

# MineQuest

*SAS & WPS Consulting Services*

## Cost of Licensing WPS 2.4 vs SAS 9.2

*A Pricing Comparison on a  
Windows Server Platform*

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**MineQuest, LLC**  
1939 Queensbridge Drive  
Columbus, OH 43235-2018  
(614) 457-3714  
PhilRack@minequest.com  
[www.MineQuest.com](http://www.MineQuest.com)

## Introduction

This document is an update from our previous pricing comparison that was done in May 2008. With the introduction of WPS 2.4, we see World Programming introducing two new modules in their software suite. These two modules are the WPS SDK which is similar to the SAS/Toolkit®, and WPS Statistics.

The purpose of this paper is to perform a price comparison between SAS® and WPS™ running on a Windows Server platform. The motivation for this comparison is due to the reported criticisms of SAS Institute's pricing policies that have gotten a fair amount of attention and how rational, from an economic perspective, it may be to swap out SAS on the Windows Server for WPS.

As some customers are painfully aware, as they begin upgrading their server hardware from single processor systems to multi-core/multi-logical processors, SAS Institute has aggressively raised their licensing fees. We have seen numerous quotes where a client is upgrading a server running SAS from a single core to a dual core configuration and SAS has increased the fees by ten times over their renewal. For example, one SAS customer that we are aware of who was paying a renewal fee of \$11,000 was quoted a new fee in excess of \$100,000 for moving to a new dual core hardware configuration. This price is for the exact same software and the exact same number of users.

In terms of the comparison presented here, we are trying to be realistic and yet sensitive to the fact that each site uses SAS somewhat differently. As a company that has more than 25 years of SAS consulting under our belt, we are very aware that SAS products are used in many different ways. However, one thing that has stayed constant is that for the vast majority of our work, we live in the SAS/Base and SAS/Access world. I would venture that for the work we do in Operational Risk and Marketing, easily 95% of our interaction with SAS encompasses these two products with perhaps the other 5% being in SAS/Graph. In our discussions with other SAS consultants, these percentages vary a bit, depending on the type of consulting, but for the most part, they are remarkably consistent.

Given that the work load typically encompasses these few products, a comparison of WPS and SAS is even more meaningful. As our clients are struggling to maintain some sanity in the cost of their software and to control run-away costs, the pressure to look at alternative software is becoming more important.

This document compares pricing for three different hardware configurations. The configurations that we look at are a single logical processor, a two logical processor configuration and finally a four logical processor configuration. These configurations are the most widely seen computing platforms in the Windows environment and representative of what many hardware vendors have commoditized.

In 2008 when we performed a pricing comparison between WPS and SAS on the Windows Server Platform, World Programming only offered their product as a single bundle. With the introduction of WPS 2.4, we see a breakout of product lines and pricing for each product line separately. This makes it easier for SAS installations to compare what products they currently have and what products WPS offers. We've included this breakout and per product pricing in the table below.

## WPS Product Categories and Per Logical CPU Pricing for WPS 2.4 For Windows Servers - 2009

WPS Products V2.4	Windows Server
	<b>Per Logical CPU (\$ USD)</b>
<b>Core Module</b>	
<a href="#"><u>WPS Core</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<b>Add-On Modules (core module required)</b>	
<a href="#"><u>WPS Workbench</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Statistics</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Graphing</u></a>	<i>Included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS SDK</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for DB2</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for DB Files</u></a>	<i>Included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for MySQL</u></a>	<i>Included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for ODBC</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for Oracle</u></a>	<i>Included</i>
<a href="#"><u>WPS Engine for Teradata</u></a>	<i>included</i>
<b>(To access SQL Server, use WPS Engine for ODBC)</b>	
<b>Bundle Offer</b>	
<b>WPS Bundle (Core + All Add-On Modules)</b>	1,848

In the following pages, we present pricing for WPS and SAS on the same hardware platform. We look at not only the first year cost, but the annual maintenance fees and a three year cost for each system. In our analysis and comparison of pricing, we used the WPS Bundle Pricing of \$1,848 per logical CPU. We could find no published bundle pricing for SAS products on a Windows Server.

