

Part 63 – Cursors in SQL Server

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In this session we will learn

- Cursors in sql server

SQL Server Video Series

Part 60 - Correlated subquery

Part 61 - Creating a large table with random data for performance testing

Part 62 - What to choose for performance - SubQuery or Joins

Link to Dot Net Basics, ASP.NET, C#, ADO.NET and SQL Server video series

<http://www.youtube.com/user/kudvenkat/videos?view=1>

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Cursors in SQL Server

Relational Database Management Systems, including sql server are very good at handling data in SETS. For example, the following "UPDATE" query, updates a set of rows that matches the condition in the "WHERE" clause at the same time.

```
Update tblProductSales Set UnitPrice = 50 where ProductId = 101
```

tblProducts		
Id	Name	Description
1	Product - 1	Product - 1 Description
2	Product - 2	Product - 2 Description
3	Product - 3	Product - 3 Description
4	Product - 4	Product - 4 Description
5	Product - 5	Product - 5 Description

tblProductSales			
Id	ProductId	UnitPrice	QuantitySold
1	5	5	3
2	4	23	4
3	3	31	2
4	4	93	9
5	5	72	5

However, if there is ever a need to process the rows, on a row-by-row basis, then cursors are your choice. Cursors are very bad for performance, and should be avoided always. Most of the time, cursors can be very easily replaced using joins.

Cursors in SQL Server

There are different types of cursors in sql server as listed below. We will talk about the differences between these cursor types in a later video session.

1. Forward-Only
2. Static
3. Keyset
4. Dynamic

DEMO

The cursor will loop thru each row in tblProductSales table. As there are 600,000 rows, to be processed on a row-by-row basis, it takes around 40 to 45 seconds on my machine. We can achieve this very easily using a join, and this will significantly increase the performance. We will discuss about this in our next video session.

Additional Resources

- PRAGIM Home Page:

- www.PragimTech.com

- Resources:

- ASP.NET Interview Questions
 - www.VenkatASPInterview.Blogspot.com
 - C# Interview Questions
 - www.VenkatCSharpInterview.Blogspot.com
 - SQL Server Interview Questions
 - www.venkatsqlinterview.Blogspot.com