

**Professional Association for SQL Server
Board of Directors Question-and-Answer**

PASS Summit, Seattle Washington
November 9, 2012

Participants: Adam Jorgensen, Allen Kinsel, Denise McInerney, James Rowland-Jones, Rob Farley, Kendal Van Dyke, Rick Bolesta, Jennifer Moser, Lara Rubbelke, Thomas LaRock, Douglas McDowell, Bill Graziano, Rushabh Mehta.

Attendees (not on stage): Neil Buchwalter, Sri Sridharan, Wendy Pastrick, Judy Christianson, Alison MacDonald

Question-and-Answer Session:

Rushabh Mehta opened the session. The Directors introduced themselves and identified their portfolios.

- 1. Question (Jack Corbett):** Jack directed his question to James Rowland-Jones. Jack said there have been general elections and people from outside the US have been elected to the Board. He wanted to know why it was necessary to assign regional seats when the PASS Community had already elected people from different regions.

JRJ responded that the aim of the bylaw changes was to make the Board representative to the international community by being relevant and reflective of them. The intent was not for the Regional Directors to 'beat a drum' for their region but to provide international perspective to the Board. All portfolios have an international component to them and by having international directors it helps shape and manage portfolios to be successful in various regions. JRJ said further details were outlined in the Global Growth Vision Document.

Bill Graziano asked if Rob Farley and JRJ would have run for the Board if they had not previously been Board advisors. They agreed that they would not have. Rob noted international candidates have a harder time being elected as they have less community exposure. He and JRJ had a higher profile and come from areas with large PASS populations. He asked how many people would vote for Jody Roberts who oversees many countries in his work as Regional Mentor for Middle East-Africa.

Follow up (Andy Warren): Andy felt that was mixed messaging as there were people in the room who did run and were not elected. The elections were a popularity contest.

JRJ noted that while a criteria was being set out to prove relevance to the international community all PASS members get to vote. Rushabh Mehta said that having someone elected for only 2 years does not provide consistency in regional representation or build regional leadership. Lara Rubbelke outlined that programs that work in North America do not work well in other parts of the world, for example South Africa. The aim was to have more voices from regions to help shape the programs for success.

Follow up (Andy Warren): Andy said there would always be the issue of people not being elected or running again. He thought PASS would be more effective building the grassroots with chapters and leaders; until a critical mass was formed appointments could be used to build connections. He felt the Board was trying to legislate a solution to a problem that wasn't there. Sri Sridharan agreed and asked about using appointments to bring perspectives to the Board.

JRJ noted there was an evolution to the use of appointments. He said if PASS were to focus its energies to work with China in 2015 there would need to be plans and budgets however the key would be to

integrate with the existing community. He clarified that PASS was part of the community but did not represent the entire community. For the proposed seat changes, Europe-Middle East-Africa (EMEA) was deliberately chosen as having a large PASS population and having held a SQLRally. The Board was trying to be sensitive to the Canada/US population while expanding out to new groups. He noted that he and Denise were working on getting internationally relevant Virtual Chapters running.

Follow up (Jack Corbett): Jack suggested that the work on the Virtual Chapters was what would build the interest to run for the Board. Before asking for a representative of a region, building a leadership base was necessary. He pointed out that the perception was that someone from a particular region wants to run so a regional seat is created for them.

Bill noted the bylaw changes would not mandate regional seats but would allow for them in the future. He said metrics would be needed to determine if a regional seat is to be created. Denise McInerney said PASS, as an organization, was behind where the community needs were. The changes were to allow the organization to catch up to the global nature of the community.

Rick Bolesta reminded the Board that the point of a Q&A was not for the Board to convince community members to see things a certain way but to solicit feedback.

2. Question (John Flannery): John directed his question to Kendal Van Dyke. John is organizing the SQLSaturday in Connecticut, which was officially titled "SQLSaturday North Haven". He felt this was not representative of the 3 Chapters working to put on the event and wanted a more flexible policy on event naming.

Kendal Van Dyke explained that the current naming is a result of the tools used and agreed that it could be more flexible. Rob pointed out this could be changed as Portland's event was called SQLSaturday Oregon. Kendal agreed and will speak to John after the Q&A about his options.

