



Professional Association for SQL Server Board of Directors Meeting

In-Face Meeting – January 25 & 26, 2012
Seattle, Washington

Attendees: Adam Jorgensen, Allen Kinsel, Denise McInerney, James Rowland-Jones, Kendal Van Dyke, Rob Farley, Thomas LaRock, Douglas McDowell, Bill Graziano, Rushabh Mehta, Rick Bolesta, Neil Buchwalter, Jennifer Moser, Lara Rubbelke, Mark Souza (Jan 25), Judy Christianson, Craig Ellis, Anika Polisenio (Jan 25)

Via Teleconference: Raoul Illyés (Jan 25)

Agenda for Discussion:

Wednesday January 25, 2012

1. IT: Time/Resources
2. Summit 2012 & Beyond
3. SQL Rally 2013
4. Global Growth
5. Board Only Time

Thursday January 26, 2012

1. Marketing Update
2. BI Conference
3. Task Management
4. FY2013 Budget Process
5. Summit Site Selection 2015/2017
6. Appointments
7. IT: Needs/Priorities
8. Global Growth
9. Other Business

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday January 25, 2012

1. IT Time/Resources

Douglas McDowell presented an overview of the PASS HQ IT team to the Board listing the areas they provide support for and large upcoming projects such as the migration from Constant Contact to Exact Target. There was a discussion about managing IT projects and addressing roadblocks.

James Rowland-Jones suggested partnering with other community groups who offer tools rather than creating and supporting new tools. This rationalizing of offerings could help build community partnerships.

2. SQLRally 2013

Craig Ellis presented the host city selection process used in 2011 for SQLRally 2012.

Mark Souza asked if international rallies needed to be addressed separately. Alison MacDonald clarified that international SQLRally events have progressed differently as there had not been competition to host the event. Interested hosts had sought out PASS. The Global Growth subcommittee on international events would address if a unique process was needed for international SQLRally events. Jennifer Moser noted international events have increased Microsoft support.

Craig asked the Board, based on the events already planned for 2013, where they would like to host the next US-based SQLRally. Because the application process can be onerous the request to the Board was to narrow down the locations that have a viable chance of hosting the next SQLRally before opening the application process up to the community at large. Geography was being used as the basis of the decision to accommodate the SQL communities around the country. There is a portion of the community who cannot travel to Summit and therefore are currently only touched by SQLSaturday events.

A suggestion was to have Dallas host SQLRally again to build upon the experiences of hosting SQLRally Dallas 2012. However, this would not expand PASS' reach into the community. Kendal Van Dyke suggested that if SQLRally is intended as a stepping stone for speakers then having it in the same location could limit the speakers able to participate as speakers are not reimbursed for their travel to the event. However having a city host the event twice would decrease the burden on PASS HQ and would allow PASS to track if the event can become bigger and better. While the intent was to cap the size of SQLRally, Lara Rubbelke noted the community would be able to find ways around any restrictions. A team that ran a successful SQLRally would be able to host a very large SQLSaturday event in the future.

Thomas LaRock suggested showing the map which outlined the locations of the 2013 PASS events, providing guidelines for hosting a SQLRally and expressing to the community the intent is to take SQLRally on the road and encouraging people to apply as host cities. The messaging will not discourage applicants.

There was a discussion about the amount of research cities have to do as part of the application for SQLRally. Allen Kinsel asked the Board if they wanted PASS HQ to investigate all the applicant cities as that required a lot of resources. It was suggested the application be simplified for the first round where teams are only expressing interest in being a host city.

Craig asked if the Board wanted a community vote on which applicant city was to host SQLRally. The alternative is a Board decision on host city. It suggested the Board select the top 3 candidates and then holding a community vote on those three candidates. Alison requested the Board be clear on the application process and final decision process prior to the application being opened to the community. Allen requested a Director be assigned to the SQLRally portfolio.

An online survey was suggested to determine where the community wanted SQLRally to be based. The program committee used a similar method when they polled community on desired pre-cons and used

the results as a factor in final decision making. Rob Farley suggested having an element of “judges” vote and community vote which would be combined into a final decision.

