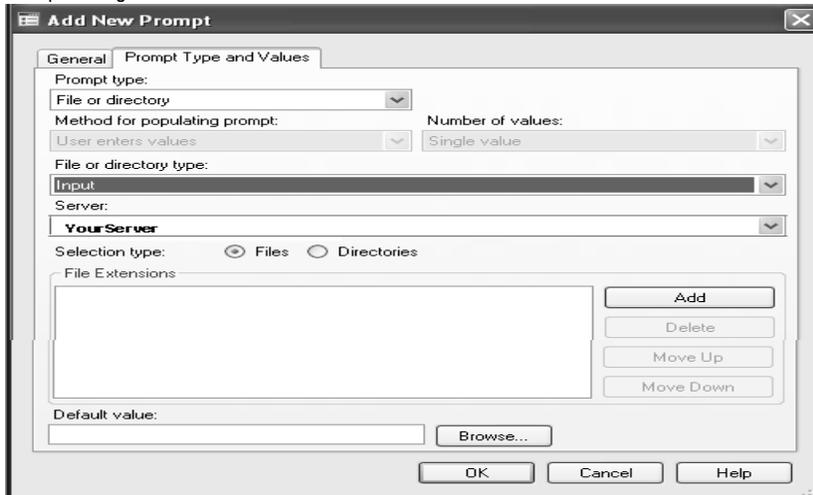


Figure 7: File/directory prompt setup

Note that we could select either files or directories. Since this application transfers a file, we will select 'Files'.

The next prompt will need is the mainframe file name. This should be a prefix you have –CREATE- authority over. File security works differently on the mainframe than UNIX. With UNIX, it is possible to have write authority without read authority. The mainframe is different, having a hierarchy of READ, WRITE and CREATE where CREATE authority automatically gives you READ and WRITE.

Our prompt will be called MVSFILE and will be set up as straight text. There will be no default value or guidelines on how to enter the name as in figure 8. The display text will be 'Enter Target MVS File Name:'

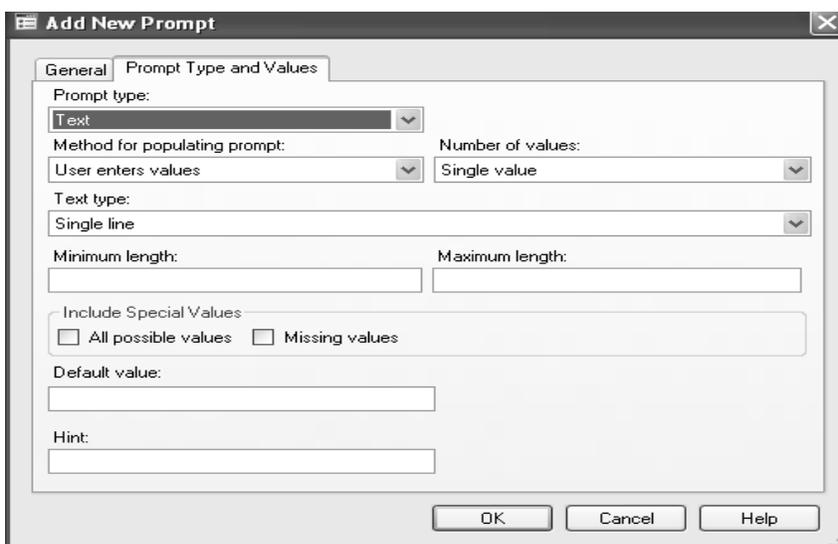


Figure 8: Unformatted text set up

Our next prompt will be the mainframe id. We will call this MVSID and let the user select from a list at run-time. 'Select MVS ID:' will be the display text. We will set the default value to be Cp.m290.com which will look like 'My Mainframe' at run-time. This will be a static list. To use a

dynamic list, there must be a data source available to you in a SAS folder. How to do this is beyond the scope of this paper but for values that don't change that much, a static list should be fine. We could also select 'Allow user to specify additional (unformatted) values' but we'll go with the one address in Figure 9 for right now.

