



SQL Servers UPDATE Newsletter

November 10, 2005

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1. ==== Perspectives ====

How to Argue for Upgrade

by Brian Moran, brian@solidqualitylearning.com

Ok, it's official. SQL Server 2005 is here. Launch events all over the world are introducing the new product, you can download bits from MSDN, and you might even already be able to purchase media from certain distributors. Most SQL Server customers will move to SQL Server 2005-- it's simply a question of when. Most technical folks will want to move yesterday; no one wants to be the last kid on the block with the newest coolest toy. But boring manager types who are actually concerned about safety might say, "Heck, what's wrong with waiting for the first service pack?" This week, I won't debate the pros and cons of a rapid upgrade cycle, but I will follow up on the idea I introduced a couple of weeks ago in "Upgrading: Who Wants to Be First?"

(
<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19214:4E6DC3>).

In that article, I emphasized that early adopters really won't be the first penguins in the water. But you might need some additional information about quality assurance testing and pre-release customer testing to help the nervous nellys feel comfortable that SQL Server 2005 is a safe and viable platform today.

One fact that might give your management the confidence to upgrade is that Microsoft subjected SQL Server 2005 to significantly more quality-assurance testing than SQL Server 2000. The company put SQL Server 2005 through 40 times more stress-testing hours than SQL Server 2000. 3900 machine hours were logged for SQL Server 2000 compared to more than 150,000 hours for SQL Server 2005. And the company increased the loads on SQL Server 2005 internal stress-testing tools by a factor of 10. SQL Server 2005 was subject to between three and five

times more functional test paths than SQL Server 2000. As part of product testing, Microsoft upgraded more than 1000 customer databases in the internal Microsoft labs. And Microsoft's patented StackHasher exception technology tested 100 times more paths in SQL Server 2005 than in SQL Server 2000; more than 100,000 paths were tested in SQL Server 2000, but more than 10,000,000 were tested in SQL Server 2005.

Many of these improved tests are the result of huge investments that Microsoft made in testing automation. The company's internal AutoVerify tool filed 11,000 bugs and analyzed 182,000 dumps without human intervention. Thus, Microsoft's ability to do more testing was greatly enhanced. Microsoft estimates that its automation tools saved more than 20,000 person hours.

What about pre-release deployments? Here are some facts that might persuade a reluctant manager that an upgrade will be successful.

Worldwide, Microsoft has 15 independent software vendor (ISV) upgrade labs that upgraded more than 200 ISV applications to SQL Server 2005 before the product's release to manufacturing (RTM). All of Microsoft's own internal, core business systems were converted to SQL Server 2005 before RTM. The company upgraded more than 100 applications, including five multi-terabyte systems. And through its early-adopter programs, Microsoft upgraded more than 50 mission-critical customer applications around the world. Some of the most interesting applications include systems for Barnes & Noble, Experian, Nestle SA, NASDAQ, Xerox, and Texas Instruments. I'll explore some of the most interesting facets of those and other large SQL Server 2005 applications in a future editorial.

So, if you're excited about upgrading to SQL Server 2005 but your management doesn't want to be the first penguin, tell them not to worry: you won't be.

Rapid Database Restoration Using LiteSpeed

LiteSpeed for SQL Server with Object Level Recovery (OLR) enables you to rapidly recover only the specific database objects that you want, without having to generate native SQL Server commands. From stored procedures and users to indexes and primary and foreign keys, retrieve only the objects you need. Now you can eliminate entire database restores through rapid, Object Level Recovery of single stored procedures. Only from LiteSpeed and Quest Software. Download your free trial today

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19218:4E6DC3>

2. ==== SQL Server 2005 Watch ====

Microsoft Launches Visual Studio 2005, SQL Server 2005
by Paul Thurrott, thurrott@windowsitpro.com

On Monday, Microsoft officially launched Visual Studio 2005 and SQL Server 2005 at a gala event at the Moscone Center in San Francisco.

Presiding over the launch was Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer, who gave the keynote address. Microsoft is making both products available to the public immediately. (Microsoft Developer Network--MSDN--subscribers have had access to them for over a week.) A third product, Microsoft BizTalk Server 2006, launches as well but won't ship until early next year.