Craig presented the advantages and disadvantages of having a room block for SQLRally and detailed how the lack of room block impacted on the eligibility of cities to host SQLRally 2012. Judy Christianson noted the difficulty in finding hotel meeting space without committing to room blocks. JRJ said SQLBits reached its room block requirements by providing speakers with one free night in the hotel. This also encouraged speakers and showed appreciation for their participation.

Allen stated the room block discussion should not be about approving a room block but addressing the maximum risk the Board was willing to take on for a SQLRally. He did not want to approve a room block unless there was a specific number associated with it. Anika Polisenko spoke to attrition rates and obligations being city specific and negotiable. She explained the numbers associated with the room blocks cannot be known at this stage of the RFP process. The Board agreed to accept cities that require room blocks into consideration for hosting SQLRally. If the associated risks are too high the Board will consider that when determining which cities to put forward for final consideration.

Action The RFP process for SQLRally 2013 will begin in the next four weeks. As part of the call for interest, PASS will post a map outlining where 2013 are being held along with a simplified application process and a decision matrix. If there are at least 2 cities being considered for the final hosting duties it will be taken to a community survey for input. The Board will consider a room block for SQLRally 2013.

3. Summit 2012 and Beyond

Craig presented the suggested floor plan changes for Summit 2012. The changes are a result of the attendance growth anticipated.

The new flow separates the expo hall and the food hall. There was discussion on how to increase the traffic and buzz for the expo hall. Suggestions included sponsor booths in the sky bridge and vendor space in the food hall where they could provide premium lunches, custom table cloths/wraps or include materials directing traffic back to their booths.

There will be sessions held in the north side of the convention centre. To address concerns that the rooms are further away from the other session rooms, it was suggested having concentrated tracks held there. Anika confirmed there will be food, expert pods, and the same feel in the extra rooms as there is in the main area of the sessions.

Marketing led the Board through a brainstorming session for Summit 2012.

There was a discussion about the Summit Keynotes. Denise McInerney noted the Dr. DeWitt keynotes are popular because they provide deep technical knowledge. Tom LaRock noted the Summit audience does not want to be sold to. Bill said the product announcements are what garner press outside of Summit. Product announcements also provide information that non-MVPs are not privy to. Tom suggested sessions in place of the third day of keynotes. The Board decided Summit 2012 will have only two keynotes.

Bill Graziano suggested a “bring your boss” day. The sessions on this day would be targeted at managers, influencers and data architects.

Video recording Summit sessions and the associated costs were also discussed. Douglas felt having the audio transcribed and indexed was more beneficial than just video recording the sessions. There was also interest expressed in having a session room streamed during Summit 2012. Tom believed this would generate buzz for Summit while Jennifer said it help highlight the professionalism of Summit while making it more accessible.

There was renewed interest in pursuing a First Timer Orientation Event and discussions about hosting a happy hour/closing event at Summit.

SQLSaturday #104, Colorado Springs had a resume service on site for attendees. Denise suggested something more casual such as a Birds of a Feather table or expert pod for resume services was discussed as a possibility for Summit. JRJ suggested as part of professional development services at Summit there be services to help employers write better job descriptions for the SQL community.

The Board discussed having an event at Summit 2012 for the significant others of PASS members. There was also discussion on having a social day or hack-a-thon prior to Summit. There was further discussion about sponsorship in the sky bridge area.

Action Jennifer Moser will share Microsoft best practices for using the Convention Center to its full capacity with Anika. A more detailed proposal on video recording Summit sessions will be brought forward to the Board. Thomas will reach out to community members to form a committee to organize the First Timer Orientation event.

4. Global Growth

Mark introduced the new directors to the background of the Global Growth committee. JRJ presented the work undertaken by the various Global Growth subcommittees.

The Global Growth Steering Committee presented its themes of Reach, Coverage and Growing Leadership to the Board. These themes outline the aims of global growth. "Reach" shifted PASS from looking primarily at membership numbers to impact had upon the SQL Server community as a whole. "Coverage" was to include qualitative measures. For "Growing Leaders" Kendal wanted to be clear that developing speakers is different than developing leaders.

Formulas and specific goals within the themes have not been established. Mark asked the Board if the Global Growth committee should move forward with these themes and if the Board should revisit the organizational goals in light of the discussion. Allen agreed these should be the aims of the organization not just the Global Growth committee.

