(March 17th, 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 Melbourne where our second class in Australia this year is under way. The Sydney class went really well last week and we're already looking forward to coming back next year! We also had a great time on Sunday watching the Formula 1 Grand Prix from a rooftop terrace party overlooking the track, and after class we're heading down to the Great Ocean Road for a day before flying home. Got to have some play mixed in with all the work!

I'm still running a survey on my blog, asking you to collect 24 hours of wait statistics and send them to me, in return for which I'll give you some insight into your data and send you a free, no-catch voucher for 30 days of access to all 100+ hours of our Pluralsight courses. See here for details.

There's a new interview with me that's been published by Red Gate's Simple Talk – check it out here.

Also, check out the latest details for our **Spring 2014 SQLintersection** conference (I blogged details here). With the newly-added SQL 2014 booth hosted by the SQLCAT team and a few more sessions by Microsoft engineers to round out our 5-star line-up, this is the place to be improving your SQL skills this April!

The most recent book I've read is Andy Weir's *The Martian*. This is a really excellent modern-day Robinson Crusoe story set in the present day about an astronaut accidentally stranded on Mars after a hurried mission abort during a major dust storm. It's very believable and requires no credibility stretching or acceptance of invented sci-fi technology. It's a brilliant debut from Weir. I cruised through this in about 8 hours while recovering from jet-lag after arriving in Sydney. Highly recommended and I'm really looking forward to Weir's second book.

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

One of the things we did on the Saturday before teaching our class in Sydney last week was rent a car and drive out to the [Blue Mountains](#) to the west of the city. We had such a good time that we decided to keep the rental car on Sunday, postpone some of the work we had to do, and go driving again – this time to the [Jenolan Caves](#) and [Kanangra-Boyd National Park](#). Work's always going to be there, but we had limited time in Sydney.

On the way home we were talking about how frenetic our life is and how we should take more time to drive around and see things in countries we're in, and in the huge country we live in – the USA. As such, on one of our trips to Chicago this year, we're hoping to drive across the country rather than fly. There a lots of parks to go through, a bunch of states to visit and tick off my 'to-do' list, and we won't have to go near any airports or attitude-challenged fellow travelers.

We mentioned this at dinner over the weekend with our friend, and fellow SQL Server MVP, Greg Low and his wife Mai, and they said they've been doing the same thing: taking time to drive around and investigate the nooks and crannies in the state of Victoria where they live in Australia.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy", as the saying goes. I think it's really easy to get wrapped up in working when not on an official vacation but there is usually plenty of scope for slowing down just a little bit and taking time to explore the world.

Work's always going to be there, and the work to-do list is always going to be long. I, for one, tend to get too hung up on it and try to make progress every day. Although a to-do list is necessary, it's ultimately futile to spend too much time whittling it away. Weekends and evenings should be mostly free of work.

To be honest, even when walking around the huge Marymoor Park in Redmond, we see people missing awesome things like roosting herons and diving kingfishers because they're so intent on their cell phones that they don't look up from the paths. And of course people use their cell phones at dinner, and in other places – our favorite quote (from Joe) is, "love the one you're with" – i.e. pay attention to your surroundings! I think we could all use a bit of downtime and offline time.

Call to action: Maybe it's just me getting older (42 in July – "Life, The Universe, and Everything!"), but I encourage you to slow down a bit occasionally and take time to look around.

I'm curious to hear your thoughts on slowing down sometimes to smell the roses, so please feel free to [drop me a line](#), always treated confidentially, of course.

<u>Video Demo</u>

From Erin: This past week I worked on an issue with a client related to an unbalanced use of CPUs on a server running SQL Server 2008R2. Imagine you were sent a screenshot that showed

four of eight CPUs at 60% utilization, and the other four CPUs below 5% utilization. What's your initial hunch? What do you check first? Does your methodology change when I tell you it's a virtual machine? Follow along in this week's Insider Video as I walk through the steps I took, and show you the root cause. If you predicted the problem, you might just have the luck of the Irish, or maybe you should fill out a bracket for your NCAA office pool. ☺ Bring on March Madness!

The video is just under 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

Please know that all of our classes will run and their dates will not change. Additionally, most of our public training courses will be held in the first half of this year. We will 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

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 **(3 SEATS LEFT!)**
- May 12-16, 2014: **IE3**: Immersion Event on High Availability and Disaster Recovery
- May 12-16, 2014: **IEDEV**: Immersion Event for Developers
- 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 with 50 SQL sessions, 3 SQL keynotes, and 7 full-day workshops (2 pre-cons on Saturday [April 12], 3 on Sunday [April 13], and 2 post-cons on Thursday [April 17]). The main conference runs from Sunday evening, 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 (including a full day pre-conference workshop and multiple sessions during the conference).

The specific sessions, titles, and abstracts are on the SQLintersection site and if you register early, 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**, Evgeny **Krivosheev**, Glenn **Berry**, Grant **Fritchey**, Jeremiah **Peschka**, Jonathan **Kehayias**, Jos **de Bruijn**, Kendra **Little**, Kevin **Kline**, Mike **Weiner**, Mike **Zwilling**, Steve **Jones**, and Tim **Chapman**!

We have a few more SQL team members joining us and the Microsoft CAT team will be hosting a booth to discuss SQL Server 2014 as well as what you're working on today! Register with the SQLskills discount code and save $50 on your registration!

This is going to be THE *get-your-questions-answered* and *architect-the-RIGHT-solutions* event of the first half of 2014! Plus, it's at the perfect time to get a jumpstart with SQL Server 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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