# Pricing Comparisons Between WPS and SAS

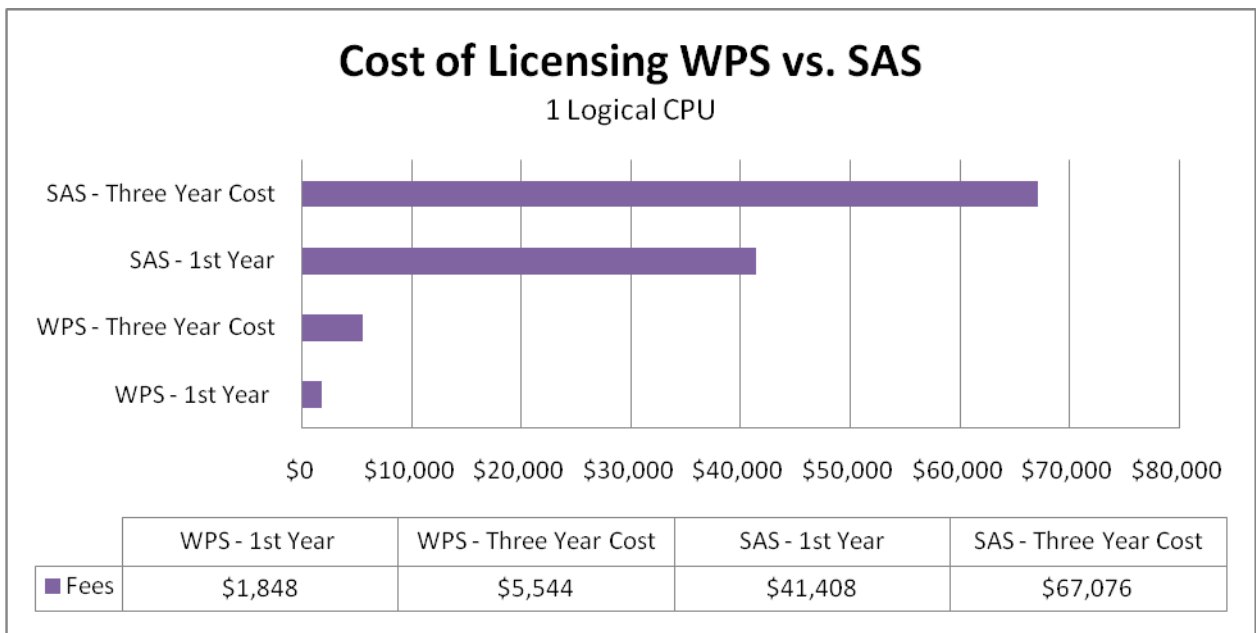
**Table 1. Single Logical Processor Running on a Windows Server.**

*Example Processor: Intel Pentium 4 (without HyperThreading)*

	WPS Pricing	SAS Pricing <sup>1</sup>	Savings
<b>Base Product</b>	\$1,848 / \$1,848	\$7,246 / \$2,293	
<b>Access Product<sup>2</sup></b>	Included	\$14,332 / \$4,720	
<b>Graphics Product<sup>3</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Statistics Product<sup>4</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Toolkit</b>	Included	\$14,656 / \$4,270	
<b>Ten Client Licenses<sup>5</sup></b>	N/A	\$5,174 / \$1,551	
<b>1st Year and Two Year Renewal Fees</b>	\$1,848 / \$3,696	\$41,408 / \$25,668	\$39,560 / \$21,972
<b>Total 3 Year Fees</b>	\$5,544	\$67,076	\$61,532