The computer world has eagerly anticipated the launch of both products, which occurs over a year later than originally expected.

Together, Visual Studio 2005 and SQL Server 2005 make up what Microsoft originally called the "Yukon wave" of products. This product wave was supposed to arrive midway between the release of Windows XP and Windows Vista, but delays moved the launches closer to Windows Vista, which is due next year.

Both product lines offer a bewildering array of editions. Visual Studio 2005 ships in several versions, including low-end Express Editions of individual developer environments, such as Visual Basic 2005 and Visual C# 2005, and several high-end Visual Studio 2005 Team System versions. SQL Server 2005 will ship several different versions aimed at the enterprise, at developers, and--with a free Express edition--at enthusiasts.

Amazingly, Microsoft is also offering the Visual Studio Express Editions for free for the next year. After that, the products will be bargain priced at just \$49 each.

Both product lines bring wide-ranging functional improvements and can be integrated to increase developer productivity. This week on the SuperSite for Windows (<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1922B:4E6DC3>), I'll examine the improvements. My overview of Visual Studio 2005 is already available, and later this week I'll publish a similar treatment for SQL Server 2005.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19219:4E6DC3>

==== Sponsor: Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services Migration ====

Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Analysis Services offers many performance improvements and benefits for existing SQL Server 2000 Analysis Services users. If you are planning a migration to Analysis Services 2005, you can't afford to ignore this paper! Download your free copy now and get all the tips and real-world examples you need to make migration faster and easier.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920D:4E6DC3>

3. ==== News & Views ====

Microsoft Offers Visual Studio Express Products Free for 1 Year

by Paul Thurrott, thurrott@windowsitpro.com

Monday at the Launch 2005 event in San Francisco, Microsoft successfully launched Visual Studio 2005 and SQL Server 2005. The company also unveiled an unexpected announcement--for the next year, Microsoft will offer the new Visual Studio Express Editions to customers for free. After that, the price will be \$49 per product.

"We are announcing a pricing promotion for Visual Studio Express," a notice on the Microsoft Web site reads. "For the first year after the products launch on November 7th, 2005, customers will be able to visit MSDN to download their copy of Visual Studio Express for free! Our customers are very excited about the release of these products, so this limited-time download is our gift to the hobbyist, student, and novice community."

The Visual Studio Express products include various versions of Visual Basic 2005, Visual C# 2005, Visual C++ 2005, Visual J# 2005, and Visual Web Developer 2005. SQL Server 2005 Express Edition, which replaces the Microsoft SQL Server Desktop Engine (MSDE), will remain free. The Express Editions are designed for individual developers creating Windows applications, Web sites, Web applications, and Web services.

In related news, the deadline-driven release of Visual Studio 2005 has triggered griping from some developers who believe that Microsoft ignored numerous reported bugs in order to release Visual Studio 2005 at yesterday's launch event. However, the software giant maintains that all 24 of the partners on its customer board and the members of the Secure Windows Initiative Team signed off on Visual Studio 2005 last month, enabling Microsoft to start shipping the product this month.

Customers who are interested in downloading any of the Visual Studio Express Editions or who want to find out more about these products should go to the Microsoft MSDN Web site.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19226:4E6DC3>

(Windows XP Service Pack 2 must be installed on your desktop before you download any of the Visual Studio Express Editions.)

Direct download links:

Visual Basic 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1921F:4E6DC3>

Visual C# 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1921E:4E6DC3>

Visual C++ 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19220:4E6DC3>

Visual J# 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19223:4E6DC3>

Visual Web Developer 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19221:4E6DC3>

SQL Server 2005 Express Edition

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19222:4E6DC3>

Results of Previous Instant Poll: Launch Events

"Will you attend one of Microsoft's SQL Server 2005 launch events?"

