(May 25th, 2015)

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 finally home after three weeks of classes in Chicago and a fourth week at our Spring SQLintersection conference in Scottsdale, AZ. That was our first time in Arizona, and the little we saw of it looked really cool. Well, not quite, because it was hot! But all the cacti and birds were excellent.

Kimberly's latest Pluralsight course has just been released: *SQL Server: Optimizing Stored Procedure Performance – Part 2*. Check it out here!

We've just added a brand new class to our roster for Chicago in November: **IEPDS: Immersion event on Practical Data Science**, taught by our great friend Rafal Lukawiecki. You can get all the details on the class here. Also, we still have a couple of seats in our IEPTO1 and IEPTO2 classes coming up in a couple of weeks in Bellevue, and our London and Dublin classes (in August and October, respectively) are almost sold out!

The last two books I've read are the final book in the Hornblower Saga I've been re-reading this year, C.S. Forester's *Admiral Hornblower in the West Indies*, and Elizabeth Chadwick's *A Place Beyond Courage*. I've already expounded on how excellent the Hornblower books are so I won't do so again.

I've read several of Chadwick's novels before, all set around the 1100s/1200s in England, and centered on the royal court of which monarch was in power. This book focuses on John FitzGilbert the Marshall, in the time of the warfare between King Stephen and Empress Mathilda in the mid-1100s. He was the father of the much more famous William Marshall, who was Marshall for King Henry II and an intimate of Eleanor of Aquitaine. I've read so much about this era so it was a treat to have one of the somewhat side characters given an excellent novel to himself. Highly recommended for fans of historical fiction.

Note: you can get all the prior Insider newsletters here.

Paul's Ponderings

I'm writing this while still at SQLintersection and I've just finished presenting a new DBA Mythbusters session. I love doing sessions like this as I get to jump around all over the SQL Server Engine and talk about lots of different things.

One of the myths I busted in the session is "Always plan a backup strategy".

Now don't get me wrong, you do need to have a backup strategy, but you shouldn't start out by thinking about what you backup strategy is going to be.

Let me tell you a story.

Back while I was on the SQL Server development team at Microsoft, I happened to be on site with Product Support, when they took a call from a small bank with corruption problems. At first they were reluctant to discuss their backups, but once we showed how recovering without backups would mean data loss, they explained their situation.

They had a full database backup from the start of January, were using the full recovery mode, and had log backups from every half-hour. The problem was that we were then in late April – so more than 5,000 backups.

And they were all on tape!

We were very skeptical that the restore sequence would work without a problem but, miracle of miracles, it did. However, it took *three* days.

They'd called in on Tuesday and the restore sequence finished on Friday. For those three days, the entire bank was offline. No ATMs, no payments, no bill paying, and so on.

And they went out of business.

If your bank is unexpectedly down for, say, half a day, you're unlikely to go through all the hassle of changing to a different bank. But if your bank is down for three days, now you won't trust them and you'll take your business somewhere else.

They thought they had a great backup strategy: full recovery mode and regular log backups. But they'd never tried doing a restore so didn't realize it would take so long.

Call to action: The trick is to plan a *restore* strategy. Think about what restores you need to be able to do to meet your downtime and data loss service level agreements. That then dictates what backups you need to have so that you can do those restores. If you just think about things from a backup strategy point of view, you can get into trouble.

Video Demo

One of the easiest ways to benchmark your I/O subsystem is to use a free tool called CrystalDiskMark. In this video, Glenn talks about how to use the new version of CrystalDiskMark (which now uses Microsoft DiskSpd), including some tips and tricks for how to use it effectively.

The video is about 6.5 minutes long and you can get it:

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

Enjoy!

SQLskills Offerings

We've released all of our classes for 2015, listed below. We'll release the first portion of our 2016 schedule around September/October.

To help your boss understand the importance of focused, technical training, we've also added a few 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](#)

Upcoming Immersion Events

Bellevue, WA

- June 8-12, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1)
- June 15-19, 2015: **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 (formerly IE2)

London, UK

- August 24-28, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1)

Dublin, Ireland

- October 12-16, 2015: **IEPTO2**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 2 (formerly IE2)

Chicago, IL

- November 16-18, 2015: **IE0**: Immersion Event for the Accidental/Junior DBA
- November 16-19, 2015: **IEPDS**: Immersion Event on Practical Data Science
- November 16-20, 2015: **IEPTO1**: Immersion Event on Performance Tuning and Optimization – Part 1 (formerly IE1)

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

We've just finished our Spring SQLintersection event in Scottsdale, AZ and it went off perfectly. We had great speakers, fantastic content, and our second SQLafterDark evening event which includes drinks, a trivia quiz bowl, and a raffle (sponsored by SQLskills and SQL Sentry).

We're already planning our Fall SQLintersection event setup for the week of November 2, 2015 back in Las Vegas; we'll have more details posted online at www.SQLintersection.com shortly! And, when you register, don't forget to use the discount code "SQLskills" (without the quotes and it isn't case-sensitive) and you can save $50 off registration. We hope to see you there!

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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