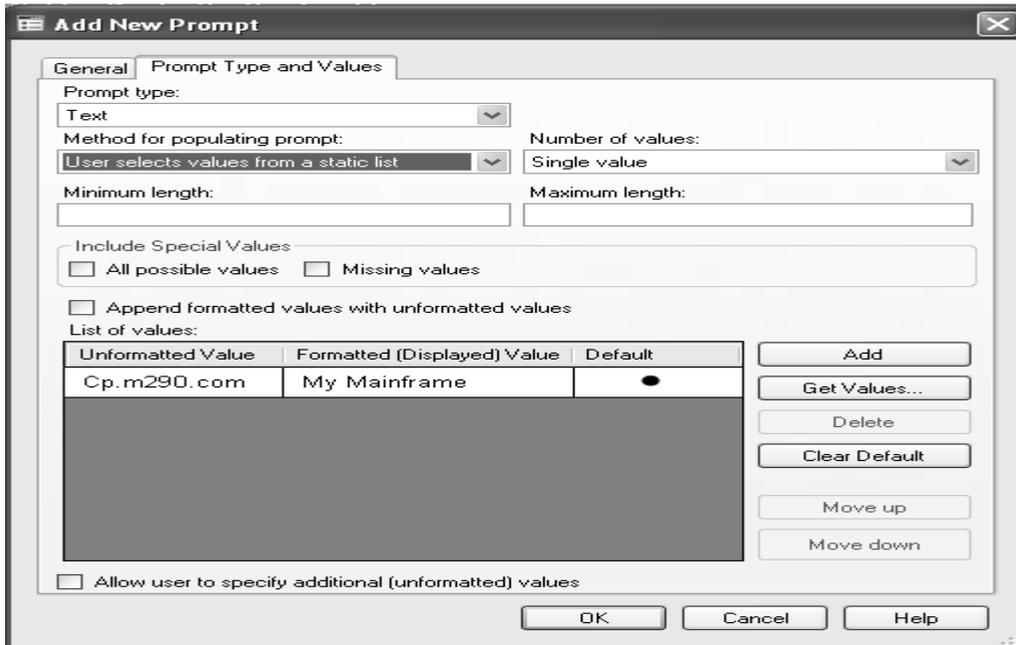


Figure 9: Entering allowable values

We will do the record format much the same way, since the four basic types, fixed, variable, fixed block, and variable block should suffice for the vast majority of our file transfers. The prompt will be named RECFM, displayed as 'Select Record Format: ' at run-time. We will make fixed block (FB) the default (Figure 10)

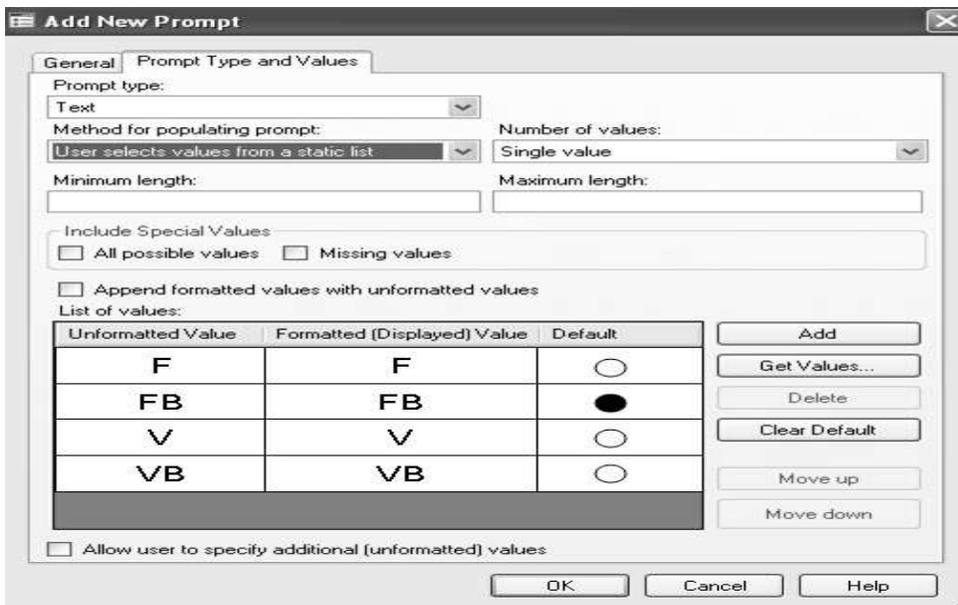


Figure 10: Default for record format

Next we'll set up a prompt for the lrecl which will be named LRECL. The prompt will display as 'Record Length (LRECL)?'. Values of ten to a thousand should handle the vast majority of our files (Figure 11)