Here are the results from the 79 responses:

- 5% Yes, I'll be in San Francisco on November 7
- 59% Yes, I'm attending a local launch event near me
- 5% No, but I'm attending a non-Microsoft event
- 23% No, it sounds fun, but I can't make it
- 8% No, I'm not into attending these kinds of events

New Instant Poll: Open Source for SQL Server

"Do you use any open-source language when programming applications for SQL Server?" Go to the SQL Server Magazine home page (

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1922D:4E6DC3>) and submit your vote for

- Yes, I use them for the flexibility they give my applications
- Yes, I learned to code in an open-source language and still prefer it
- Sometimes, but I mostly use T-SQL/.NET languages
- No, I only use T-SQL/.NET languages

4. ===== Reader Challenge =====

November Reader Challenge Solution: Grouping Sequential Changes

by Umachandar Jayachandran, challenge@sqlmag.com

Congratulations to Ken Selvia, a Programmer Analyst for Enterprise Products Company in Houston, Texas and Shane Dubble, a DBA for Innoviant, Inc. in Wausau, Wisconsin. Ken won first prize of \$100 for the best solution to the November Reader Challenge, "Grouping Sequential Changes." Shane won second prize of \$50. You can read a recap of the problem and the solution to the November Reader Challenge at

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920F:4E6DC3>

December Reader Challenge: Troubleshooting Performance issues

Now, test your SQL Server savvy in the December Reader Challenge, "Troubleshooting Performance Issues" (below). Submit your solution in an email message to challenge@sqlmag.com by November 17. Umachandar Jayachandran, a SQL Server Magazine technical editor, will evaluate the responses. We'll announce the winner in an upcoming SQL Server Magazine UPDATE. The first-place winner will receive \$100, and the second-place winner will receive \$50.

Here's the challenge: Kevin is a DBA who manages several data warehouses in his organization. All the data warehouses are stored in SQL Server 2000 with Service Pack 3 (SP3) or SP4. Each data warehouse consists of a reporting database and a historical data store. Several applications connect to the reporting database to perform ad-hoc queries or operations. Kevin encounters blocking or performance issues periodically, and he wants to be able to troubleshoot these problems more efficiently. Help Kevin do the following:

1. Identify the executing Server Process ID (SPID), blocked status, wait type, wait resource, CPU, IO, and memory counters in a particular database.
2. Identify the current executing statement with the appropriate stored procedure or function name, if present.
3. Develop a simple query that Kevin can use to retrieve these details.

5. ===== Events and Resources =====

Get Ready for the SQL Server 2005 Roadshow in Europe--Get the facts about migrating to SQL Server 2005!

SQL Server experts will present real-world information about administration, development, and business intelligence to help you implement a best-practices migration to SQL Server 2005 and improve your database-computing environment. Receive a one-year membership to PASS and one-year subscription to SQL Server Magazine. Register now.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920E:4E6DC3>

SQL Server 2005: A New Day for BI

From business scorecards and dashboards, to a unified dimensional model for OLAP and an enterprise ETL tool, Microsoft delivers on the promise of a new era for business intelligence. In this free Web seminar, you'll get all you need to know about the capabilities of Microsoft Business Scorecard Manager and its integration with Office, Analysis Services, Reporting Services, and SharePoint.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920C:4E6DC3>

Get the Maximum Return on Software Investments by Optimizing Every Dollar Spent on Software

Inaccurate information about software usage causes many organizations to either overspend and buy licenses they don't use, or underspend and deny some end users access to the software they need.

Attend this free Web seminar and get a 5-step plan for quickly implementing a license management program today!

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19212:4E6DC3>

What Does It Mean to Be Compliant?

We've all heard about legal and regulatory requirements, but there are other types of compliance that might also affect you--specifically email compliance. In this free Web seminar, you'll get insights into compliance and policy issues that you need to know about, suggestions on what to look for when implementing your compliance strategy, and more. Register today!

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19215:4E6DC3>

Deploy VoIP and FoIP Technologies

Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is the future of telecommunications, and many companies are already enjoying the benefits of using VoIP networks to significantly reduce telephone and facsimile costs. Join industry expert David Chernicoff for this free, on-demand Web seminar to learn the ins and outs of boardless fax in IP environments, tips for rolling out fax and integrating fax with telephony technologies, and more.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19216:4E6DC3>

See the complete Windows IT Pro Network guide to Web and live events.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19228:4E6DC3>

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6. ===== Featured White Paper =====

Stopping Crimeware and Malware: How to Close the Vulnerability Window

Computer users can no longer wait for a new vaccine every time a new security threat appears. How do you defend your network in a world of smarter, faster, Internet-borne zero-day attacks? Find out about an Intrusion Prevention System that can detect and destroy malware with virtually zero false positives.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19213:4E6DC3>

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7. ===== Peer to Peer =====

Hot Tip: Using Fields as Primary Keys

by Brian Moran, brian@solidqualitylearning.com

Q. What's quick query to find out whether two fields together are unique and if I can use the combination as a primary key?

