

ARE TPC BENCHMARKS USEFUL?

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BEING KIND

- **The TPC benchmarks are significant improvements over the loosely defined Debit Credit, ET1, and TP1 benchmarks. They are more formal. The original designers and some of the auditors are experienced, knowledgeable, and well-meaning professionals.**

A CAUTION

- **Unfortunately, these facts are a trap. They lead users who do not understand the complexity of the benchmarking art to perceive TPC benchmark numbers as offering useful information to users about performance and concurrency.**

AN INDICTMENT

In fact, TPC benchmarks are not scientific, repeatable, nor do they provide useful information...

But they are great marketing and sales tools.

- **TPC BENCHMARKS ARE A LITTLE MORE THAN ADVERTISEMENTS**

BENCHMARK DESIGN ISSUES

- POOR USE OF STATISTICS
- UNREALISTIC CONFIGURATIONS
- HIGH COST
- TUNING COMPLEXITY

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

- **TRANSACTION PROFILES NOT RELEVANT TO MOST USERS**
- **LACK OF COMPARABILITY**
- **NO MEASURE OF PRODUCT CAPABILITIES**
- **INADEQUATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

- **AUDITOR COMPREHENSION**
- **TOO MUCH AUDITOR DISCRETION**
- **NON-UNIFORM TRANSACTION ISOLATION**
- **SERIALIZABILITY NOT ENFORCED**

CRITICISMS OF THE COUNCIL

- . OWNED AND RUN BY VESTED INTERESTS
- . TOO MUCH MEMBER POLITICS
- . CLOSED MEETINGS AND MINUTES
- . MEMBER LOBBYING
- . SELF-SERVING

CONCLUSIONS

- **TPC BENCHMARKS ARE IMPROVING**
- **USERS MUST DEMAND MORE**
- **IN THE MEANTIME, JUST SAY NO!**
- **TO THE INFLUENCE OF USELESS BENCHMARKS**

Biography

- David McGoveran is a well-known relational database consultant and president of Alternative Technologies (Boulder Creek, CA), specialists in solving difficult relational applications problems since 1981. He publishes The Database Product Evaluation Report Series: authored (with Chris Date) A Guide to SYBASE and SQL Server; and is completing An Advanced Guide to Client/Server Applications.