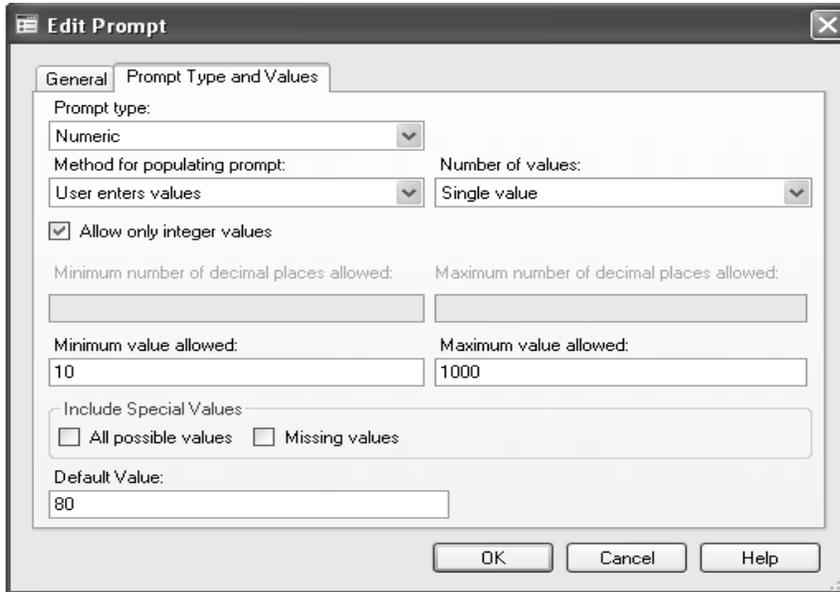


Figure 11: Allowable LRECL values

We will want NDM to send an email when it's done so we'll set up a variable named ENOTIFY with the email address. At run-time, this will be displayed as 'Enter Notification Address:'. We can put in some known addresses as in figure 12 but we will also allow the user to specify another address.

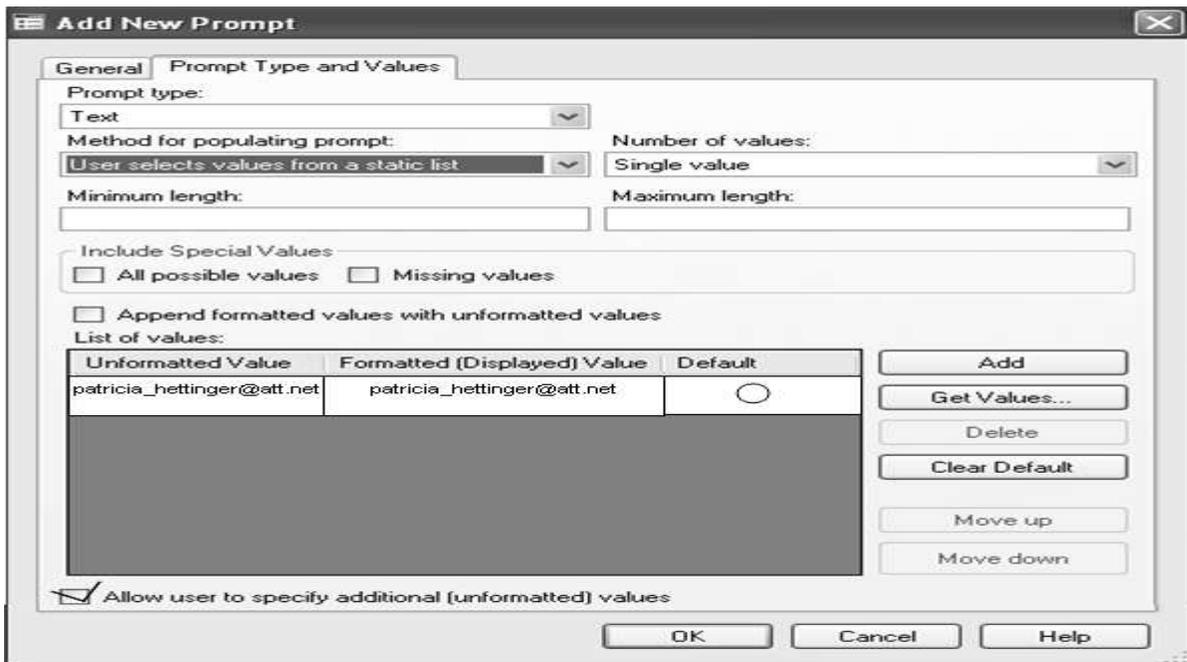


Figure 12: Letting the user enter other values

We will do the same thing with USERID (mainframe user id), allowing the user to either use some known id like XSELL234 (figure 13) or to specify another one. The display text will be 'Enter MVS User Id:'

