

# SQLskills Immersion Event

## IEPTO1: Performance Tuning and Optimization

### Discussion: Table Design Strategies

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## Database Development and Design

- **Whose job is it?**
- **Resources**
  - Pluralsight: SQL Server: Why Physical Database Design Matters
    - Author/Presenter: Kimberly L. Tripp, SQLskills.com
    - <http://pluralsight.com/training/Courses/Description/sqlserver-why-physical-db-design-matters>
  - Pluralsight: Developing and Deploying SQL Server ISV Applications
    - Author/Presenter: Erin Stellato, SQLskills.com
    - <http://pluralsight.com/training/Courses/Description/sqlserver-developing-deploying-supporting-isv-applications>
- **Things to consider**
  - Data type best practices
  - Understanding row width (vertical partitioning)
  - Application inconsistencies in types
  - The cost of poor design



## Use the “Right” Data Type

### System supplied data types:

- Binary
- Character
- Integers
- Exact numerics
- Monetary
- Date and time types
- Legacy LOB (image, (n)text)
- LOB (“max” types, XML)
- Uniqueidentifier (GUID)
- FILESTREAM (vs. LOB)

Find the “right” data type for the job:

\* Use the *smallest (but least restrictive) data type possible*

\* If the data type varies:

- < 5 chars should be fixed width
- 5-20 chars – questionable
- > 20 char – lean towards variable-width

\* For decimal/numeric data:

- Find the right range
- Standardize on decimal or numeric
- Understand precision and range
- Consider vardecimal in SQL Server 2005+

\* For date/time data

- Review all choices/ranges in SQL Server 2008+

\* For additional space savings consider:

- Compression in SQL Server 2008+
- Columnstore in SQL Server 2012+

\* Use uniqueidentifier sparingly

\* Consider “sparse” attribute for 2008+  
(for Entity Attribute Values [EAV] / flexible design)

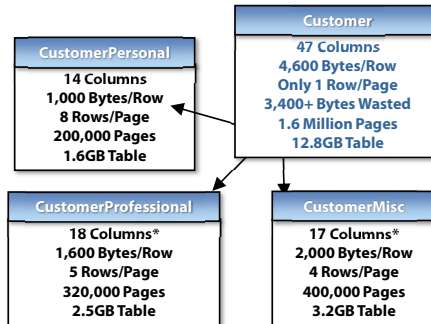
## Optimal Row Width

- Consider table usage above all else
- Estimate average row length
  - Overhead
  - Fixed-width columns
  - Estimate average from realistic sample data

```
SELECT avg (datalength (columnname)) FROM tname
```
  - Review min, max and avg. row width of existing and/or sample tables

```
sys.dm_db_index_physical_stats
```
- Calculate page density (rows/page):  
 $8,096 \text{ bytes/page divided by } ??? \text{ bytes/row} = \text{rows/page}$
- Calculate wasted bytes – on disk and in memory

## Consider a Customer Table With 1,600,000 Rows



One, single Customer table =  
**12.8GB**

or

**Customer, vertically partitioned  
into three separate tables = 7.3GB**

- Savings in overall disk space (5.5GB saved)
- Not reading data into cache when not necessary
- LOB data can be isolated from more critical data to support online index operations (prior to SQL Server 2012 where rebuilds with LOB can be done online)
- Locks are table-specific therefore less contention at the row level

\* The PRIMARY KEY column(s) must be made redundant for the additional tables.  
Above: 47 columns in Customer; 49 columns total between 3 tables.

## Vertical Partitioning

- **Optimizing row size for:**
  - Caching: better page density means less memory required
  - Locking: only locking the columns that are of interest minimizes even row-level conflicts
- **Usage defines vertical "partitions" or "sets"**
  - Logically group columns to minimize joins
  - Consider read only vs. OLTP columns (LOB separate from OLTP to allow online index maintenance (prior to SQL Server 2012) for the critical/OLTP part of the table)
  - Consider columns often used together
- **If every query requires a join, this isn't as optimal as it could be but should still be considered**

## Pushing LOBs “Out of Row”

- Subtle form of vertical partitioning
- Doesn't affect the application
- May *significantly* improve performance
- When should you do this:
  - You have a lot of “small” LOB values (values under 8KB) that actually create large rows
  - LOBs aren't returned on most requests so you're filling cache with LOB values that aren't being used
- Set with `sp_tableoption`

```
EXEC sp_tableoption tablename
    , 'large value types out of row'
    , TRUE
```

