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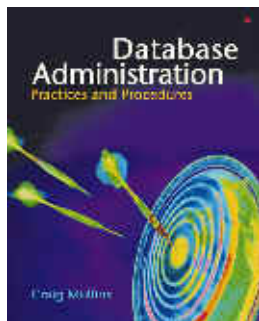
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The DBA Corner

by Craig S. Mullins



Business Eye for the DBA Guy

DBAs are technologists first and foremost. We like to immerse ourselves in the bits and bytes of technical solutions and learn all there is to know about the software we use. And this is okay--up to a point. But technology-loving DBAs must take care not to blind themselves to the business reasons for the software and hardware they love so much.

To keep the business "top of mind," the DBA's tools and utilities need to be tied to business strategies and initiatives. In this way, the DBA's work becomes integrated with the goals and operations of the organization. This requires merging business with technology to create Business Service Management, or BSM.

The first step in achieving BSM is the integration of DBA services with the other core components of the IT infrastructure. Of course, the DBA should be able to monitor and control the databases under his purview, but he should also be able to monitor them within the context of the broader spectrum of the IT infrastructure--including systems, applications, storage and networks. Only then can companies begin to tie service-level agreements to business needs, rather than technology metrics.

To fulfill the promise of BSM, it is necessary to link business services to the underlying technology. For example, a technician should be able to immediately comprehend that a service outage to transaction X7R2 in the PRD2 CICS region means that regional demand deposit customers cannot access their accounts. See the difference?

Focusing on transactions, TP monitors and databases is the core of the DBA's job. But servicing customers is the reason the DBA builds those databases and manages those transactions. Technicians with an understanding of the business impact of technology decisions will do a better job of servicing the business strategy. This truism is even more important for the DBA's manager. Technology managers who speak in business terms are more valuable to their company.

We can go further and tie the concept of [PAR \(Performance, Administration, and Recovery\)](#) into our BSM implementation. The components of PAR are the weapons used by the DBA to combat service disruptions. When PAR is automated, business service can be returned more rapidly because the system finds the problem, notifies the

technician of the business impact, then analyzes the situation and begins to implement a corrective action. With the intelligent automation of database problem resolution, sometimes all of this occurs before anyone has started to complain. Now isn't that nice!

Of course, the devil is in the details. A key component to realizing effective BSM is the ability to link specific pieces of technology to specific business services. This requires a service impact management capability--that is, analyzing the technology required to power each critical business service and documenting the link. Technologies exist to automate some of this through event automation and service modeling. Such capabilities help to transform availability and performance data into detailed knowledge about the status of business services and service level agreements.

Today's modern corporation needs technicians who are cognizant of the business impact of their management decisions. As such, DBAs need to get busy transforming themselves to become more business-savvy--that is, to keep an eye on the business impact of the technology under their span of control.

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