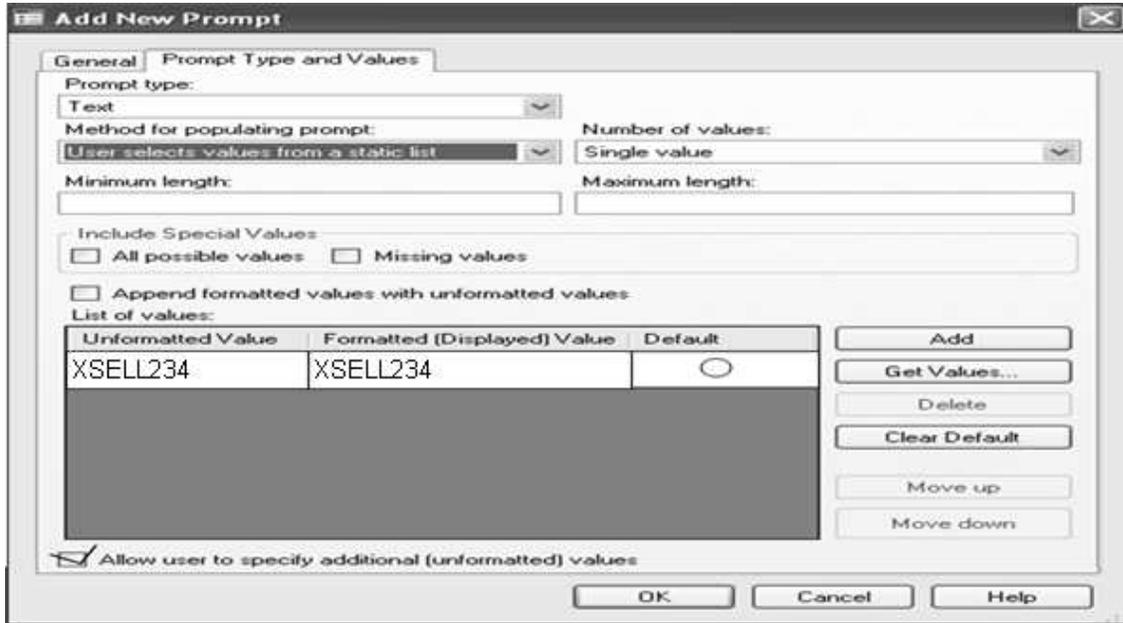


Figure 13: Mainframe user id

Now for our password. We must pass this to the mainframe as plain text. We will call it NDM\_PASSWORD and set it up as illustrated in Figures 14 and 15. Figure 14 shows the displayed text 'Enter MVS Password' and Figure 15 more of the prompt type.

