



CASE STUDY

Lumidata - Managing over 500 SQL Server databases

"If you work with SQL Server and don't have SQL Toolbelt, you're likely losing thousands of dollars a month."

John Trumbul

Senior Software Engineer, LumiData

LumiData know data. They analyse billions of dollars in sales data for consumer goods companies.

John Trumbul, Senior Software Engineer at LumiData, uses the tools in the SQL Toolbelt to save time managing more than **500 databases**.

In the first three months of using the SQL Toolbelt, Trumbul **saved a half-year of a developer's salary**.

The context

As its name suggests, LumiData knows data. How to collect it, how to present it, how to help customers – Fortune 1000 consumer goods companies – use it to increase revenue, boost margins, enhance brand visibility, and strengthen market positions.

The company's SOLYS application creates dashboard analytics and easy-to-understand sales reports providing compelling reasons why buyers at major big-box stores should cut purchase orders for hundreds of thousands of dollars for the consumer products that LumiData customers sell. Its SETL (SOLYS ETL – Extract, Transform, and Load) is used to download data from the retailer's portal and load it into SQL Servers to drive SOLYS reports.

Think of the need for real-time backups and restores of sales data at both the chain level and for each store where customers' products are sold worldwide. Something as minor as a field going from a decimal point with five places to six not being propagated across all of LumiData's clients can throw off their numbers, cause crashes, and inject bugs that could cost thousands of dollars to track down and fix.

Think of the importance of managing 10 SQL Servers with more than 500 databases that hold hundreds of millions, in some cases billions, of dollars in sales data.

Then think of John Trumbul of LumiData, a senior software engineer who oversees these operations as combination DBA and lead developer for SETL. John holds 11 Microsoft certifications and six Brainbench certifications and was among the nominees for Exceptional DBA of 2011.

We could tell you some of John's story, but you might not believe us. And, who better to tell the story than John himself? So here it is in his own words.

Making the case

As you can probably guess, we need to have 100-percent-accurate failovers, backups, partitions, and recovery plans since the data we manage is mission-critical to each of our customers – nearly 100 of the top brand-name consumer goods companies. We purchased Redgate's SQL Toolbelt about five months ago to automate these tasks.

Before the purchase, I created a case study for our CTO assessing feature comparison, learning curve, cost effectiveness and ROI. After using other tools in the past and doing the comparisons, Redgate was light years ahead of the competition in my opinion.

I use **SQL Toolbelt** for upwards of 70 percent of my DBA work, including but not limited to:

- Using **SQL Backup Pro** to back up our customers' critical sales data on multiple levels.
- Monitoring our production server with **SQL Monitor** to detect bottlenecks, memory leaks, long-running jobs and queries, and other factors that can slow performance.
- Optimizing T-SQL code and the database itself with **SQL Prompt**.
- Synchronizing scripts and changes across anywhere from two to 200 databases at the same time using **SQL Compare Pro** and **SQL Data Compare Pro**.
- Generating our database documentation with **SQL Doc**. The documentation is published on our developer wiki and used as a base line for all developers during their on-boarding process.

Quantitative and qualitative benefits

I don't have to estimate the improvements SQL Toolbelt has made on our operations; I have exact numbers and demonstrable qualitative differences:

- In the first three months, **we've saved a half-year of a developer's salary** – roughly \$40,000 USD.
- Our backup process is **71 percent faster** and the backup sizes are **18 percent smaller**.
- We went from shabby documentation to full MSDN-style **documented databases in mere minutes, saving us months** if we would have had to manually create the documentation and website.
- We went from no source control to having a full-blown source control that was wired up in a few clicks with SQL Source Control; **this has saved me on multiple occasions**.
- SQL Compare saves our master template from ever getting out of sync and ensures all **our customers will never get a database error** due to something being absent.
- With SQL Monitor, we can be **proactive in our optimization process**, instead of waiting until a customer reports a problem.

SQL Toolbelt has helped LumiData deliver a foolproof development cycle rivaling that of any company, Microsoft included. We can now have major database revisions or releases out in minutes and distributed to all of our clients' databases. **That saves us 10 hours, or approximately \$2,000, per release.**

Adding value and revenue

Perhaps most importantly, SQL Toolbelt allows LumiData developers to concentrate on things that bring incredible value to our customers and revenues to our business.

With the time I've saved in automating our backup process, for example, I've been able to add new data feeds to our SETL tool. The more feeds we add, the more new clients we can add. These feeds also help us up-sell to existing clients. Clients love to hear how our software will import their data not only from the retail links® proprietary format, but also from email, xls, csv, edi, and xml at the same time.

Say Company X purchased our tool to import and report on their sales data from a retailer portal, but their forecast data comes from a separate system that only generates pipedelimited csv files. We can tell them that they are now able to import that data as well.

ROI: 300-400 percent annually

Adding the new client and up-sell revenue to the developer time saved, I would estimate the ROI of SQL Toolbelt to be roughly 300 to 400 percent per year, with the potential for ROI into the millions of dollars.

Based on my experience with Redgate and my 13 years in this industry, I consider SQL Toolbelt simply a must for anyone in the data industry. If you work with SQL Server and don't have SQL Toolbelt, you're likely losing thousands of dollars a month. And in this economic climate, no one can afford to do that.



Redgate's SQL Toolbelt contains all of the tools mentioned by John in this case study, and more. Together, they make you productive, your team agile, and your data safe.

Try for free at www.red-gate.com/sql-toolbelt