

Management Studio Tips & Tricks

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Who Am I?

- SQL Server professional since 6.5
- Microsoft MVP for over a decade
- Blogger at <http://sqlblog.com/>
- Twitter : [@AaronBertrand](https://twitter.com/AaronBertrand)
- Wrote 2 chapters in “SQL Server MVP Deep Dives”
Book by MVPs for charity ([War Child](http://www.sqlservermvpdeepdives.com/)):
<http://www.sqlservermvpdeepdives.com/>

What are my goals today?

- pass along my SSMS knowledge
- make you say “cool” or “wow” at least once

Management Studio

- start faster
- prevent mistakes
- work better
- print smarter
- present better
- embrace add-ins
- try alternatives

Start Faster

- open an empty environment
- add -S, -d, -E arguments to SSMS shortcut
- add -nosplash argument to SSMS shortcut
- periodically review registered servers
- don't leave unused OE trees open
- don't open and close SSMS all day

Start Faster

- exclude SqlWB.exe / Ssms.exe from virus/spyware tools
- turn off Online Help
- turn off error / usage reporting
- turn off certificate revocation checking

Prevent Mistakes

- use custom colors for production instances
- use New Query template with BEGIN TRAN
- move “Start Debugging” icon off the toolbar
- add multi-level undo/redo to toolbar
- drag column lists from Object Explorer
- use caution with multiple tab groups

1 : registration properties, connection properties tab, use custom color
2 : I use an add-in that allows me to customize this. More later.
3 : looks too much like SQL 2000's execute button
5 / 6 : demo
6 : very easy to press stop or execute when the wrong window is focused

Work Better

- use Cancel vs. OK when nothing has changed
 - especially in SQL Server Agent
- use SSMS on server for expensive operations
 - Agent history or error log viewing
- use Object Explorer Details
 - search, view properties, customizable columns
 - multi-object actions
- use templates
 - to apply consistent formatting or rules
- use runas /netonly to connect via Win Auth across domains: <http://bit.ly/RunasNetOnly>

Work Better

- make use of the Properties panel (F4)
 - execution plan details
 - current query details
- get to know Tools / Options
 - size of results to grid / text
- take advantage of XML data type
- be aware of limitations of visual designers
 - e.g. BIT data entry on Open Table / Edit Top Rows
- migrate registrations to a new server
 - little-known wizard in context menu

Work Better

- learn keyboard shortcuts
 - CTRL + A / C / R / A / V
 - F5, ALT + F1
 - CTRL + SHIFT + U / L
 - CTRL + U
 - CTRL + K, CTRL + C/U
 - ALT drag
 - CTRL + SHIFT + M (templates)

much more:

<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms174205.aspx>

- use Activity Monitor for quick glances at performance

Work Better

- customize appearance of query tab, status bar
- quickly insert data using Excel
- use Object Explorer's filtering
- debugging : see Buck Woody's primer

<http://informit.com/guides/content.aspx?g=sqlserver&seqNum=339>

- show tabs with filename removed
- demo pulling list from employee e-mail

Work Better

• projects and solutions

<http://blogs.msdn.com/buckwoody/archive/2009/08/04/sql-server-management-studio-projects-and-solutions.aspx>

<http://wiseman-wiseguy.blogspot.com/2009/12/do-you-use-projectssolutions-in-ssms.html>

<http://www.kevingao.net/sourcesafe/integrating-sourcesafe-vss-with-sql-server-2008.html>

<http://decipherinfosys.wordpress.com/2009/06/05/project-management-features-in-ssms/>

<http://consultingblogs.emc.com/jamiethomson/archive/2006/01/08/2586.aspx>

• central management servers

<http://www.informit.com/guides/content.aspx?g=sqlserver&seqNum=316>

<http://www.informit.com/guides/content.aspx?g=sqlserver&seqNum=319>

http://sqlserverpedia.com/wiki/Central_Management_Server

<http://bit.ly/KimberlyTrippCMS>

Work Better

- source control integration

can use native:

<http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms173550.aspx>

or third party:

ApexSQL:

http://www.apexsql.com/sql_tools_source_control.asp

Red-Gate:

http://www.red-gate.com/products/SQL_Source_Control/index.htm

Print Smarter

- set up printer to match color coding
- use different font/size (print vs. screen)
- print using line numbers
- glyph for word wrap
- long lines an issue? print landscape

Present Better

- use high contrast colors (not black on white)
- use better fonts (consolas vs. courier)
- send results to separate tab
- include query in results
- increase font size for:
 - text editor
 - results to text / grid
 - tooltips / statement completion
- use “Large Fonts” OS setting

Embrace add-ins

- Red-Gate SQL Prompt

- better IntelliSense (subjective)
- code reformatting
- doesn't require 2008 target

http://www.red-gate.com/products/SQL_Prompt/

- Red-Gate SQL Search

- search for words in views, procedures, functions
- FREE!

http://www.red-gate.com/products/SQL_Search/

Embrace add-ins

- Mladen Prajdic's SSMS Tools Pack

Lots of fantastic stuff here, including:

- query history
- CRUD / insert data generator
- snippets
- FREE! (donations encouraged)

<http://ssmstoolspack.com/>

Try Alternatives

- Quest Toad

<http://toadworld.com/PRODUCTS/ToadforSQLServer/tabid/217/Default.aspx>

- ApexSQL Code

http://apexsql.com/sql_tools_code.asp

- Embarcadero DBArtisan

<http://embarcadero.com/products/dbartisan>

- AquaFold AquaData Studio (also on Mac)

<http://aquadatastudio.com/index-sqlserver.html>

- RazorSQL (also on Mac)

http://razorsql.com/features/sqlserver_features.html

Feedback

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