SNOWLINE

Snowline School District Improves SQL Server Management with Aqua Data Studio

OVERVIEW

The Snowline Joint Unified School District encompasses the Southern California communities of Wrightwood, Phelan, Pinon Hills, Baldy Mesa, Oak Hills, West Cajon Valley and portions of Victorville. The district opened in 1982 with 1,589 K-12 students and has grown to a current student population of over 7,800.

Snowline's database administrator, Charles Embry, manages the district's data environment, which includes five SQL Servers and 25 databases that host a number of applications for the district's 1,200 employees, 7,800 students and their parents -- more than 30,000 users in total.

ORGANIZATON PROFILE

Industry Education   **Headquarters** Phelan, CA   **Website** snowlineschools.com

CHALLENGE

As a one-man team, Embry needed a fast, efficient way to access, configure, manage and visually analyze data and components from Snowline's SQL Servers so he could spend more time on other priorities. Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) provided some of the necessary functionality, but it only works on Windows and he prefers to use a Mac.

Embry wanted a high-performance database management tool that runs natively on Mac, offers all the features of SSMS and provides immediate productivity. He evaluated a number of tools in the market, but few met the minimum criteria. Some of the products did not have all the necessary capabilities built in and were clunky to use. Others did not perform well on Mac and caused the system to work too hard.

SOLUTION

Embry selected AquaFold's Aqua Data Studio for meeting all of his criteria, and deployed it for Snowline's SQL Server management in 2014. He uses the tool to view agent jobs, schedule them, and monitor the history -- and has found that it provides more detail on agent jobs than SSMS. Aqua Data Studio also allows Embry to create security logins, set up user accounts, reset passwords and perform other user management functions in an easily customizable way.

The state of California mandates detailed reporting from school districts on a regular basis. Aqua Data Studio's report generation capabilities allow Embry to easily create customized reports that provide data in CSV, XML or Excel formats.

RESULTS

Since Embry installed Aqua Data Studio, he has been able to keep doing tasks previously done via SSMS, and get even more done more efficiently. He has seen a noticeable improvement in productivity, with 15-20 percent time savings using the tool over what SSMS provided. Aqua Data Studio also works well on his Macbook laptop and does not require excessive computing power.

In addition, Aqua Data Studio's scripting capability makes it easy for Embry to locate content with better detail. When he sets up test databases for a rollover operation, he develops database tables and moves the data back and forth. With Aqua Data Studio, he can find a saved script or one in SQL history and create that database creation script immediately.

Aqua Data Studio's integration with open source version control system Git improves efficiency. Embry also liked Aqua Data Studio's custom keyboard shortcuts, search features, and navigation in long scripts with a magnified scroll/click option.

"With Aqua Data Studio, I'm saving seconds or minutes per task at a time, and over the course of a day or a year, it's huge," said Embry. "The tool offers the same or better capabilities than similar products from other vendors at a fraction of the cost. For me, selecting Aqua Data Studio was a no-brainer, and I'll never turn back."

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