Read the answer to this question today at

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19210:4E6DC3>

Hot Article: MAX Specifier Boosts Variable-Length Data Types

SQL Server 2005 enhances support for large object (LOB) data types in ways that are sure to please programmers and DBAs. The enhancements provide a unified programming model for regular data types and LOBs and let you manipulate LOBs in a much easier and more flexible fashion than ever. In his November T-SQL 2005 column, Itzik Ben-Gan discusses some enhancements related to LOBs and demonstrates their use. Read this article today and post your comments at

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19211:4E6DC3>

In a Nutshell: The Wonders of USE PLAN in SQL Server 2005

There's a great new feature in SQL Server 2005 called USE PLAN that allows the substitution of one execution plan for a given query with another plan of your own design. This is especially exciting for those of you who may be suffering from poorly coded third-party applications in which you can't change the SQL of the procedures, triggers, views, and functions within the product. Read about this new feature and let Kevin know your opinion of its potential today at

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19217:4E6DC3>

Hot Threads: Check out the following hot threads, and see other discussions in our 30 SQL Server forums.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19225:4E6DC3>

SQL Server General Discussion: Can Bad Queries Cause Bad Statistics?

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920A:4E6DC3>

Administration: Failover Clustering

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19207:4E6DC3>

T-SQL: GROUP BY Query

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19209:4E6DC3>

Performance: Controller Cache Setting

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1920B:4E6DC3>

OLAP/Data Warehousing: Modifying Cube Design

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19206:4E6DC3>

SQL Server 2005 General Discussion: 2005 64-Bit Running Slower Than 2000 32-Bit
<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19208:4E6DC3>

8. ===== Announcements =====

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7 access to a database of more than 2300 SQL Server articles that will give you all the answers you need, when you need them. BONUS--Includes the latest digital issue of SQL Server Magazine. Sign up now for just

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9. ===== New & Improved =====

by Blake Eno and Trisha Pendley, products@sqlmag.com

Share Your Story and Get a T-Shirt!

Have you used a product that saved you time or made your job easier?

Send us a short note about how your favorite product solved a SQL Server problem for you, and if we print your submission in the magazine's Hands On department we'll send you a SQL Server Magazine t-shirt. Send your email today to handson@sqlmag.com!

See and Understand Data

Tableau Software announced Tableau 1.5, visual analysis software that lets users dynamically create useful views of data. In addition to support for SQL Server 2000, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel, MySQL, and Hyperion Essbase, the latest release of the product includes support for SQL Server 2005, Analysis Services 2005, and Oracle. A new interface, Tableau ShowMe!, helps users automatically create views of data by selecting data fields and clicking ShowMe!. The software then automatically generates the analytical view of that data. Tableau 1.5 also has formatting control that includes customized sort ordering; multiple scales for axes in the same display; color binning and palette selection; font and number formats; and support for customized labels, descriptions, and captions. Tableau 1.5 lets you export high-resolution data displays to Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint and export cross-tabs to Excel. The software also automatically generates captions for presentations. Tableau Software offers a 30-day free trial. For more information, please visit the vendor's Web site.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=19229:4E6DC3>

Black Box Streamlines Development Lifecycle

Identify announced the integration of its application development automation tool, AppSight 6.0, with Microsoft Visual Studio 2005.

AppSight 6.0 technology automates the process of problem resolution throughout the development lifecycle by using a software module known as the AppSight Black Box. The module operates like an aircraft's black box flight recorder, recording application execution and capturing a realtime log of user actions, configuration data and code execution.

Crucial time savings are realized when the developer doesn't have to try to recreate the problem. The integration allows access to AppSight 6.0 and Black Box functionality through an embedded UI in Visual Studio 2005. For more information, contact Identify at 212-629-0003.

<http://lists.sqlmag.com/t?ctl=1922C:4E6DC3>

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