

(January 20th, 2014)

If you know someone who you think would benefit from being an Insider, feel free to forward this PDF to them so they can sign up [here](#).



Quick Tips for our Insider friends!

Hey Insiders!

This newsletter is coming to you from Redmond where we're working on content for this year's classes, conferences, and Pluralsight courses. I was hoping for some snow before we spend February in Tampa but it seems we're on the wrong side of the country for that! I hope you've all fared well with the weather this winter and that you've even been able to enjoy some of it.

The first classes of the year are almost upon us and there are a few seats open in each class in Tampa in February – see the bottom of the newsletter for details. Also check details of the **Spring 2014 SQLintersection** conference (I blogged details [here](#)) and **how you can get a \$50 Amazon gift card for referring someone** to our IE0 and IEHW classes.

The most recent book I've read is John Durant's [*The Paleo Manifesto*](#). This was an interesting read. Contrary to what the title evokes, it's not a "go naked into the wilderness and kill things" book. It presents some compelling points about the industrialization of food production and the unhealthiness inherent in much of that, getting proper exercise for the body (not just pounding a flat-surface treadmill), getting sunshine, eating a healthy, omnivorous diet, getting a decent amount of sleep, and being careful not to upset the circadian rhythms of the body. Durant also discusses vegetarianism (in a mostly slightly-negative way), hunting and nose-to-tail animal consumption, and posits that crop-based agriculture is inherently more unhealthy than, say, dairy-based farming, as far as nutrients, sustainability, and resource-intensiveness are concerned. Most of his arguments seem cogent and sensible and many of them are just common sense: don't eat crap and try to treat your body like it's evolved to be treated. I can see where some of the negative backlash against the whole paleo movement has come from, but I liked this book and it's helped inspire me to make some changes in my lifestyle. Recommended.

Please [let us know](#) if you liked what you read/saw here and/or have any suggestions for future Quick Tips.

Note: you can get all the prior Insider newsletters [here](#).

Paul's Ponderings

I had a lot of feedback from the last newsletter around causes of not having backups, and one of the reasons is my topic for today.

Quite a few people responded that they're concerned about the same kind of thing happening to their companies. They expressed frustration because they're competent and conscientious DBAs but they're being prevented from taking care of all the critical tasks they know they should be (like ensuring that there are valid backups and that databases don't have corruption problems).

Why are they being prevented? If they're a DBA, that's their job, right?

Well, yes. And that's what is frustrating them. They're being prevented from doing their job because of other forces in play at their companies.

In one example, a company is experimenting with a new method of software lifecycle which involves every software team having a DBA as a team member, responsible for deployments, architecture discussions, designs, and so on – i.e. being forced to be more of a development DBA rather than a production DBA. This means that all the production DBAs are seconded to the software development teams.

Who's watching the shop in the meantime? No-one, as there are no more production DBAs – a metaphorical disaster waiting to happen.

In another example, the number of DBAs at a company has been slashed as part of a cost-cutting move, resulting in the remaining DBAs being hugely over-worked, lots of tasks being dropped on the floor, and morale in the DBA team dropping precipitously. Now there are DBAs actively looking to leave the company, meaning even more pressure for the few who remain.

In this case, there are DBAs trying to watch the shop but they're spread hopelessly thin – another disaster waiting to happen.

What is the solution in each case? From what I can gather, management has been told about the dangers in each case and is oblivious to the concerns. I suspect it will take some kind of disaster to occur to wake them up, but then who's going to be blamed for the ensuing problems?

You know as well as I do – the poor DBAs.

Call to action: if you're in a similar situation to that described above, make sure you've voiced your concerns to your management, and you've kept evidence of that (C.Y.A. if you end up being unfairly blamed and fired.) There's quite a bit of demand for good DBAs right now, so if you're in a bad situation at work, there are plenty of companies willing to hire. If your company doesn't respect and value your role as a DBA, know that there are others that do. But, at the same time, don't jump too quickly – be sure to interview any possible future employer just as much as they interview you to make sure you won't be in the same boat in a new position.

I'm curious to hear your thoughts on the situation I described above, so please feel free to [drop me a line](#), always treated confidentially, of course.

Video Demo

From Erin:

When you update statistics, what happens to the query plans in cache? Prior to SQL Server 2012, any plans that used the updated statistics are invalidated...unless you have the Auto Update Statistics option disabled (read more about that interesting caveat in my blog post [here](#)).

Did you know that in SQL Server 2012, if you update a statistic where no rows have changed - based on SQL Server's internal method of tracking row modifications - associated plans will NOT be invalidated? Whether this news is a new or old take a few minutes to watch this week's Insider video where I demonstrate this behavior, and then check out [Kimberly's post](#) to understand why this matters when it comes to query tuning.