**Chart 1. Cost Analysis of a SAS Server License vs. WPS Server License - 1 Logical Processor.**

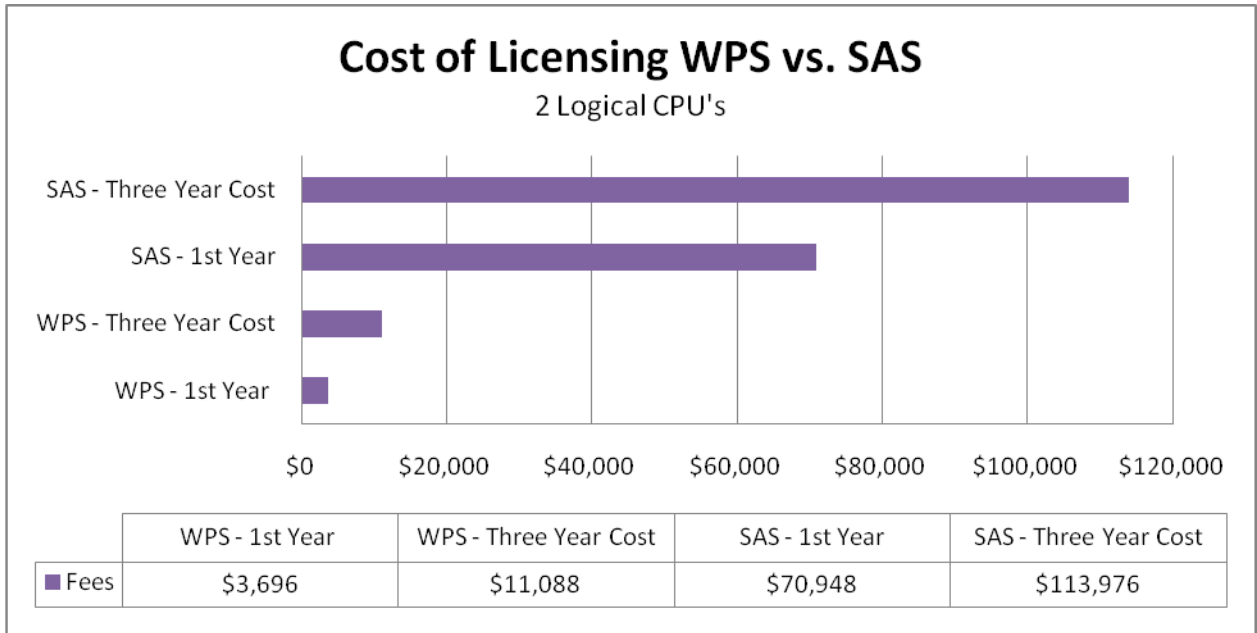
*First Year Cost and Three Year Cost*



**Table 2. Two Logical Processors Running on a Windows Server.**  
*Example Processor: Intel Core 2 Duo Processor E6850*

	WPS Pricing	SAS Pricing <sup>1</sup>	Savings
<b>Base Product</b>	\$3,696 / \$3,696	\$12,346 / \$3,421	
<b>Access Product<sup>2</sup></b>	Included	\$32,700 / \$9,808	
<b>Graphics Product<sup>3</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Statistics Product<sup>4</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Toolkit</b>	Included	\$24,424 / \$6,734	
<b>Ten Client Licenses<sup>5</sup></b>	N/A	\$5,174 / \$1,551	
<b>1st Year and Two Year Renewal Fees</b>	\$3,696 / \$7,392	\$70,948 / \$43,028	\$92,166 / \$35,636
<b>Total 3 Year Fees</b>	\$11,088	\$113,976	\$102,888

**Chart 2. Cost Analysis of a SAS Server License vs. WPS Server License - 2 Logical Processors.**  
*First Year Cost and Three Year Cost*



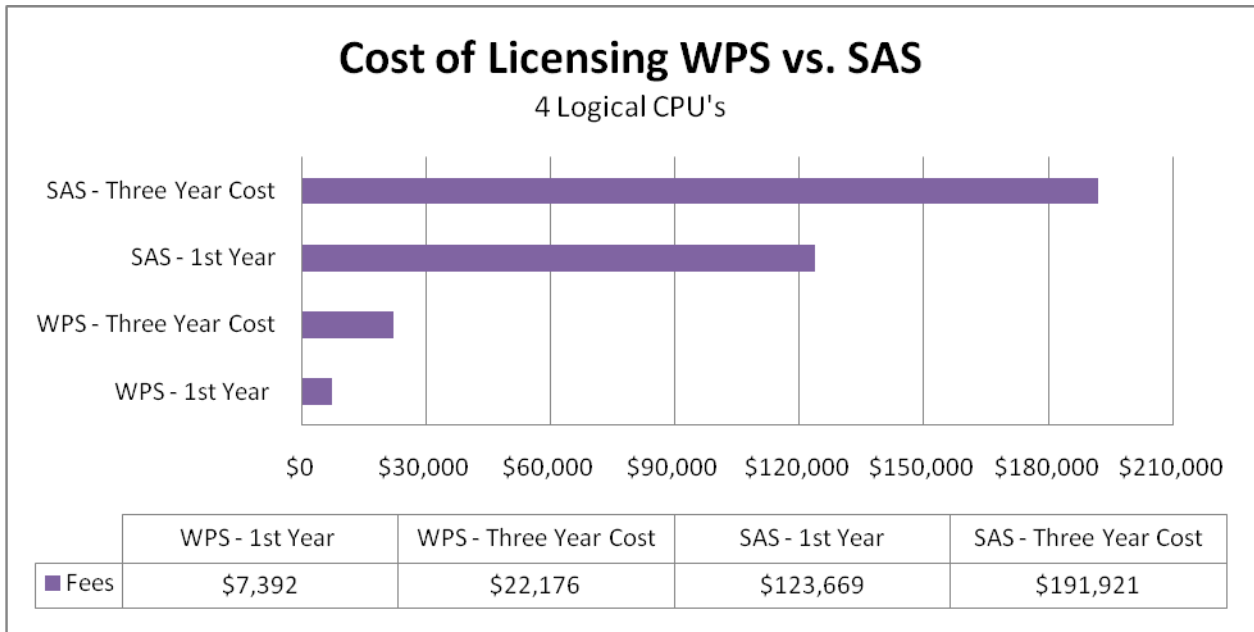
**Table 3. Four Logical Processors running on a Windows Server.**

