Frequently Asked Questions – Application and Multi-server Management

**Q. What is Application and Multi-server Management?**

**A.** Microsoft’s investments in Application and Multi-server Management will help organizations manage database environments more efficiently at scale with visibility into resource utilization for consolidation and improved efficiencies across the application lifecycle. These improvements will offer DBAs increased visibility and control, resource optimization, and efficiencies, ultimately leading to a healthier, more stable environment.

**Q.  How does Application and Multi-server Management work?**

**A.**  A new control point explorer in SQL Server Management Studio allows DBAs to enroll SQL Server instances across their environment into centralized multi-server management. Once enrolled, DBAs can adjust default capacity policies to define desired utilization across instances or applications. Dashboard viewpoints provide insight into utilization and policy violation to help identify consolidation opportunities, maximize investments and ultimately maintain healthier systems. Meanwhile, the introduction of a Data-tier Application, a single unit of deployment, helps significantly streamline SQL Server consolidation and upgrade initiatives.

**Q.  How does the Application and Multi-server Management feature improve efficiencies?**

**A.**  Interoperability with Visual Studio 2010 introduces a new project template which produces Data-tier Applications. This project template captures the database application schema (tables, stored procedures, etc) and packages it with application deployment requirements, enabling a single unit of deployment. A new central control point in SQL Server enables DBAs to more quickly deploy these application packages to available instances that meet defined deployment requirements. These capabilities reduce trial and error associated with deployments streamlining SQL Server consolidation and upgrade initiatives. The SQL Server control point also provides broad control over the hardware utilization of the database environment, enabling hardware to be more fully utilized and reducing administration costs.

**Q. How will Application and Multi-server Management investments help organizations do more with less in a difficult economic climate?**

**A.** By centralizing the capacity management of SQL Server instances and data-tier applications, DBAs will gain visibility into utilization across their environment which will help streamline consolidation initiatives to help save money. Dashboard insights into both database instance and database utilization will help DBAs make better decisions about resource allocation—including identifying consolidation opportunities and potential performance issues.

Furthermore, DBAs will find it easier and faster to move, upgrade and deploy databases applications with the introduction of a new Data-tier Application, a single unit of deployment.

By extending the power of Policy-Based Management to application and multi-server management, DBAs will proactively manage application and instance capacity to help ensure service quality.

**Q. How do the Application and Multi-server Management investments leverage the power of Visual Studio?**

**A.** Utilizing future capabilities in Visual Studio, developers will create deployable packages through a new project type, define database schema and deployment requirements for application components, and handoff these bundled components to administrators. This will streamline collaboration between data-tier developers and DBAs and help enable quicker deployments. Policy-Based Management is extended through these new capabilities in Visual Studio enabling developers to bundle deployment requirements with their projects— for example, “the application must be installed on SQL Server 2008 or later.”

**Q. This sounds a lot like Systems Center Operations Manager (SCOM) functionality. How are these products different?**

**A.** System Center has a broad charter which looks across all Microsoft products within the IT environment including managing physical instances, or hardware assets. SQL Server’s investments in application and multi-server management functionality focus strictly on the DBA’s role at a deep level, the data-tier applications and database instances on which they reside to help facilitate centralized database management, improve resource utilization, and manage instances and application components at scale.

**Q. How do I get Application and Multi-server Management?**

**A.** Application and Multi-Server Management capabilities will be available in SQL Server 2008 R2. At this time, we have not disclosed which SQL Server editions will contain this functionality. However, you can download SQL Server 2008 R2 CTP2 and try the beta for free today!

**Q. What do these investments cost?**

**A.** We have not yet committed to any pricing or packaging strategies. More information will be available as we get closer to the release of SQL Server 2008 R2 in H1 2010.

**Q. What Application and Multi-server Management capabilities are available in the August CTP?**

**A.** With the SQL Server 2008 R2 August CTP, customers can perform the following functions:

* Set up a central management point (SQL Server Control Point).
* Use the Control Point Explorer to enroll SQL Server instances into the SQL Server Control Point for centralized capacity management and policy-based evaluation.
* Extract Data-tier Applications, a single unit of deployment, from existing deployed database applications from SQL Server 2000 to SQL Server 2008 R2.
* Deploy Data-tier Applications to SQL Server 2008 R2 databases.
* Use the SQL Server Control Point to view at-a-glance dashboard viewpoints for insights into utilization and policy violation.
* Extensions to Policy-Based Management in the SQL Server Control Point deliver default utilization policies while fine-tuning slider bars enable you to adjust utilization thresholds within seconds.