



www.*DanHotka.com*
Quarterly Newsletter

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Dan Hotka is a Training Specialist who has over 28 years in the computer industry and over 23 years of experience with Oracle products. He is an internationally recognized Oracle expert with Oracle experience dating back to the Oracle V4.0 days. Dan's latest book is the [SQL Developer Handbook](#) by Oracle Press. He is also the author of [Oracle9i Development By Example](#) and [Oracle8i from Scratch](#) by Que and has co-authored 7 other popular books including the [Database Oracle10g Linux Administration](#) by Oracle Press. He is frequently published in Oracle trade journals, and regularly speaks at Oracle conferences and user groups around the world.

Invite Dan to speak at your next event.

C *Collaborate 07* this year was the week of April 15 in Las Vegas. I had 4 accepted speaking slots: *All the Free Stuff from Oracle* (always a favorite), *Tuning When You Cannot Change the Code* (last years award winner), *SQL Developer Tips and Techniques* (1/2 hour lunch) and a 3 hour *Hands On SQL Developer*.

"They worked me like a rented mule!" says Dan. ☺

OAUG is a fantastic organization to work with. The *Tuning When You Cannot Change the Code* went over so well, I was asked to do an encore session that was also well attended.

It was a sunny but cool week and darn right chilly for their beach party event.

I am doing the core content of this presentation twice over the next couple of months (see *SQL Statement Tuning Tips and Techniques*) in the Public Training section, page 2.

I found a fantastic article on passwords, how they are compromised, and patterns to keep in mind that make it very difficult for password breakers to hack, see page 5.

Watch this fall for an announcement on my new Oracle Analytics course offerings.

Iowa folks: Mark your calendars...Iowa Oracle Users

Summer 2007

Group meeting on June 21th (Westlake DMACC Campus, 2nd floor auditorium)...SQL Developer Tips and Techniques, Ice Cream Social, TOAD Tips and Techniques. I hope to do the same agenda in eastern Iowa on June 20 (location to be arranged). Please contact me for more information.

Take note of my Public Course Offerings and locations. Watch for me in your area!

Take note of my pricing model, it is very different from how others price training...I make on-site training very cost effective. Check the Educational Offerings for these details.

I found that illusive Isetta...right here in Des Moines. Check out the back page.

This newsletter, along with all prior newsletters, are available at www.DanHotka.com.

Check out the 'new look' of my website...I hope you find it easier to navigate. Thanks to Debra Elliot for the input and ideas...contact her at www.web-concept-designs.com for a new look to your website.

What's in this issue?

Tuning When You Cannot Change the Code!

- Part 2 of a 4 part series with excerpts from this very popular 1-hour presentation that is regularly requested – page 4

Public Training Offerings

Watch for Dad in your area with these courses. Contact Dan for course details and enrollment. Check www.DanHotka.com, click on Onsite Training for course outlines, or, just ask Dan.

May 22 – 24, Minneapolis
SQL Statement Tuning Tips and Techniques

June 11 – 12, Los Angeles
Oracle Discoverer for End Users

June 13 – 15, Los Angeles
Advanced PL/SQL Tips and Techniques

July 16 – 18, Salt Lake City
SQL Statement Tuning Tips and Techniques

Freeware Downloads

- Another Useful Oracle Website – page 6
- SQL Developer v1.1
- Website of affordable computer components
- Dan's freeware tuning tools

Switching to SQL Developer?

My 1-day SQL Developer course is just the opportunity to jump-start your staff with this new tool from Oracle Corp. Course materials includes a copy of my book: Oracle SQL Developer Handbook – page 3

Password Tips and Techniques

Useful knowledge on how passwords are compromised and tips on good password selection techniques – page 6

User Group Information

- Dan's speaking topics, new half-day, and all-day hands-on training sessions – page 3
- Speaking topics for User Group – page 3

Product Review

An article where I review a useful product I've used or discovered - page 7

Dan In Print...

- *Oracle Professional: Oracle Trace Analyzer, May 2007 Issue*
www.pinnaclepublishing.com
- *Oracle SQL Developer Handbook* ISBN: 0-07-148474-4.
- *Oracle Database 10g Linux Administration*

ISBN: 0-07-223053-3 (I did the Oracle 10g tuning chapters).

Order your copy today at www.Amazon.com.

