



SQL Sentry Event Manager Peak 10 ROI Case Study

Corporate IT organizations face the constant challenge to be faster, better, and cheaper. Technology investments therefore have little room for error. New IT solutions must be simple to install, operate, and maintain and they must deliver a quantifiable return on investment (ROI) right out of the box.

Executive Summary:

Peak 10, a managed hosting provider, supports 32 Microsoft SQL Servers in business critical solutions for multiple customers. An experienced, skilled DBA team is required to maintain the very high service levels for this diverse set of solutions. SQL Server job management is a key factor influencing team success, as it impacts labor efficiency, hardware/software utilization, system performance and reliability.

The native SQL Server tools have an awkward and inefficient approach to job management. This is a cause of many efficiency losses as the highly skilled labor force must manually perform mundane repetitive tasks and research individual job issues. In addition, a lack of easily-accessible job performance information limits the DBA team's ability to operate as proactively as their standards dictate.

Peak 10 deployed SQL Sentry Event Manager to improve overall reliability, performance and cost efficiency. **As a result, Peak 10 generated more than \$137,000 in labor, hardware, and software savings. The first year return on investment (ROI) was 260% and Event Manager paid for itself in less than 5 months of operation.**

In addition to the operational savings, SQL Sentry Event Manager enabled Peak 10 to acknowledge, respond and resolve job issues before they caused major failures. As one example, the reliable, comprehensive alerting features have delivered time-critical information that allowed the DBAs to make quick informed decisions reducing system downtime and raising customer service levels. Overall, Event Manager enabled a more efficient and effective approach to job management.

Product Overview:

SQL Sentry Event Manager is the ultimate scheduling, alerting and response system for optimizing server schedule performance. It delivers many valuable benefits to SQL Server users and a fast return on investment.

SQL Sentry Event Manager will:

- Lower Database administration costs
- Reduce the cost and strain from job/server failure/downtime
- Improve application performance
- Extend your server hardware/software investment

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The Background:

Peak 10 is the Southeast's leading data center operator and managed services provider, delivering scalable, economical and reliable solutions for hosting and managing complex information technology infrastructure. The company combines its seven data centers and portfolio of managed services with localized engineering and support to serve their many Fortune 1,000 customers. Their managed hosting customers utilize SQL Server to support many business critical systems. Peak 10's three-person DBA team is responsible for the overall performance and management of a diverse set of solutions deployed across 32 SQL Servers.

As the business grew, Peak 10's DBA team was spending an inordinate amount of time on job management tasks. The number of servers and jobs reached the point where even the daily task of reviewing and monitoring job logs required substantial time and effort. When job failures were discovered, information was missing for efficient troubleshooting and resolution. Properly scheduling jobs was difficult. Data, on a job's performance requirements or a schedule's open capacity, was challenging to find or even manually document. That increased job conflicts, job failures, and resulted in reduced overall performance.

Enterprise Manager, Profiler, PerfMon, and the other SQL Server native tools were less than ideal for the daily management tasks of so many large and complex job streams. These tools desperately lacked a graphical view of the overall job schedule and even expected functionality such as sorting job data lists was not there.

Many productive hours were lost on the tedious, repetitive tasks of job management. Equally important, that time could have been invested in more strategic initiatives. Peak 10's IT management also experienced additional stress of maintaining high service standards while managing an increasing volume of complex SQL Server job streams.

Time Lost

Job management was occupying more and more of our time - searching through job logs, researching failures one at a time. Not only was it inefficient, it was frustrating.

Denis McDowell Peak 10 DBA

In order to alleviate their job management pain, Peak 10 decided to implement SQL Sentry Event Manager for all of their SQL Servers and the results were astounding.

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Costs before SQL Sentry Event Manager

The primary daily job management tasks of Peak 10's DBA team included:

- reviewing and verifying job logs for failures or other issues
- investigating and resolving job failures
- reviewing and adjusting job schedules to minimize schedule conflicts, resource contention and job failures

Job management required on average 22.5 total staff hours per week, prior to implementing Event Manager. Therefore, at an average cost of \$50 per hour, total job management labor cost was \$58,500 per year (22.5 hrs/wk * 52 wks/year * \$50/hr = \$58,500/yr)

Additionally, Peak 10's 32 SQL Servers across their enterprise represented a capital investment of \$640,000, based on \$20,000 per server for hardware, server software, and SQL Server licensing (32 Servers * \$20,000 ea. = \$640,000 Total servers)

Savings with SQL Sentry Event Manager

Peak 10 deployed SQL Sentry and it was quickly adopted by the entire DBA team. They reported that it increased their productivity on all job management tasks. The time required for reviewing and verifying job logs dropped from 40 minutes /day to 10 minutes /day. The DBA staff's total job management hours dropped from an average of 22.5 hours per week to only 6.5 hours per week. The labor efficiency increase alone saved Peak 10 an estimated 832 hours per year resulting in an estimated \$41,600 labor cost reduction. (16 hrs/wk * 52 wks/year * \$50/hr = \$ 41,600 Savings in labor)