Finally, in case you haven't played much with statistics, or are looking for a refresher on the basics, please join me this **Tuesday, January 21, 2014** for my online Statistics Starter session, hosted by the PASS DBA Fundamentals chapter. You can [sign up here](#), I hope to see you there!

The video is just over ten minutes long and you can get it:

- In WMV format [here](#).
- In MOV format [here](#).

You can get the demo code [here](#).

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

If you know someone who would benefit from our IE0: Immersion Event for Accidental/Junior DBA or IEHW: Immersion Event on SQL Server Hardware, refer them to us and when they register we'll send you a \$50 Amazon gift card. Either they (or you) just need to let us know you referred them, we'll match it up to their registration and send you the gift card.

Please know that these classes are final as the hotel contracts are signed, and the classes will not be cancelled or moved for any reason, nor will the dates change. Additionally, most of our public training courses will be held in the first half of this year. We might add a couple of other classes in the second half of the year, but not all that many (maybe one or two IE1 deliveries and one IE2 and, if added, they'll be held in the US). Please plan accordingly.

Finally, to help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've added a few new items to help you justify spending your training dollars with us:

- [Letter to your boss explaining why SQLskills training is worthwhile](#)
- [Community blog posts about our classes](#)

- [Immersion Event FAQ](#)

2014 Immersion Events

Tampa, FL

- February 3-7, 2014: **IE1**: Immersion Event on Internals and Performance
- February 3-5, 2014: **IE0**: Immersion Event for the Accidental/Junior DBA
- February 6-7, 2014: **IEHW**: Immersion Event on SQL Server Hardware
- February 10-14, 2014: **IE2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning
- February 10-14, 2014: **IEBI**: Immersion Event on Business Intelligence
- February 17-21, 2014: **IE3**: Immersion Event on High Availability and Disaster Recovery
- February 17-21, 2014: **IEDEV**: Immersion Event for Developers

Australia

- Sydney, NSW; March 10-14, 2014: **IE1**: Immersion Event on Internals and Performance
- Melbourne, VIC; March 17-21, 2014 **IE1**: Immersion Event on Internals and Performance

Chicago, IL

- April 28 – May 2, 2014: **IE1**: Immersion Event on Internals and Performance
- April 28 – May 2, 2014: **IEBI**: Immersion Event on Business Intelligence
- May 5-6, 2014: **IEHW**: Immersion Event on SQL Server Hardware
- May 5-9, 2014: **IE2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning
- May 12-16, 2014: **IE3**: Immersion Event on High Availability and Disaster Recovery
- May 13-16, 2014: **IETS**: Immersion Event on Advanced Transact-SQL
- May 19-23, 2014: **IE4**: Immersion Event on Security, PowerShell, and Developer Support
- May 19-21, 2014: **IE0**: Immersion Event for the Accidental/Junior DBA

Bellevue, WA

- June 9-13, 2014: **IE1**: Immersion Event on Internals and Performance
- June 16-20, 2014: **IE2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning

See [here](#) for the main Immersion Event Calendar page that allows you to drill through to each class for more details and registration links.

SQLintersection

Our Spring SQLintersection conference has an amazing line-up of 5 tracks over 3 days with 7 full-day workshops (2 pre-cons on Saturday, 3 on Sunday, and 2 post-cons on Thursday). The conference runs from Sunday, April 13 through Wednesday, April 16, 2014 in Orlando, FL at the JW Marriott. We plan to pack in a lot of information about best practices, architectural/design decisions, platform choices, and new features coming in SQL Server 2014. The specific sessions, titles, and abstracts are on the [SQLintersection](#) site and if you register for the full show package before January 17, 2014, you'll also receive your choice of an XBOX One, Surface 2, or a gift card.

Our confirmed speaker line-up includes: Kimberly L. **Tripp**, Paul S. **Randal**, Brent **Ozar**, Aaron **Bertrand**, Andrew **Kelly**, Bob **Beauchemin**, Bob **Ward**, David **Pless**, Erin **Stellato**, Glenn **Berry**, Grant **Fritchey**, Jeremiah **Peschka**, Jonathan **Kehayias**, Kendra **Little**, Kevin **Kline**, Steve **Jones**, Tim **Chapman**, and a few more surprises still coming!

This is going to be THE *get-your-questions-answered* and *architect-the-RIGHT-solutions* event of the first half of 2014!

Summary

We hope you've enjoyed this issue - we really enjoy putting these together.

If there is anything else you're interested in, we'd love to hear from you - [drop us a line](#).

Thanks,
Paul and Kimberly

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