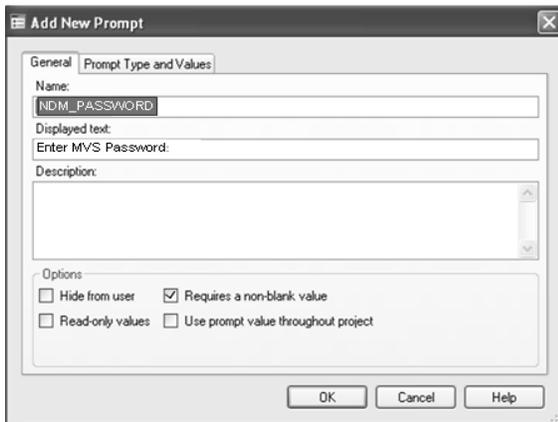


Figure 14 - the \_PASSWORD suffix

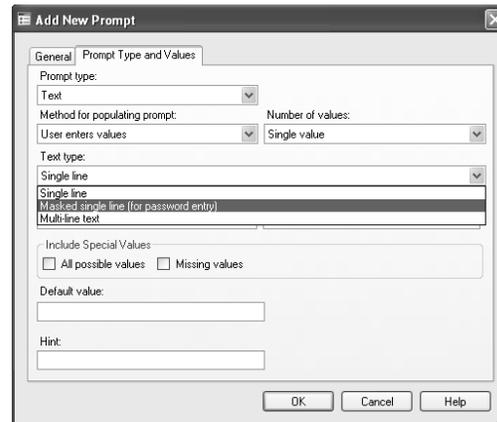


Figure 15 - masking at run-time

Now that we have our prompts set up, we need a SAS program to use them. Our SAS program that calls the Korn script is very simple - just turning off symbolgen and turning the mainframe variables MVSFILE, USERID and NDM\_PASSWORD to upper case on the strong likelihood your receiving MVS system would consider these in error otherwise. We then use the systask command to execute the Korn script.

```
options NOsymbolgen;
%let MVSFILE=%trim(%upcase(&MVSFILE));
%let USERID = %trim(%upcase(&USERID));
%let UNIXFILE=%trim(&UNIXFILE);
%let MVSID=%trim(&MVSID);
%let RECFM=%trim(&RECFM);
%let LRECL=%trim(&LRECL);
%let NDM_PASSWORD=%TRIM(%UPCASE(&NDM_PASSWORD));
SYSTASK COMMAND "/UNIX_path/NDM2MVS.ksh &UNIXFILE &MVSFILE &MVSID &RECFM
&LRECL &USERID &NDM_PASSWORD &ENOTIFY";
RUN;
```

We will call this program SAS2NDM.SAS. Now we have to associate these with the program. We could do this from the editor or by right-clicking on the program icon in Enterprise Guide's Project View and clicking on 'Properties' as in Figure 16:

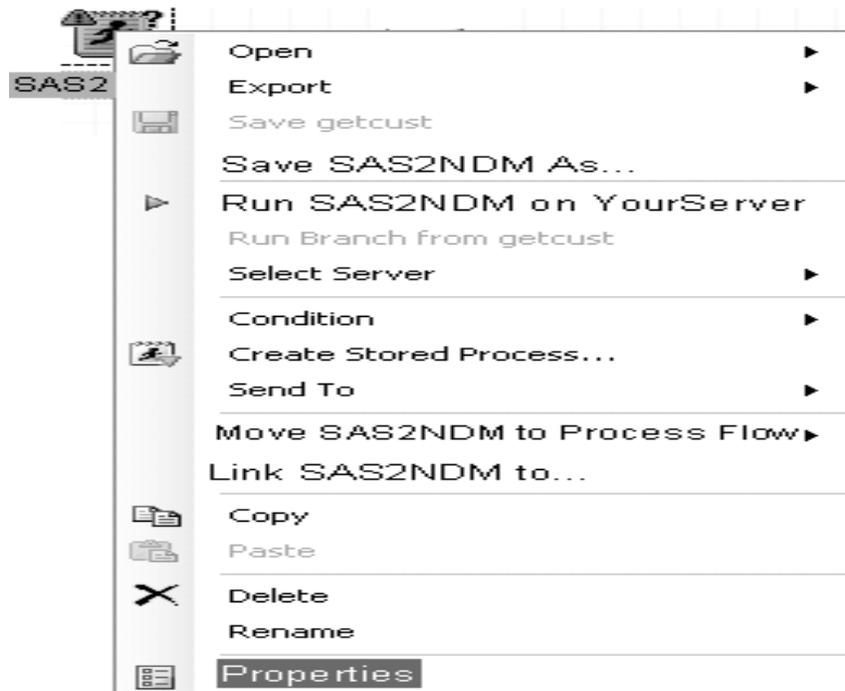


Figure 16 – Selecting properties

A properties box will open up. If you select prompts and then 'add', you will see a list of all the available prompts (Figure 17). We will add all of them in the order given.