Peak 10 has also documented a significant server capacity increase. The vision and insight provided by Event Manager enabled the DBA team to level their job schedules throughout all their servers. This approach improved the server performance and resulted in an estimated 15% increase in server capacity or \$96,000 savings in server hardware/software. (\$640,000 Total servers * 15% Perf. increase = \$96,000 Total servers savings)

Time Saved

SQL Sentry saves me time everyday. I can completely review last night's job logs in only three minutes. SQL Sentry gives me a concise visual of our job schedules, highlights the job failures that require my attention and lets me drag and drop jobs to resolve conflicts in a second...

Brian Vandervort Peak 10 DBA

Overall, Peak 10 has reduced job management labor costs by \$41,600 and Server hardware and software costs by \$96,000. A total savings of \$137,600!

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The Return on Investment

Peak 10 is extremely pleased with the results delivered by SQL Sentry Event Manager. It has allowed the DBA team to more effectively manage large and complex job streams while reducing the hours spent in tiresome everyday tasks. The DBA team is able to focus on strategic issues resulting in better performance and overall operation. Peak 10 has found that Event Manager:

- Lowered Database administration costs –increased DBA productivity saved 832 hours per year,
- Reduced the cost and strain from job/server failure/downtime – less after-hours events,
- Improved application performance - better job management raised overall performance, reliability and response ensuring high Quality of Service
- Extended their server hardware/software investment – increased server job capacity 15%

This table details Peak 10's job management costs before and after Event Manager deployment along with the calculated return on investment.

1.) Labor Savings

	Before (hrs/wk)	After (hrs/wk)	Savings (hrs/wk)	
Reviewing and verifying job logs for failures or other issues	10.1	2.5	7.5	75%
Investigating and resolving job failures	5.0	1.7	3.2	65%
Reviewing and adjusting job schedules to minimize schedule conflicts, resource contention and job failures	7.5	2.3	5.3	70%
Total Time	22.5	6.5	16.0	

2.) Server HW / SW Savings

	Before	After	Savings	
Number of Servers	32	27.2	4.8	15%

3.) Return on Investment

	Before	After	Savings
Job Management Labor Costs	\$ 58,500	\$ 16,887	\$ 41,613
Servers Hardware / Software	640,000 ⁽¹⁾	544,000 ⁽²⁾	96,000
SQL Sentry Event Manager Software		38,208 ⁽³⁾	(38,208)
1 Year Total	\$ 698,500	\$ 599,095	\$ 99,405
		1 Year ROI	260% ⁽⁴⁾
		Payback Period (Months)	4.61 ⁽⁵⁾

(1) \$20,000 * 32 Servers

(2) \$20,000 * 32 Servers * 85% Reflecting a percentage increase in job capacity

(3) SQL Sentry 1 Yr. cost, 32 license * \$995/server (license) * \$199/server (1st Yr. maintenance) = \$38,208

(4) 1 Year ROI = \$99,405 (Net Benefit) / \$38,208 (SQL Sentry Event Manager 1 Yr. cost) = 260%

(5) Payback = \$38,208 Investment / \$99,405/yr = 4.61 months

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Summary:

Peak 10 deployed SQL Sentry Event Manager to improve overall reliability, performance and cost efficiency. Quantitatively, Peak 10 has documented significant budgetary benefits; a 65 to 75% labor cost reduction for most job management tasks, and a 15% increase in server performance and capacity. Peak 10 received \$137,600 in labor, hardware, and software savings. The first year return on investment (ROI) was 260%. Combine that with an estimated \$99,400 1st Yr. Net Benefit and a less than five month payback period makes Event Manager a very compelling solution for busy SQL Server shops.

Peak 10 has benefited qualitatively as well. Event Manager has enabled a more efficient and effective approach to job management. Improvements have been noted in DBA morale and performance due to less strain from routine daily chores and more excitement driving strategic efforts. Event Manager enabled the team to acknowledge, respond and resolve job issues before they caused major failures. Best of all Event Manager has enabled them to deliver even higher Quality of Service levels by improving the performance and reliability of their systems, applications and output.

Higher Quality of Service

SQL Sentry has improved our business and our work environment. Clients and Management have noted the positive effect. Quality of Service is higher due to faster & more reliable results. The DBAs are happier managing and improving the systems rather than struggling through daily job management chores. The stress and strain of managing unpredictable events is reduced and we get to focus on fine-tuning our systems and applications everyday.

Scott Brooks, Director of Hosting Services, Peak 10

You too can save with SQL Sentry Event Manager. Visit our web site to learn more and try our Interactive ROI for calculating your own potential return on investment. An Excel worksheet is available to allow more flexible analysis. Please contact sales@sqlsentry.net to receive a copy.

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