Educational Offerings

- New Oracle 10g New Features for Developers class – page 4
- Advanced PL/SQL Programming Techniques
- My Training Pricing Model – up to 15 attendees for 1 low price
- On-site at your company or in your city via user group participation...see Educational Offerings

Featured Presentation:

- Discoverer 10g Tips and Techniques - page 6

The Back Page:

- Found that illusive Isetta!

Puzzler...

During the Oracle 4 & 5 days what was the secret code name Oracle employees used to get faster help when calling into Oracle Support?

Go to www.DanHotka.com for the answer!

User Group Information

I am available to speak at your user group. A complete listing of available topics is on my website.

Let me know what you would like and I am sure I can fill your timeslot.

Switching to SQL Developer?

Onsite Oracle SQL Developer Course will Jumpstart your staff with this new/cool tool from Oracle Corp

I am getting a number of requests for my 1-day SQL Developer course by people using other popular Oracle development tools.

The course guide is fully annotated and makes a great reference guide all by itself. I also include a copy of my Oracle SQL Developer Handbook by Oracle Press as well.

SQL Developer Tips and Techniques 1-Day Course Outline

Dan will illustrate the latest features of the new free SQL Developer tool from Oracle Corp necessary to view, extract, and manipulate data within the Oracle database. This workshop covers all of the features necessary to develop, manipulate, and debug PL/SQL code, develop

& tune SQL statements, and discover all of the features of SQL Developer. Students will add their own reports and build master/detail reports. All of the various SQL Developer reports will be reviewed. This short course will also cover exactly how to put Oracle data into Excel spreadsheets!

This is the perfect course to get your staff productive with this new tool from Oracle.

This is a hands-on workshop. Attendees will be able to learn by using SQL Developer in a test environment. This workshop includes on-line tutorials of all the topics useful to enable the end user to be more successful when working with the Oracle database.

Educational Offerings

Remember that my portable computer lab make these courses very easy to teach at your site. The cost of this lab is included in my 1-fee pricing model (see below).

New Courses:

Oracle10g New Features for Developers

The purpose of this 3-day course is to present some of the most advanced features available to database developers. Many of these features are either newly available with the Oracle10g release or have been substantially improved with that release.

Advanced PL/SQL Programming Tips

This course also covers many of the Oracle10g new features while working with PL/SQL.

Attendees have the opportunity to learn how to find the poorly-performing components of PL/SQL routines, use Oracle's newer DEBUG routines to find problems in PL/SQL logic and how to use the latest features of the PL/SQL language such as the new optimizing compiler and collections.

Topics covered:

- Oracle Architecture
- Introduction to PL/SQL
 - Syntax and language structure review
- PL/SQL Topics
 - Package Usage (both User Defined and Oracle Defined Packages)
 - Profiling/Debugging/Compiling
 - Cursor Sharing/Cursor Variables
 - Collections
 - Dynamic SQL
 - Autonomous Transactions
 - PL/SQL Coding Tips
 - Debugging PL/SQL
 - Working with Oracle Trace

Training Pricing Model

I price my courses at a fixed rate for up to 15 attendees. This rate compares to the price that others charge for just 2 to 4 attendees. This course fee includes the use of my portable computer lab. There is a separate per attendee charge that covers the cost of the student guide and any additional books that might be associated with the course. This student fee is anywhere from \$30 to \$150, depending on the course.

Current Course Offerings

Give your technical staff that competitive edge with Oracle Workshops! These courses are designed to enhance your staff's skill set to perform their job better.

These workshops are designed to be held at your location. These courses use my portable computer lab. On-site instruction enables more people to be trained with the same training dollar.

The course utilizes a variety of current tools. Students will have the opportunity to learn more about SQL Developer, TOAD, TextPAD, as well as the Oracle tools like SQL*Plus, iSQL*Plus, and Dan's new Java-based SQL Tuner.

Oracle SQL Tuning Tips and Techniques with Optional 3rd Day Advanced Tuning Topics

SQL Developer for IT Staff

TOAD for IT Staff

Oracle Discoverer for End Users

Introduction to Oracle (SQL)

Oracle Intro to PL/SQL

Oracle Advanced PL/SQL

Oracle Fundamentals

Oracle10g New Features for Developers

Introduction to UNIX/Linux

UNIX/Linux Shell Programming

Oracle/Unix Scripting Tips and Techniques

Tuning When You Cannot Change the Code – Part 2

I want to share some of my tuning tips with you from this popular presentation. I won an award with this presentation at last year's *Collaborate* event and they submitted it to OOW where I gave the presentation again. User groups: ask me to come and deliver this presentation.