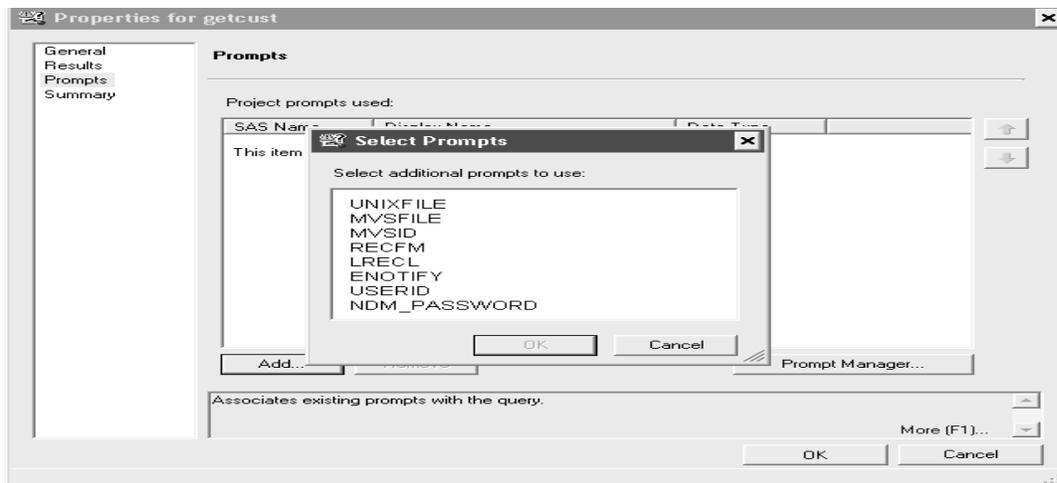


Figure 17: Adding prompts to our code

## RUNNING CODE WITH PROMPTS

Now that you'd added the prompts to your code, your screen should look like this at run-time (Figure 18)

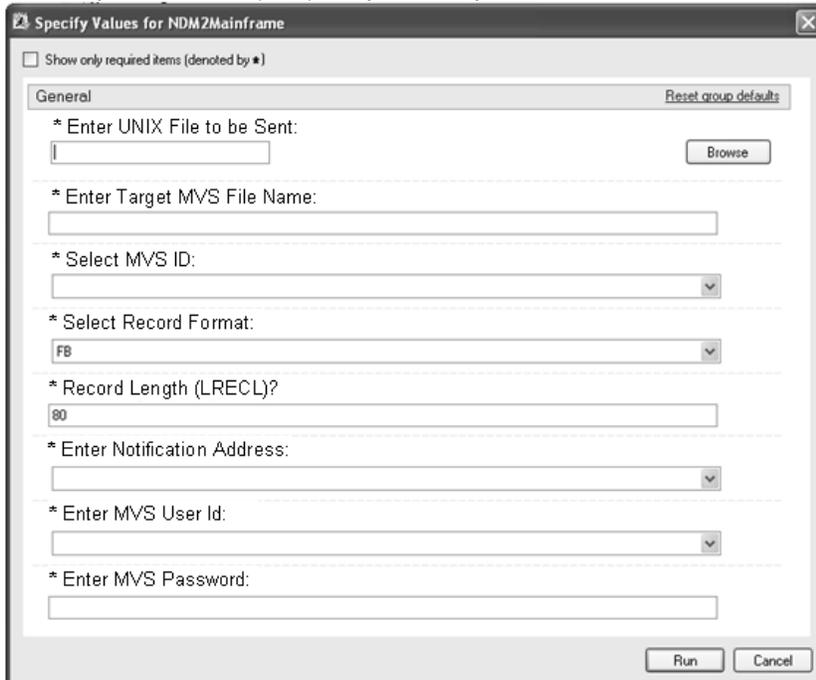


Figure 18: Run-time

Let's take a better look at the first prompt, selecting the file on UNIX to be sent. In order to browse for a file, you must be able to reach it through a SAS metadata server as in Figure 19 below. Of course you could always type or copy the complete path as well.