## “Place Holder” Rows?

### Nullability and INSERT Performance

- No default: no specific value required/specified at INSERT
- NULL values DO NOT mean empty space (*NULL bitmap is stored separately from the column data*)
- Working with NULLs
  - Accessing columns which allow NULL values can cause inconsistencies when developers/users are not aware of them
  - Math with NULL values can produce interesting results (value – NULL = NULL)
  - ANSI session settings can affect results sets when accessing columns that allow nulls
- Sometimes it's best to pre-allocate the row if you're using place-holders (so that updates do not cause massive fragmentation)

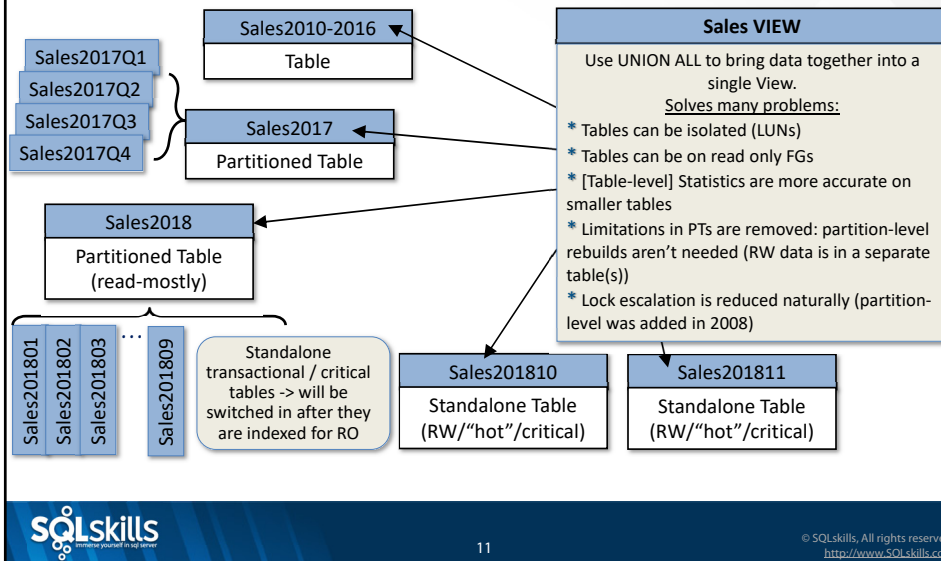
## Inconsistencies in Data Types

- **Query doesn't match the column definition**
  - The case of the implicit\_conversion
- **Key inconsistencies**
  - "Probe Residual" in showplan for hash join
    - May add a hash value for comparisons
    - May add a converted version of a column
  - Wastes storage space, index size, backups, ...
- **Inconsistencies in any layers can be costly**
  - Tables
  - Stored procedures/functions
  - Ad hoc queries/application interface
- **Consider tools like Visual Studio for refactoring and static code analysis**

## Horizontal / Functionally Partitioning Data

- **Breaking a table into smaller / more manageable chunks to:**
  - Reduce resource contention / limitations
  - Improve options / performance for varying access patterns
  - Allow more maintenance options and reduce costs / restrictions
  - Improve availability and reduce downtime for disaster recovery
  - Remove resource blocking or minimize maintenance costs
- **Usage defines partitioning pattern / partitioning key**
  - Usually date-related (but doesn't have to be)
  - Distinct data patterns in terms of:
    - Usage
    - Criticality
    - Maintenance
- **Queries must specify the partitioning column on every request to aid in partition elimination**

## Functionally Partitioning Data



## Functionally Partitioning Data

- **Partitioned tables (requirement: Enterprise Edition prior to SQL Server 2016 SP1)**
  - But, for ALL Enterprise ADMIN features such as online operations – you still need EE
  - Can convert an existing table as an ONLINE operation IF the table doesn't have any LOB columns in 2005 / 2008 / R2 (fixed in **2012**)
    - Might run into problems around "unique" index requirements for PTs in that the partitioning column must be a member of the key – for all unique indexes
  - Cannot do fast switching in 2005 if Indexed Views
  - Cannot do fast switching if iFTS desired
- **Partitioned views (benefit: available in any edition)**
  - Might be able to replace an existing table with a view (even for DML) if you meet the correct criteria
    - Might not be able to replace all statements, can programmatically direct modifications (for INSERTs)
  - Conversion may require downtime or time where certain data is inaccessible
  - Definitely more work to architect, manage, design – payoff is often worth it!

## Table Design Best Practices

- **Communications, DESIGN, consistency!**
- **Sloppy design (or none!) leads to:**
  - Performance problems
  - Difficulty when performance tuning
- **Scalability can only happen with good design**
  - Tables can be created easily but design takes knowledge:
    - **Knowing the data**
    - **Knowing the users**
    - **Knowing the system**
  - Take more time for design/prototyping – the sooner you begin to code, the longer it's going to take!
  - Consider changes over time – if already in place...third-party tools can help with refactoring, testing, static code analysis!