Part 35 – Indexes

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In this session we will learn

- What are indexes
- Why do we use indexes
- Advantages of indexes

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Why Indexes

Indexes are used by queries to find data from tables quickly. Indexes are created on tables and views. Index on a table or a view, is very similar to an index that we find in a book.

If you don't have an index, and I ask you to locate a specific chapter in the book, you will have to look at every page starting from the first page of the book.

On, the other hand, if you have the index, you lookup the page number of the chapter in the index, and then directly go to that page number to locate the chapter.

Obviously, the book index is helping to drastically reduce the time it takes to find the chapter.

In a similar way, Table and View indexes, can help the query to find data quickly.

In fact, the existence of the right indexes, can drastically improve the performance of the query. If there is no index to help the query, then the query engine, checks every row in the table from the beginning to the end. This is called as Table Scan. Table scan is bad for performance.

Index Example

At the moment, the Employees table, does not have an index on SALARY column.

Id	Name	Salary	Gender
1	Sam	2500	Male
2	Pam	6500	Female
3	John	4500	Male
4	Sara	5500	Female
5	Todd	3100	Male

```
Select * from tblEmployee
where Salary > 5000 and Salary < 7000
```

To find all the employees, who has salary greater than 5000 and less than 7000, the query engine has to check each and every row in the table, resulting in a table scan, which can adversely affect the performance, especially if the table is large. Since there is no index, to help the query, the query engine performs an entire table scan.

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Creating an Index

```
CREATE Index IX_tblEmployee_Salary
ON tblEmployee (SALARY ASC)
```

The index stores salary of each employee, in the ascending order as shown below. The actual index may look slightly different.

Id	Name	Salary	Gender
1	Sam	2500	Male
2	Pam	6500	Female
3	John	4500	Male
4	Sara	5500	Female
5	Todd	3100	Male

Salary	RowAddress
2500	Row Address
3100	Row Address
4500	Row Address
5500	Row Address
6500	Row Address

Now, when the SQL server has to execute the same query, it has an index on the salary column to help this query. Salaries between the range of 5000 and 7000 are usually present at the bottom, since the salaries are arranged in an ascending order. SQL server picks up the row addresses from the index and directly fetch the records from the table, rather than scanning each row in the table. This is called as Index Seek.

Next Video – Different Types of indexes, Disadvantage etc...

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Additional Resources

- ## PRAGIM Home Page:

  - http://www.PragimTech.com

- ## Resources:

  - ASP.NET Interview Questions
  - http://www.VenkatASPInterview.Blogspot.com
  - C# Interview Questions
  - http://www.VenkatCSharpInterview.Blogspot.com

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