



Professional Association for SQL Server

Board of Directors Meeting

Teleconference – May 14, 2010

9:30 AM Pacific Standard Time

Agenda/For Discussion:

1. Spring Conference discussion and Brainstorm

Attendees: Bill Graziano, Douglas McDowell, Andy Warren, Thomas LaRock, Jeremiah Peschka, Brian Moran, Lynda Rab, Roni Karassik, Judy Christianson, Craig Ellis, Blythe Morrow, Sonia Dewey, Jack Corbett

Absent: Rushabh Mehta, Rick Heiges, Wayne Snyder, Kristina Kerr, Neil Buchwalter, Rick Bolesta, Christoph Stotz

Spring Conference Discussion and Brainstorm

- Judy Christianson – As a result of discussion at the in-face Board meeting around a spring event, Andy, Judy, Craig and Kate worked together to build three different models. One, a mini Summit; two, a smaller conference; three, a Super SQLSaturday. A thorough budget was created, all were compared, and the final consensus was a Super SQLSaturday would be a good model to follow.
- Sonia Dewey – This is a great grass roots event, and minimizes execution time from marketing and community. It will also let us know if we want to include east coast events to PASS's event strategy.
- Sonia – Should we have a pre-con day or try to successfully coordinate two full-session days?
- Judy – If this model works in North America we can replicate it in other countries as we grow globally.
- Andy Warren – We need to choose an option that will satisfy the community's desire for a full conference on the east coast. Do we want to reach out to the community for their thoughts? (Don't think we need to at this time. We have enough information to move forward with our recommendation of a Super SQLSaturday.)
- Roni Karassik – We want to be careful with reaching out broadly to the community because if they pick something that won't fit into our growth, budgets, and timelines then we will be not taking their advice again.
- Douglas McDowell – Who is our target audience for the event? Have we thought about cannibalization to the Summit?

- Andy – We can make it attractive for people to go to both the Super SQLSaturday and the Summit. We suspect that if people can go to the Summit, they will. If they can't go to the Summit, then the Super SQLSaturday is an option.
- Roni – If PASS does any discounting then it should be on the regional event instead of the Summit.
- Bill Graziano – There isn't a lot of HQ time budgeted in to execute this event. Can we really do it without them fully engaged?
- Andy – It's important to have HQ staff involved, but because it's a grass roots event and essentially a large SQLSaturday, we should be able to execute largely with volunteers.
- Sonia – Would we consider using some of the Summit speakers for this event?
- Andy – We should be focusing on this event as a stepping stone to speaking at the Summit. We also want to increase Chapter involvement and will encourage them to submit and vote on sessions.
- Roni – If this event becomes a bit bigger over the next two years, we need to think about how it will tie into the Summit and create fully structured marketing plan.
- Andy – Recording sessions gets a little bit too close to the Summit model. This event is not community run but it's community driven.
- Roni – What would you like Microsoft's role to be in this event? Would you like something similar to the Launch tour?
- Douglas – With the grass roots nature of it, in year 2 and 3 with increased HQ support, we need to ask if we are putting ourselves in a bad position because of the initial lowered price point.
- Andy – We went with the lowest price point possible here; go through it once, then determine if we want to increase the price in year 2.
- Roni – Do we have any data on the \$299 price point? Why was that figure chosen?
- Andy – Through conversations with our community we discovered they would feel comfortable paying that price point out of their pocket if they couldn't get corporate sponsorship. The difference with this event and the SQLSaturday is that there is an entire subset of people who don't want to come out on a Saturday and instead want to execute professional development during work hours.
- Jack – Someone who has done a Spotlight session at the Summit and wants to move into a full-day training session. This speaker will be compensated \$2000.
- Jack – The idea is to create a speaker development process into moving up to speaking at the Summit. This will be another stepping stone for community leaders.
- Sonia – Do we have professional networking events planned similar to the Birds of a Feather or Don Gabor sessions?
- Judy – There are no official networking events planned in the budget.
- Jack Corbett – We have 4 bonus evening sessions planned with Q&A and panel discussions to get people talking.
- Bill – In the proposal, there is no expo or sponsor area outlined. Do we have plans for that?
- Jack – We don't have the physical space to coordinate a full expo. We were thinking about pulling together a sponsor coffee house that would be a bit larger than a normal SQL Saturday. These ideas are in progress.
- Bill – To confirm: there are four concurrent sessions, and room sizes seat a maximum of 200 theater-style for the pre-conference, and 125 per room for the regular conference.
- Bill – Will this conference conflict with the European conference? We want to make sure Marketing has time for these events.

- Judy – If we are moving into a regional event model then we should be able handle two events within the same time frame.
- Sonia – Are there any SQLSaturday events that compete? Would like to see these put on hold in the 2-3 month period before the Super SQLSaturday.
- Jack – The only event that conflicts is the Jacksonville SQLSaturday, and we are looking to work with them. All Chapters are on board to helping with the event.
- Bill – How do you differentiate this from a normal SQLSaturday?
- Jack – There will be a higher level of competence from the speakers, and much more of a general polish than a normal SQLSaturday.
- Bill – If we surpass projected attendance numbers, what would you include into the event?
- Jack – We could add the internet and incent people to tweet to create excitement. We could also improve the lunch.
- Bill – If registrations are successful, we will be able to funnel increased funds into the event and make networking a focus.
- Jack – This will be a great opportunity to push the event out at the SQLSaturdays in the area. We have 25-35 SQLSaturdays this year, which is a huge benefit for marketing purposes.
- **TASK: Judy/Craig to work with Andy and Jack as it relates to other options for registration, HQ time, and marketing initiatives. More to follow.**