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Headline: How can we best use Big Data and analytics software to fight crime?

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BY NEETWORKS ASIA STAFF



Over the course of a weekend, teams of future analytics experts mulled over one central question – How can we best use Big Data and analytics software to fight crime?

This challenge was posed to them by business analytics leader SAS, for this year's SAS Analytics Competition in Singapore. Jointly sponsored by SAS Singapore, PCS Security, Singapore

Management University (SMU) School of Information Systems and National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School, SAS Analytics Competition was organized in collaboration with student interest groups from NUS Business School's Business Analytics Consulting Team (BACT) and SMU Business Intelligence & Analytics SIG.

The competition, which took place from 23rd to 25th January, challenged students to explore ways in which analytics can help police forces in fighting crime – this could range from assisting deployed patrols on the streets, identifying insights that could guide policy planning, or in identifying ways to optimize resources.

Teams were given crime incident data as well as relevant supporting data to analyze, with the help of [SAS Visual Analytics](#) software to enable them to gain insights from the data through its multiple visualization features. They were then asked share their recommendations and to present their findings to a panel of judges. The three-day competition was designed to give students the opportunity to get first-hand experience in seeing the benefits of analytics applied to public security and smart policing.

“With Singapore moving towards becoming a global data and analytics hub, skills in analytics are in high demand, but there isn't enough talent to fill those jobs. By giving students the opportunity to have hands-on experience in a real-world scenario, they will be able to see how their skills can be applied to anticipate and respond to everyday issues and choose to embark on a career as an analytics expert,” said Francis Fong, Managing Director, SAS Singapore. “We're strongly committed to working with the education sector to help groom a new generation of skilled talent to prepare them for their entry into the workforce.”

Teams were judged by a judging panel which was made up of four judges including Khoong Hock Yun, Assistant Chief Executive, Development Group, Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA), PCS Security, Tan Boon Huat, Chairman, Executive Committee, SAS User Group and Neumann Chew, Principal (Analytics), SAS Singapore.

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Team from NUS emerge as winners

Zhu Yexin, 22, Yvonne Peh, 22 and Lee Zi Ning, 21, from NUS approached the challenge in an interesting manner. Coming in first place against eleven other teams, they were able to use the data and SAS Visual Analytics to analyze variables associated with crimes committed to identify correlation and forecast future crime rates. They impressed judges with their findings and use of data to come up with recommendations on police resource allocations based on location and seasonality, mapped back to crime trends

“We decided to take part in this competition because it’s a competition where you can gain a lot of interesting insights to analytics and it also relates to our major which focuses on data analytics,” said student from NUS’ winning team, Zhu Yexin. “It was also a very good opportunity to get exposure to real time data sets which made it more stimulating for us. At the same time, using SAS’ Visual Analytics software provided us with an experience of what its like working in a data analytics work force.”

“Data and analytics underpin our development toward becoming a Smart Nation, and hold incredible potential to improve the lives of citizens,” said Khoong Hock Yun, Assistant Chief Executive, Development Group, IDA. “As demonstrated with this competition, data and analytics can be used to provide consistent, actionable intelligence to enable innovation, for example in public security.”