Grasp the Business Value of a Complete SQL Server Health Check

Data is the most valuable currency in any organization, yet in many cases, even those people responsible for its integrity and security may not know the health of that environment. Halfway through the management of a crisis is not the time to discover that your disaster recovery plan involves crossed fingers. To avoid that kind of drama, a formal SQL Server health check should be considered routine, required, and responsible.

Basic Database Health

A comprehensive SQL Server health check is designed to provide you with a better understanding of your complex database environment, and delivers answers you need to the questions you need to be asking:

• Is our data accessible, available, and recoverable?
• Is our SQL Server stable? Is the hardware able to manage current demand for the data it provides?
• Are there any immediate security concerns?
• Is our SQL Server properly configured? Are memory settings accurate?
• Is our current hardware and software infrastructure sufficient to support our current database growth patterns?

The answers to those questions provide the kind of baseline data that is critical if your team is going to be able to support your ongoing database needs. It's equally important to their understanding and support of the day-to-day operation and maintenance of these systems.

Advanced Database Care

Building on that baseline, consider whether your organization can confidently respond to the following questions:

• What SQL Server maintenance should be completed within the next 30 days?
• Is there a regular maintenance schedule that allows for security patches to be applied and server upgrades to be performed?
• Are our databases performing efficiently? Have indices been implemented? Is there index fragmentation? Are there duplicate or unused indices?
• Is there a predetermined series of best practices that are being followed as they relate to database design and management?
• Has a disaster recovery plan been implemented? Does it adequately support the needs of your organization? (consider the maximum acceptable time period you could be without access to your data, as well as the legal liability and potential consequences that could result if it is unavailable for recovery)
• Does our team have the expertise we require?

Database Diagnostics

Even beyond the obvious benefits of being educated and prepared, there is an additional dimension to consider regarding the management of SQL Servers. As an organization you expect excellence from your team, and that means equipping them with the tools and information they need to perform competently and confidently.

Don't worry if all of this feels a little overwhelming. An ounce of prevention is a lot less expensive than a pound of cure. Contact Datavail if you need further assistance with these types of health checks and/or follow our frequently updated blog for helpful DBA related topics.

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Experienced in the management of large DBA teams involving offshore staff, Eric specializes in ITIL certification, management of local and remote staff, project coordination, database administration, change management, server OS administration, programming and scripting. Eric's years of experience as a DBA programmer, ITIL implementer, and change control manager allow him to run high-performance DBA teams providing exceptional customer support. In his off time Eric enjoys spending time with his family, snowboarding, karate, running and computer games.