*Example Processor: Intel Q6600 Quad-Core*

	WPS Pricing	SAS Pricing <sup>1</sup>	Savings
<b>Base Product</b>	\$7,392 / \$7,392	\$19,429 / \$5,337	
<b>Access Product<sup>2</sup></b>	Included	\$59,996 / \$17,168	
<b>Graphics Product<sup>3</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Statistics Product<sup>4</sup></b>	Included		
<b>Toolkit</b>	Included	\$39,070 / \$10,070	
<b>Ten Client Licenses<sup>5</sup></b>	N/A	\$5,174 / \$1,551	
<b>1st Year and Two Year Renewal Fees</b>	\$7,392 / \$14,784	\$123,669 / \$68,252	\$116,277 / \$53,468
<b>Three Year Cost</b>	\$22,176	\$191,921	\$169,745

**Chart 3. Cost Analysis of a SAS Server License vs. WPS Server License - 4 Logical Processors.**

*First Year Cost and Three Year Cost*



## Findings

The tables and charts tell the story in stark terms. Across the board, WPS maintains a dramatic cost savings over SAS. As a matter of fact, you can buy four copies of WPS for a two logical processor server and still have money left over for the price you pay for a single copy of SAS. The savings seen are most dramatic in the first year but are still four times lower per year when it comes to renewal fees. If your SAS applications and processes are heavily weighted to the use of SAS/Base, SAS/Access and to some degree SAS/Graph, an evaluation of WPS should be on your short list of things to do.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

If you are considering upgrading your server hardware to more modern architectures such as multiple processors and cores, this would be a good time to consider swapping out SAS for WPS. You not only can save tens of thousands of dollars over a three year period, but can continue to use your SAS code with very few changes. You also maintain your company's investment in the SAS language but also SAS programming talent.

Although WPS can hold its own in terms of performance with SAS, we have found that it averages about 10% slower on some real world applications. Some WPS procedures are much faster than SAS's, such as the SORT procedure and some data step code where we see WPS being 10 to 20% faster. Benchmarking is an art and we suggest that you benchmark your own code to be able to conclude how WPS will perform.

### **Our Recommendations.**

if you are looking at upgrading your SAS Server from a single processor to a two processor platform, we would recommend that you swap out SAS and license WPS on the new hardware. Your WPS code will run faster on the two processor server than SAS will run on a single processor server. Not only will you save thousands of dollars in licensing fees, but you will also notice that your other applications that reside on the server such as databases, SharePoint and Web Servers which will be much more responsive.

To highlight the cost differential, your organization could upgrade to a four processor machine running WPS for about one-third the three year cost of licensing the SAS System on a single processor system. The savings in software licensing alone will pay for the hardware and you will see a dramatic decrease in processing times and have the ability to handle more users and more production jobs on the same server.

Finally, this pricing comparison has been limited to the Windows Server platform. With version 2.4 of the WPS System, many new platforms based on the Unix/Linux architectures have been introduced. If your organization is running SAS on a Linux or Unix platform, you can also save tens of thousands of dollars by swapping out SAS for WPS.

## Notes

1. SAS pricing in the tables above represent first year prices and annual maintenance.
2. WPS includes six database drivers. They are ODBC, DB2, Oracle, MySql, DB and Teradata. The pricing comparison between WPS Database Engines and SAS\Access products is the price of four of these products combined.
3. WPS implements a subset of the most popular SAS\Graph language procedures. SAS\Graph fees were not included in this analysis because WPS Graphing is a subset of the most popular graphic procedures used in the SAS System.
4. In WPS 2.4, WPS Statistics contains the statistical procedures: REG, LOGISTIC and SCORE that corresponds to those found in SAS\STAT.
5. Note that the SAS Server pricing does not include client licenses. SAS requires that you purchase client licenses in the form a desktop copy of SAS or an Enterprise Guide license that currently cost \$5,174 for ten users. WPS pricing is for the Terminal Server product which does not require a client license to access the server allowing you to have as many clients as you wish. Note that there are practical limitations as too many users may result in a performance drop-off.

WPS pricing is based on logical CPU count. Logical CPU's include the number of cores and whether HyperThreading is enabled. A dual core CPU with HyperThreading enabled would count as 4 logical CPU's. To help determine whether your Intel processor supports HyperThreading, visit the [Intel processor comparison page](#).

Pricing for SAS products taken from the [SAS GSA Price List](#) and can be found at the Executive Information Systems web site at: <http://www.execinfosys.com/>. Prices used in this document can be found on pages 38, 39, 40, 64, 68, and 69. SAS does not publicly list pricing for non-academic/non-governmental customers. Hence, the SAS pricing used in the comparisons above are considered by the federal government to be "best prices" and are at a minimum 16% lower than pricing to the private sector. WPS pricing for Windows is readily available on the web. Pricing for WPS products can be found at the [World Programming](#) website. The prices above were taken on October 19, 2009 and are in U.S. dollars.

## Trademark Notices

Teradata is a trade name of Teradata Corporation.

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