3. Question (Paresh Motiwala): Paresh asked the entire Board if there was anything they were not able to execute on at Summit because there were no volunteers. He had offered to volunteer and did not hear back from the Board. He had only heard back from HQ about the ambassador program.

Bill noted there used to be a volunteer portfolio that looked at intake and utilization of volunteers. He indicated that Sri Sridharan would be looking at volunteers across the organization in 2013. Kendal suggested Paresh look at volunteering at a local level as well as at Summit and offered to put Paresh in touch with Karla Landrum for more volunteer opportunities.

4. Question (Aaron Nelson): Aaron wanted to know who the target audience was for the Business Intelligence Conference, in particular which job titles were being aimed at.

Lara clarified that it was a Business Analytics conference rather than a more narrow Business Intelligence focus. Rushabh said the audience were people who work with data, excel, who do deep dive analysis and implementers. The aim was at technical architects. Tom noted that the messaging for the conference needed to be improved. Denise said her role is an example of the target audience for the conference: someone who works with business owners and liaisons with data scientists to get the right questions asked.

Follow up (Andy Warren): Andy asked what the expected audience size would be.

Douglas said 1250 attendees.

Follow up (Andy Warren): Andy expressed concerned that 6 months out from the event the messaging was not clear.

Douglas reiterated that the Business Analytics conference was aiming at Data Scientist, Data Architects and Technical Decision Markets.

Follow up (Mark Caldwell): Mark asked how the BA Conference would impact on Summit content.

Rushabh said that Summit was more technical and focussed on implementation. There would be elements of that in the BA Conference. Tom noted Summit sessions are community driven so that there would not be a split in Summit content. Adam said Summit was not getting smaller. There were still a record number of attendees and sessions however the roles of the attendees are changing. There was more cross over in session tracks attended. The BA conference would be the next step in the careers of Summit attendees as well as aimed at a new audience. There could be great sessions done at the BA Conference that could move over to Summit. Douglas said that in addition to addressing the needs in the current PASS Community, the aim was to bring a sense of community into this new arena.

Follow up (Mark Caldwell): Mark wanted the Board to be more aware how this was being communicated as there was confusion surrounding the event. He asked if there would be community content.

Tom confirmed that there would be a call for speakers. Rushabh said it would be more prescriptive than a general call for sessions as at Summit.

5. Question (Attendee 1): The attendee asked if the Board had heard from other Chapters about filing for 501(c)3 and if it helped with sponsors.

Allen Kinsel confirmed that other chapters were doing it however the rules vary by state. There were resources on the Chapter Leader page on how to set this up.

Follow up (Attendee 1): The attendee asked if 501(c)3 was prohibitive, what were the alternatives the Board could recommend for Chapters that don't want to charge for meetings.

Bill noted the Kansas City Chapter was small and often asked for VIK donations of drinks and other items.

Follow up (Andy Warren): Andy noted national sponsors often do not care if groups have 501 status however Chapters could incorporate fairly easily.

Allen reiterated that there were recordings available on this. Aaron Nelson asked that the RMs convey that information.

6. Question (Andy Warren): Andy requested the Board publish the bylaw changes.

Bill said the Board wanted to have the bylaws at ready state before publishing them. JRJ suggested having a finalized version out to interested parties in the next week and hosting webinars to gather feedback.

7. Question (Andy Warren): Andy suggested the Board were missing an opportunity to have a successful handoff and conduct PASS business at Summit by not identifying the Directors who would be taking over SQLSaturday and Chapters.

Bill took responsibility for that. The Monday board meeting covered portfolio assignments and bylaws extensively.

8. Question (Andy Warren): Andy asked how much money was in PASS reserves.

Douglas spoke to the target number of 12% to hold in reserves. He continued that currently 15% of revenue was in reserves. Bill outlined what reserves were. Douglas said 15% of 5.6 million was the total amount of what was put into reserves and asked for someone to contact Sandy Cherry for the exact amount.

9. Question (Andy Warren): Andy asked that the Board publish the criteria for determining if Summit 2013 in Charlotte is a success prior to the event occurring.