I will discuss 4 different tuning topics when you cannot change the code, ie: any purchased application.

This part will discuss Index Monitoring, probably one of my favorite features of Oracle9.2!

Indexes contain key values and stores rowids, the physical location of any row in an Oracle Database. Indexes are automatically picked up by Oracle when developing execution plans and generally improve performance SQL performance rather dramatically.

Oracle has improved how indexes are used. It is no longer necessary to have multiple indexes with the same key values but in different sequences, for example. Indexes are added for many reasons, Oracle even creates them automatically for primary-key constraints.

The more indexes on a table object, the longer inserts and updates take because indexes have the same recovery and locking mechanisms on them as well.

It is not uncommon to save a significant amount of time on a batch update job just by dropping unused indexes.

Before Oracle 9.2, it was rather difficult to see if Oracle ever used a particular index or not. The Mmon Oracle background process watches statistics for the cost-based optimizer (and helps the Oracle advisory process) ****and**** it keeps track of which indexes have been accessed.

The V\$OBJECT_USAGE table has several columns: Index Name, table name, monitoring, used, start_monitoring, and end_monitoring.

Altering the index and including the syntax 'monitoring usage' trips this feature on. The syntax 'nomonitoring usage' turns it back off.

Syntax: 'alter index <index name> monitoring usage;'

A simple SQL creating SQL script against USER_INDEXES or ALL_INDEXES would create a script to turn on/off monitoring for all application indexes.

Using SQL*Plus: set heads off, set feedback off, set verify off, set pagesize 0, spool index_monitoring.sql, select 'alter index ' || index_name || ' monitoring usage;' from user_indexes; spool off, exit

This syntax should create an alter index line for each index associated with the application.

Once monitoring is turned on, if the index has been used, the used column will have a 'YES' in it. The column is null if the index has not been accessed. Simply run some counts daily against this view to see how many indexes are being used. You will be surprised!

Please note that only the owner of the index can see the monitoring results.

Review your indexes and see if many not used during the month can be created for month end/quarter end/year end processing then dropped.

Password Tips and Techniques

I found this article “Don’t hack around to get a password” by Teresa Dixon Murray (Newhouse News Service) to be of particular interest.

She has some solid advise. Some I knew, some I didn’t.

For example: she says people looking to hack passwords use automated programs that try thousands of combinations a minute. She says, using this automated technique, it only takes 2 minutes to hack a password of 5 positions (letters and numbers). Seven position passwords of all lowercase and digits takes 2 days to hack, mixing uppercase and lowercase increases the time needed to 23 days. She says eight position passwords should be the minimum. According to Microsoft, the best passwords are more than 14 characters.

Some suggestions:

DON’T use any names/numbers that can be connected to you.

DON’T use any word found in the dictionary (personal contribution).

DON’T use any information that can be obtained through public record.

DON’T use letters in sequence on the keyboard. 12345 and qwert (the left-hand keystrokes) are some of the most common passwords nationwide.

DO think of a sentence that is easily remembered and take the first letter of each word.

DO mix upper-case/lower-case and numbers. Use special characters, if supported by the host application.

DO make your passwords a minimum of eight positions and a mix of letters and numbers.

Personal experience: change your password every now and then.

Oracle now supports password aging...forcing users to change their passwords every so often. Using this syntax in Oracle10g, you can effective control failed attempts as well as the life span of the password.

This syntax is an excerpt from the Oracle10g Database Administration Guide, chapter 22.

```
CREATE PROFILE prof LIMIT
  FAILED_LOGIN_ATTEMPTS 4
  PASSWORD_LOCK_TIME 30
  PASSWORD_LIFE_TIME 90;
ALTER USER ashwini PROFILE prof;
```

Featured Presentation

A full list of my available Technical Presentations are on <http://www.danhotka.com/> under Event Speaking Topics

Oracle10g Discoverer Tips and Techniques

Dan will demonstrate the following features in a live-demo format. This presentation is packed full of tips and techniques, including scripts.