Raoul Illyés joined the meeting via teleconference.

Denise requested an elevator pitch from the global growth committees. She felt she could not agree if this was the right direction if she did not know what the final aim of the group was. JRJ suggested PASS underpin and support the SQL community by providing a framework. It was intended to increase PASS' impact outside of North America.

The Global Growth subcommittees presented their tactical objectives to the Board. Craig presented the aims of the Event Content Subcommittee. There was a discussion on the value of ungating PASS content on the website. Craig presented the tactical objectives of the International Events Subcommittee. The group aims to create guidelines and event models for international events. Craig presented a slide

showing the increased demand for events outside of North America. This was the driving force behind Global Growth – the grassroots community needs were ahead of where PASS was organizationally.

Rob Farley presented the Global Chapter Subcommittee's tactical objectives, including a focus on the speaker bureau and improved chapter tools. Lara presented the tactical objectives of the Localized Communications subcommittee, including translation options, trans-creation options, and revised Connector formats. Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese were suggested as trial languages for localizing language.

JRJ presented the proposal put forward by the Governance Subcommittee, beginning with a presentation on the principles of good governance. The group proposed a new organizational structure to gain relevance in the international community. The proposed governance structure also aimed to address the new financial considerations the organization faces. The proposal contained a global board in addition to multiple regional boards. Each regional board would be its own legal entity but a wholly owned subsidiary of the global board, responsible for its own elections and representative of its local community. Each regional board would have a director in the global board.

The role of paid professionals changed in the new the structure. The shift would move the Board towards a strategic role. There would also be a shift in Founding Partner roles. Rick noted PASS has contractual obligations to its Founding Partners to have a certain number of votes and presentation hours. Tom suggested CA have the required votes on the US regional board and that the global organization could not mandate that another region reserve two seats for a particular partner. The aim of the proposal was to have the right strategic relationships built through partner representation and to provide guidance on how to build those relationships. For example, the global board would own the relationship with corporate Microsoft however each region would be encouraged to build direct relationships with their local Microsoft subsidiary.

Rushabh clarified that the global Board would own all IP including events such as Summit and that managing regional finances does not mean the funds will be held by that regional board.

Allen asked the Global Growth committee to be aware that the American members have put in a lot of effort to grow summit and PASS. There will be some resentment during the transition period when Summit funds go to support other regions. It was suggested thinking of the Summit as the world wide fundraiser rather than a US event and a gradual transition would ease concerns. Regional seats on the current board were suggested as either part of a transition plan or a viable alternative to the structure proposed. The increased demand for international events indicated a grassroots expansion globally and that the Board needed to begin the process now to be able to keep up with the growth.

Raoul left the meeting.

Action The Board discussed options on how to define a region and the subcommittee will present selected regions to the Board at the May meeting. In May the subcommittees will also present a set of refined measurable goals that align with the overall global growth goals. Allen requested the owner of the impacted portfolios be included in the Global Growth discussions. Event Content: Alison will create a detailed plan about ungating PASS content, including methods of monitoring and evaluating the impact this has. Localized Communications: Kendal will provide information to Alison and Lara on Amazon Mechanical Turk. Governance: The group will reach out to consultants for more feedback on the proposal

and to help create a transition plan. Rick has requested a list of the companies with similar governance structures.

Thursday January 26, 2012

1. Marketing Update

Alison presented the Marketing calendar for 2012. With the increase in the number of SQLSaturday events coming up it was noted that Karla Landrum's time was being stretched. Rick inquired about the current schedule of having three international rallies in the same quarter as Summit. Alison felt this was not an issue as the events in Sweden and France were not locked in yet. In 2011 SQLRally Nordic and the GUSS event were in the same quarter as Summit 2011. Allen requested a director of SQLRally to monitor resources and timeline.

There was a discussion about the timeline for SQLRally Australia and how far along in the planning process the listed events were.

Tom presented a proposal to improve communications between the Board and PASS membership including quarterly Question and Answer periods and portfolio blogs. Another focus will be on creating clear value propositions for PASS. Alison presented the current communications plans for the year and how Exact Target will assist in focussed communications by introducing better segmentation. The number of sponsored email blasts will also be reduced in 2012.