Douglas noted that for a convention Summit's size contracts and space are being locked up years in advance so decisions on future Summits were being made prior to 2013 being evaluated. Jennifer Moser agreed to set the criteria ahead of the event to allow for a bench mark and realistic expectations. Bill said from a financial standpoint there was an attendee number needed for success and that the Board would investigate outlining further criteria.

Follow Up (Paresh): Paresh did not like the day 2 keynotes and requested the detailed financials be disclosed during that keynote.

Rushabh noted the detailed financials are all online.

Follow Up (Paresh): Paresh felt Summit provided a captive audience. He also suggested an honourable mention or comp be given to community members who help provide practical solutions to PASS issues.

10. Question (Russell Scheinberg): Russell works at a small-medium size company. He found that a lot of sessions were geared at companies with the latest and top of the line releases of products. He asked if sessions could address the resources small-medium firms would have.

Adam agreed that a lot of session focussed on the latest editions. He'll take that feedback to the program team. He also noted that if the speakers or experts did not have answers about the tools smaller companies were using then there are 4000 attendees who might have an answer. JRJ said that part of the draw for Microsoft engineers at the event was to hear feedback from people using things on the ground level.

11. Question (Ryan Adams): Ryan asked who the Director responsible for the BA Conference was. From his experience working on SQLRally Dallas, Ryan found it difficult to not have a Board liaison.

Douglas will be the point person for BA Conference.

12. Question (Ryan Adams): Ryan told the Board how he would have issues bringing a couple of new chapters as the funding from UGSS was no longer available. He asked if any alternatives were in the work.

Jennifer Moser outlined the changes to the UGSS program and how it would not be a direct source of Chapter funding. She said the SQL team would still be providing funding to UGSS but the details were still being worked out. The new UGSS site went live that week. She said PASS needed to decide how it wanted to adapt to the new UGSS situation.

13. Question (Matt Slocum): Matt wanted to know if the keynotes could be tailored more to the audience at Summit. He also wanted to know if there were opportunities to build relationships with the community in Japan.

Jennifer asked to connect with Matt regarding improving the keynotes. Allen suggested connecting with Karla Landrum about PASS in Japan.

14. Question (Jorge Segarra): Jorge acknowledged the inconsistencies in the PASS Brand and said having a unified brand would be important. He asked if there was a push to rebrand. He noted that people often call Summit "PASS" as in "I am going to PASS".

Kendal agreed that the Summit vs. PASS distinction needed to be made. Bill said the Board had talked previously about rebranding; however the brands were springing up more quickly than the group had time to stop and reflect. He introduced Alison MacDonald of PASS marketing. Tom requested examples of the mix messaging to be sent to him. JRJ pointed out that internationally the brand had similar challenges. For example, "SQLSaturday" as a brand is not received well in France.

Sandy Cherry of PASS Finance joined the meeting. She clarified that approximately \$390,000 were in CDs and money market, in addition to €160,000 in savings. \$275,000 was voted on during the Summit Board meeting to be put into reserves.

Follow Up (Andy Warren): Andy requested a clear number of what is in reserves on an annual basis.

15. Question (Sri Sridharan): Sri had been told a factor in putting SQLRally on hold was financial but noted that SQLRally Dallas made a profit. He asked when SQLRally US was going to be re-evaluated and how did the BA Conference factor into the decision to revive SQLRally US.

Bill confirmed there was no budget item in 2013 for SQLRally US but it could be reevaluated for the next year. JRJ noted SQLRally never closed as the model had success in the Nordic countries. The model needed to be standardized and then revived in the US.

Follow Up (Andy Warren): Andy was disappointed that the Rally decision was based on losing money but in actually SQLRally Dallas made money. He felt the lack of investment in it meant the decision is essentially made. He felt it was disingenuous to not make a clear decision on the fate of SQLRally US.

Bill confirmed the SQLRally US discussion was on his slate for January. Jennifer said it was about the model being using – international rallies utilize fewer resources and HQ hours to run. Lessons needed to be learnt from the European model before the fate of the US rallies could be determined.

Follow UP (Ryan Adams): Ryan was on the organizing team for SQLRally Dallas. He requested the final numbers.

Judy Christianson said the numbers would be ready shortly.

Bill Graziano thanked the audience for attending and asked that if there were further questions for people to speak with him directly.