Dan will cover these topics using Discoverer10g web version:

- Review of the new ‘Drake’ interface

- Stop Light Exceptions
- Advanced Conditions
- Adding columns/Formatting data with Calculations
- Graph Review
- Scheduling Features and a useful Oracle script
- Key differences between the Oracle10g Desktop and Web versions
- Time Permitting: Discoverer10g Admin topics: How the thing works!

Dan will conclude with an in-depth comparison of the web version versus the Desktop versions of the Oracle10g Discoverer product. This presentation is good for people who are considering implementing Discoverer, new to Oracle Discoverer, as well as experienced Discoverer Users.

Product Review

This new column will feature a product I’ve run across and have found enough value to share with you. The data sheet of these products will appear for a period of time on my website under Product Review. I hope you find this information of value.

MGA Eagle Eye

Eagle Eye is a complete tuning environment produced by Mark Gurry and Associates out of Australia.



This tool has a variety of useful Oracle tuning problem-finding areas such as real-time monitoring and reporting, monitoring top Oracle sessions, monitoring the top IO users (each area having additional drilldowns to detail/problem SQL), and more. This tool incorporates a lot of the scripts we have read about or seen demonstrated at various events into a single, easy-to-use interface. The control center allows for easy Oracle instance monitoring and/or user session monitoring.

I like the Stats Pack report interface which allows you to easily access information stored in snapshots. Eagle Eye will then process the snapshots and present you with the stats pack report.

In my tuning course, I have all attendees learn how to turn trace on and off, finding and interpreting the trace output using TKProf or Trace Analyzer (I put up a cool interface JS Analyzer that eases the character-mode pain). Creating the proper trace file and capturing the correct SQL information can be difficult, and again, is a command-line process. Eagle Eye allows you to initiate trace sessions (with the proper Oracle permissions of course) for any user session, your session, or even system wide. Eagle Eye prompts you for the type of trace you want (just SQL, with bind variables, and with wait event information). Eagle Eye then can present this trace information to you by time waited per wait

event...very useful problem-solving information.

Eagle Eye has a free trial period. Try it out, let me know what you think.

<http://www.mga.com.au/products/eagle.shtm> or just navigate thru the www.mga.com.au site.

Downloads

This section will highlight a freeware/shareware type product that I use and I feel is important enough to share.

www.lazydba.com: I like the title. I found this site when googling something Oracle related. The site covers Oracle, SQL Server, and DB2/UDB topics. You can register for their forum.

www.Compuvest.com: My buddy Kevin McGinnis told me about this site. I order all my laptop hard drives from here. Fair price and have yet to have a problem with any of their drives. This website sells parts for just about any electronic gizmo.

SQL Developer: Oracle Corp has a pre-release of Version 1.1 now available on Oracle Technet (www.Oracle.com → Downloads). You can download just SQL Developer and you can download SQL Developer with an installed Java Runtime Environment. This same download page has a white paper on the new features included in this option. Pay attention to Sue Harper and Kris Rice's blogs: always a good source of information on various features of SQL Developer

JS Tuner: Email DHotka@Earthlink.net and request this tool. This tool will assist you with enhanced explain plans and useful index info/hints/and SQL history at your fingertips.

JS Analyzer: Email DHotka@Earthlink.net and request this tool. This tool makes running the character-mode TKProf and SQL*Plus interface Trace Analyzer a snap. No more typing long trace file names.

The Back Page

VW Update

Both bugs made the winter just fine. Have not had either out much yet though. Oldbug is still awaiting its top, and a wire up the steering column to run its horn.



Isetta

I actually found 2 of these cars right here in Des Moines! As you can see, they are quite small and there isn't much left of either one of these. BMW made these little cars from 1957 thru 1962. The yard gave me a good price for them both, although, I'm only really interested in the red one.



There is a white one sitting right next to this one. They both have been here for years. Neither have anything underneath. I would put the body back to how it looked when

it was new and prepare a golf cart chassis for the undercarriage.

The only thing holding up the project is I am seriously trying to decide just what I'd do with an Isetta/golf cart combination! I have parade cars already...it would be a fun project but without its original undercarriage, I'm not sure who would want it/what it would be worth.

Wouldn't this be something to take on a golf course!?!?!?

Motorcycle for sale!

This is my 1975 Honda 55K motorcycle. It is in fantastic shape...with the VW hobby, I simply do not have a use for it anymore. First \$1,000 gets it.

