

Wrox Beginning SQL Server 2005 Administration 2006



I feel kind of like Sid in the movie Toy Story when his rocket came in the mail—"It came it finally came!" I

remember anticipating SQL Server 7 when working with SQL Server 6.5 and hoping for an improvement. I wasn't disappointed. SQL Server 7 left far behind all the baggage of OS/2 and the UNIX environment from which SQL Server initially emerged. It was truly a new and innovative release. When SQL Server 2000 was announced, I was hoping for some even more dramatic improvements, and I wasn't disappointed. Although the changes in the product from SQL Server 7.0 to SQL Server 2000 were not of the magnitude of the changes between SQL Server 6.5 and SQL Server 7.0, they were still impressive. SQL Server was easier to program against, and easier than ever to manage. That was five long years ago. Shortly after the release of SQL Server 2000, I heard about a new database system, code-named "Yukon,"

that was in development at Microsoft. The information I received made it sound like it was going to be the most significant release ever, and I became "cautiously optimistic." The company I was working with was invited to join Microsoft's Yukon Ascend program when the product was in its Beta 1 stage. The Ascend program was designed to get Microsoft partners and key customers up on the product before it shipped in order to help spread early adoption. The Microsoft Developer Evangelists and Technical Evangelists were gearing up to spread the news about this new release, and my company was hired on to help "spread the good news." What I encountered after joining the Ascend team

was intriguing, even exciting. The possibilities this new release seemed to create were incredible. Still, the product was in very early Beta. I withheld judgment, waited, and explored the product, encountering many "This feature not yet implemented" messages along the way.

When Yukon finally graduated to Beta 2 and its name was officially announced as SQL Server 2005, my excitement overcame my caution. From that day, I became a little obsessed with the product. I read everything I could find about it, I played with it, and I migrated several development applications to it. I was impressed with what I saw. The possibilities this new release offered seemed almost endless. However, trouble loomed on the horizon as the dates for Beta 3 kept slipping. Many people started calling it "SQL Server 2006," or joked that the release date would be December 14, 2005. Enter Paul Flessner, Executive Vice President, Microsoft Corporation. Flessner announced at the Microsoft TechED conference that the release date for SQL Server 2005, Visual Studio 2005, and BizTalk 2006 would all be on November 7, 2005. In addition, he also announced that there would be no Beta 3. For the last few months of the product's development cycle, only the interim builds (known as "Community Technical Previews") would be released. Flessner told an attentive crowd that "the SQL team loves SQL Server 2005 so much they don't want to let it go." He was cutting the apron strings. SQL Server 2005 would ship in 2005. Was it really ready? Only time would tell.

For me, November 7 couldn't come fast enough. I was very excited not to have to wait until the official launch, and was installing the RTM version of SQL Server 2005 within hours of it becoming available on the MSDN Subscriber Web site on the last day of October 2005. I immediately started putting it through its paces to see if it was all that Microsoft's marketing claimed it would be. Because I had worked with the beta and CTP releases for more than two years, I wasn't surprised with what I encountered with the final release. I was, however, impressed with the stability and thoroughness of the 2005 release

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