Chapter 8: Breaking Up With Your Relational Database

“I call it the law of the instrument, and it may be formulated as follows: Give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding.”

Abraham Kaplan, The conduct of inquiry: methodology for behavioral science

It’s an all-too-familiar story. You’ve been faithful companions for years. You knew everything about your partner and came to depend and rely on it for many of your core needs. But, times have changed. Your needs are more nuanced and complex, and you’re starting to have doubts about your relational structure. You thoughts and queries begin to stray; you survey and index the field and find new, vibrant and exotic options that you never knew of before. And, then, you realize the hard truth: it’s time to break up with your relational database.

Relational databases (RDBMS) have been around since the 1970s when Edgar Codd proposed1 “*a relational model of data for large shared data banks*” as an alternative to network models prevalent at that time (so much for ‘big data’ being a 21st century concept). Despite the hype surrounding newer database technologies, relational databases still have quite a bit to offer but should not be the only tool you look to when trying to solve a problem, find “badness” or organize your security data. In this chapter, we’ll explore these newer technologies through security use-cases but also show you how to breathe life into your existing RDBMS relationship.

Realizing The Container Has Constraints

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In Summary

Becoming a truly effective as a security data scientist will require a shift in mindset from any monolithic relational database fidelity you may have. Solving real problems will require you to keep your options open, recognizing each database technology has unique benefits for specific tasks.

For Further Reading

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References

1Codd, Edgar Frank. "A relational model of data for large shared data banks." Communications of the ACM 26, no. 1 (1983): 64-69.