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Andersen Consulting

Andersen's were centralizing their world-wide purchasing department in order to obtain purchasing power and discounted contract rates from world-wide suppliers. The project was reported as very successful and Andersen's say that they saved 'beaucoup' dollars.

It was a Development project: Database Tuning and Optimization of the Peoplesoft Accounts Payable module. I was one of two members of the **performance measurement and optimization team**. The Accounts Payable application was running on a SQL Server RDBMS. The mission of the Optimization Team was to troubleshoot any problems that might occur for any reason and implement a solution by tuning the database to compensate, without disturbing software warranties.

We established a methodology and acceptable response times (sub-second response to a user interface) and achieved dramatic improvements. For example, from a response time of 2 1/2 minutes to 1 1/2 seconds. This was mostly achieved by establishing indexes in the database. However, we set up a decision support database from where we could run daily, weekly, monthly and annual reports without affecting the OLTP production database. These efforts sometimes took all night but we worked non-stop until we found the solution. Many of the techniques we used are now standard procedures in the current version of SQL Server.

One problem that formed a part of the underlying problems was that Peoplesoft was designed to run on an Oracle database and, when Oracle brought out Oracle Financials, Peoplesoft became very upset and 'ported' the applications over to SQL Server. There were many design problems, most of which could be worked around but, of course, some that could not. For example, the check run interacted with the database while printing the checks and there were locking problems all over the place. This could not be fixed.

At present Peoplesoft is owned by Oracle (after the hostile take-over) and Peoplesoft is now back to using the Oracle database system.

My particular accomplishments included:

- the establishment of the reporting methodology for the projects
- setting up LoadRunner testing facilities for performance analysis and database tuning resulting in dramatic improvements
- optimization of a Decision Support Database (DSS) SQL Server database and reporting system
- investigating, analyzing and documenting business processes
- suggesting improvements in methodology for meeting business process objectives in the context of the Peoplesoft accounts payable modules

During this time I remember getting very excited about the advent of ADO (ActiveX Data Objects) as a means of generating reports from the database. We are now up version 2.8 and I am still excited.