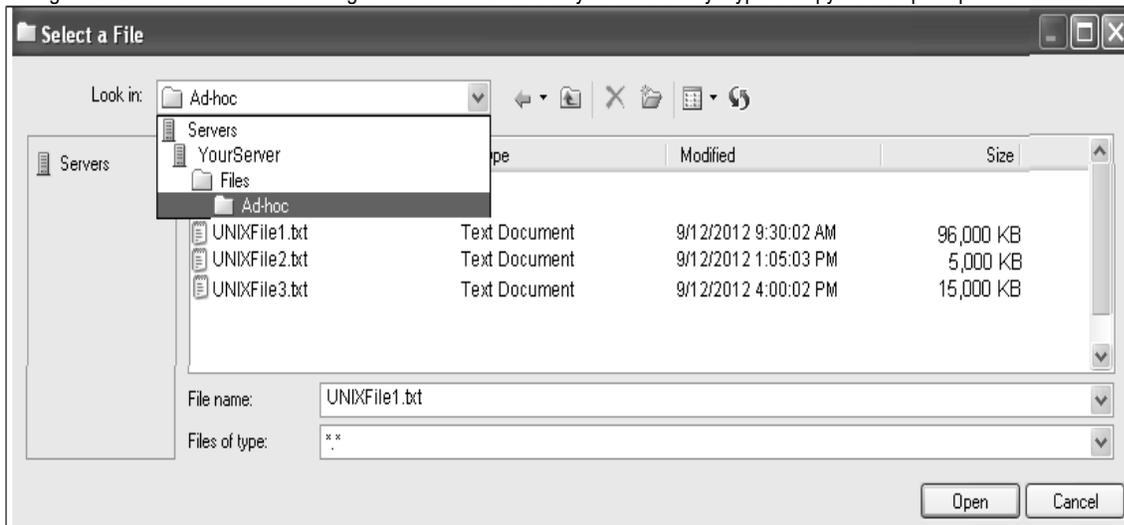


Figure 19 – Browsing files from the metadata server

## CONCLUSION

The NDM demonstration is just one of several applications you can build with prompts to automate common processes, reduce error and just generally make your work day more productive. Just another reason to get started with SAS Enterprise Guide!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

Your comments, questions and experiences are valued and encouraged. Contact the author at:

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## APPENDIX

### A. Macro to use multiple character prompts in a 'WHERE' statement

```
%MACRO proctext;
%LET listval = ; *&listval will be our resulting variable;
    %DO i=1 %TO &custname_count; *&custname_count is the number of values selected;
        %IF &i = &custname_count %THEN %DO;
            %LET listval = *build the string;
                &listval "%unquote(%NRSTR(&custname)&i. )"; *quoting and unquoting;
        %END;
    %ELSE %DO;
        %LET listval = &listval "%unquote(%NRSTR(&custname)&i. )";
    %END;
%END;
    PROC SQL;
    SELECT * FROM
    dictionary.tables
    WHERE memname IN (&listval);

*&listval evaluates to list as in Figure 4 like 'Jones','Bradford','Hettinger','Harrison';
    QUIT;
%MEND proctext;
%proctext;
```

## B. NDM UNIX to Mainframe Korn shell script

```
!/usr/bin/ksh
NDMAPICFGxxx//ndmapi.cfg
export NDMAPICFG
#above will vary by your system
#####
### This script is to transfer one file from a UNIX to one of several OS/390 servers
# There are eight parameters that are needed: Parameter 1 = The from file - fully qualified,
#   Parameter 2 = The to file - fully qualified, Parameter 3 = snodep - receiving system
#   Parameter 4 = recfmp - OS/390 record format, Parameter 5 - lreclp - OS/390 record length
#   Parameter 6 - sid - OS/390 user id, Parameter 7 - pw - MVS password
#   Parameter 8 - notify - email address for ndm notification
#####
#
fromfile=$1
tofile=$2
snodep=$3
recfmp=$4
lreclp=$5
sid=$6
pw=$7
notify=$8
if [[ $# != 8 ]];then
    print "Need eight parms"
    exit
fi
if [[ $recfmp = "FB" ]];then
    if [[ $lreclp -lt 278 ]];then let blksize=$lreclp*100
    elif [[ $lreclp -gt 277 ]];then let blksize=$lreclp*10
    fi # calculate blocksize if record format is fixed block
elif [[ $recfmp = "VB" ]];then let blksize=32760 #literal for variable blocked
elif [[ $recfmp = "V" ]];then let blksize=$lreclp+4 #variable unblocked
elif [[ $recfmp = "F" ]];then let blksize=$lreclp #fixed unblocked
fi
set -v
/xxx/ndmcli -x << EOJ # Above path will vary according to your system
submit maxdelay=0 proc1 process
snode=$snodep
snodeid=($sid,$pw) #mainframe id and password
notify=$notify
copy01 copy from (file=$fromfile
    sysopts=":datatype=text:"
```

```

        PNODE
    )
ckpt=5m
    compress extended=(CMP=5
        WIN=15
        MEM=9)
to (file=$tofile
    disp=(RPL,CATLG,CATLG) #RPL overwrites current file if it exists
    DCB=(DSORG=PS,RECFM=$recfmp,LRECL=$lreclp,BLKSIZE=$blksize)
    unit=XXX # varies according to your system and whether you want tape or disk
    snode
)
if (copy01 != 0) then
failed run task pnode
    sysopts="echo '$JOBSTEP NDM FAILED' "
    eif
pend;
EOJ

```