SHOW CREATE TABLE

Another way to understand the structure and properties of a table is to see the **CREATE TABLE** statement that created it. With Hive and Impala, you can do this using the **SHOW CREATE TABLE** statement.

Furthermore, if you made changes to the schema or other properties of a table after creating it, then the output of the **SHOW CREATE TABLE**statement will reflect all of those changes. This makes it particularly useful for recreating a table; instead of issuing the original **CREATE TABLE** statement, followed by a series of other statements to modify the table, you can use **SHOW CREATE TABLE** to display a single **CREATE TABLE** statement to recreate the table in its current state. You can copy that **CREATE TABLE** statement and execute it in a different environment that doesn't share the same metastore. This is especially useful when migrating tables from a development or test environment to a production environment.

Try It!

First compare the results of a **DESCRIBE** statement with and without the **FORMATTED** keyword.

1. Execute the following commands in Hive and notice the difference in the details provided. (You must use Hive because the **dig.tunnels** table was created using a Hive SerDe.)

DESCRIBE dig.tunnels;

DESCRIBE FORMATTED dig.tunnels;

Do Steps 2 and 3 to see how you can tell if a table is (internally) managed or unmanaged (that is, externally managed).

2. Look again at the **DESCRIBE FORMATTED** results for **dig.tunnels**. Look down the results for **Table Type**; the value should be **MANAGED_TABLE**. This means it was created *without* the **EXTERNAL** keyword.

3. Compare that to an externally managed table. You can run this in Hive or Impala:

DESCRIBE FORMATTED default.investors;

Again look for **Table Type** and note the value for it.

4. The **dig.tunnels** table was created with a SerDe. Look again at the results of the **DESCRIBE FORMATTED** command for that table, or re-run the command in Hive if necessary. Look for **SerDe Library** in the **col_name** column, and see what the **data_type** value is for that.

5. Although you haven't made any modifications to a table, try the **SHOW CREATE TABLE** statement with the **default.investors** table:

SHOW CREATE TABLE default.investors;

Take some time to review the result. You'll see a lot of familiar things (like **EXTERNAL** and **ROWS DELIMITED** keywords); but you'll probably see some things that are not so familiar. For this table, you'll see **TBLPROPERTIES** settings that you don't recall setting and you might not understand. These are settings that happen invisibly, by default. Don't worry about it—this is not the statement you should have used to create the table; instead, it's *one possible* statement that you *can* use to produce the exact table that you currently have.

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