Alison presented the membership statistics including regional representation of members to the Board.

Technical Hours

In 2010 the Board set a goal to reach 1 million technical hours presented by 2015. Bill presented a breakdown of the current technical hours PASS produces. There was a discussion if this goal should be pursued and if it was achievable. The Board agreed to continue to pursue this goal and attempt to dovetail it into the areas of focus presented by the Global Growth committee. Alison requested standardized methods to calculate the technical hours PASS presents.

2. BI Conference

Douglas presented details on Microsoft's intentions for a BI Conference and asked for the Board feedback on PASS hosting a standalone BI Conference in North America. There was discussion if a SQLRally, a 24 Hours of PASS or increasing the number of BI sessions at Summit were better vehicles to address the need for BI content. There was discussion about colocation with Summit to take advantage of the audience and good will extended at Summit. Tom preferred collating to a standalone BI Conference 6 months out of Summit. Judy said the idea of a PASS BI Conference came from discussions with Ted Kummert. JRJ suggested the event did not have to be based in the US if there was a greater community demand outside the US. He estimated that SQLBits had approximately 40% BI attendees.

Adam agreed that there is a value addressing the gap in the BI Market. He suggested creating a hybrid model between Summit and Rally to fit a BI audience. He noted the 300 level of BI sessions at Summit

are better attended than the high level sessions and suggested a BI 24hop could be created to venture into the market and show the value to partners.

3. At Task

Craig presented At Task, a project management system that would increase transparency on projects both PASS HQ and the Board were working on. Craig felt with the timeline changes to the trail period PASS HQ was not ready to provide recommendations to the Board on this software.

Action Craig will look into licensing options for Board members to ensure they are able to submit and respond to tasks in At Task. The Board granted a request for additional time to evaluate the system. Adam, Allen and JRJ volunteered to be part of the At Task trial.

4. FY2013 Budget Process

Douglas presented information on the year-to-date financials and a simplified budget to the Board. Currently the Board is anticipating having additional funds at the end of the fiscal year. The Board brainstormed possible allocations for these funds including a governance consultant and video recordings at Summit. Bill requested the May in-person Board meeting, which was removed in the final version of the FY2012 budget, be returned to the calendar.

Other items discussed included increasing the Chapter budget for a speaker bureau or another community role. Judy clarified items requested from this fiscal year's budget must be spent prior within 3.5 months of June 30. This year, Summit falls outside of that timeline.

Motion To add a May In-Face Board Meeting with an expected budget exception of \$30,000.

Motion: Douglas McDowell
Second: Thomas LaRock

Adam Jorgensen	Yes
Allen Kinsel	Yes
Denise McInerney	Yes
James Rowland-Jones	Yes
Kendal Van Dyke	Yes
Rob Farley	Yes
Bill Graziano	Yes
Rushabh Mehta	Yes
Rick Bolesta	Yes
Neil Buchwalter	Yes
Jennifer Moser	Did Not Vote
Lara Rubbelke	Yes

Motion passed (13 yes, 0 no, 1 did not vote)

Douglas presented a revised timeline for the FY2013 budget process aimed at creating fewer revisions. He asked portfolio owners for a concise paragraph describing their portfolio, a ranking of requirements, a draft budget and guidelines on the budgeting process for any future portfolio owner.

The Board discussed attendance targets for Summit 2012. Last year the actual attendance surpassed the projected number.

Action Budget exceptions need to be submitted in the next 2 weeks. During the budget exception process, Douglas will work with Marketing and create a recommended range for the Summit attendance target.

5. Site Selection: Summit 2015/2017

Bill spoke to the RFP process for Summit sites. Seattle is not available for 2015 and venues are booking well in advance. It was suggested in launch years Summit be hosted in Seattle. Craig noted that with the growth in attendance at Summit, some cities such as Charlotte will not be able to host Summit in 2015 and beyond.

While historically the Summit moved locations, there was not as much Microsoft support as there is now. Seattle/Redmond has international appeal as a host city. If Summit was to be outside of Seattle, the Board should consider cities with reputations for international tourism. Moving Summit outside of America would reduce attendance due to passport requirements.

6. Appointments

As a result of a lot of constructive public feedback, the Board reviewed the process for making Board appointments. Rushabh requested the Board keep in mind for the discussion that there is a difference between appointments to fill strategic needs and appointments to fill seats that are normally elected. The need for a consistent and transparent method of appointments was reiterated. Requests gathered from public feedback included involving the Nominations Committee in the appointment process, clarifying the difference between appointments and elections, and increased transparency on Board intentions.

There was a discussion if the bylaws needed to change. Denise stated some members assumed that the 2 appointments would be made from the non-elected candidates. She suggested that the Board consider having vacancies filled by election if they are known about before the election process starts. Bill acknowledged the Board did not do a good job setting expectations prior to the election. Tom suggested for future elections if any openings are known prior to the opening of applications for the Board, expectations be set that the runner up candidates “win” the seats in question for the remaining term.

Rob said if the Board is to pursue strategic aims it must be allowed to pick strategic candidates for appointment rather than be limited to people involved in the elections process. The issues surrounding the 2012 appointments arose because the Board has not been clear on the importance of global growth strategically and all of the efforts being made in that area. Some of the concerns were the result of the timing around election and appointments. Tom suggested appointments could have been made prior to the completion of the election cycle to increase transparency. He continued on to suggest the issue was that the public messaging went from an introductory post by the new president to the announcement of appointments. There was no intermediary communication outlining the goals and direction PASS was pursuing.

Adam noted to be a strategic body the Board could not continue to be reactionary and apologetic. There needs to be clear statements on when popular vote will be used and when strategic board decisions will be made. Denise stated that she thought a by-law change to fill vacancies by election should be considered, but she agreed the Board does need discretion to make appointments in particular circumstances for strategic reasons. Rushabh said if bylaw changes were to be considered they should be timed to also address changes necessary for global growth.

Lara stressed the importance of the board retaining the ability to make strategic appointments. She also wanted more communication from the NomCom if there were concerns about candidates. Tom spoke to the role of the NomCom to verify if someone cannot serve on the Board and the communications to the Board during the 2011 election.

Tom clarified the Board was trying to improve the process for future appointments not go back and change any actions taken. The discussion circled on better ways for the Board to communicate throughout the elections and appointment processes.

Action Kendal intends to blog about the appointments process. Alison will be preparing an official communication for the upcoming Connector. A discussion on how to increase election participation including candidate numbers will be brought forward to another meeting.

7. IT: Needs/Priorities

The Board put forward requests from their portfolios for IT resources including improving chapter tools, upgrading DNN, content indexing, developing a speaker bureau, modifying Orator, capturing metrics and migrating to Office 365.

Allen requested Wes' time be transitioned to focus on Chapters as the SQLSaturday projects wind down. Craig will look at reprioritizing Wes' projects however Wes is scheduled to work on Office 365.

Kendal volunteered to own the speaker bureau project with help from Adam and Rob. Allen, Douglas, Denise, Kendal and Rob will work on the Chapter tools. There was a discussion on using volunteer resources to push some IT projects through. Rob suggested a Project Manager for the HQ IT team.

Action A new director will be appointed to the Director of IT role. Douglas will continue on in this role until an appointment is made.

8. Global Growth

The board began discussions on transitioning to a Global Board. Tom felt regions needed to be determined first before the process of growing leaders can get underway however Bill did not want to designate regions first as he would be uncomfortable giving someone a seat then taking it back. He suggested adding two designated seats to the Board for any members from outside of the United States. Expanding the existing board to the experience level where it can spawn off regional boards was discussed. For the future governance model the 2 company rule will be examined.

The transition discussion was tabled for a future meeting.

Action The Governance Subcommittee will email the Board information on the organization they have based their research on. Lara will work with JRJ on weekly reporting mechanism.

9. Other Business

Allen reiterated the request for someone to be designated Director of SQLRally.

Lara requested consideration for another community evangelist position.

Douglas informed the Board on the new ACH payment options for expense forms.

10. Next In-Person Board Meeting

The next in-person Board meeting will be during SQLRally Dallas – May 10 & 11, 2012 in Dallas, Texas.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 pm.