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Gary Lapointe, MVP

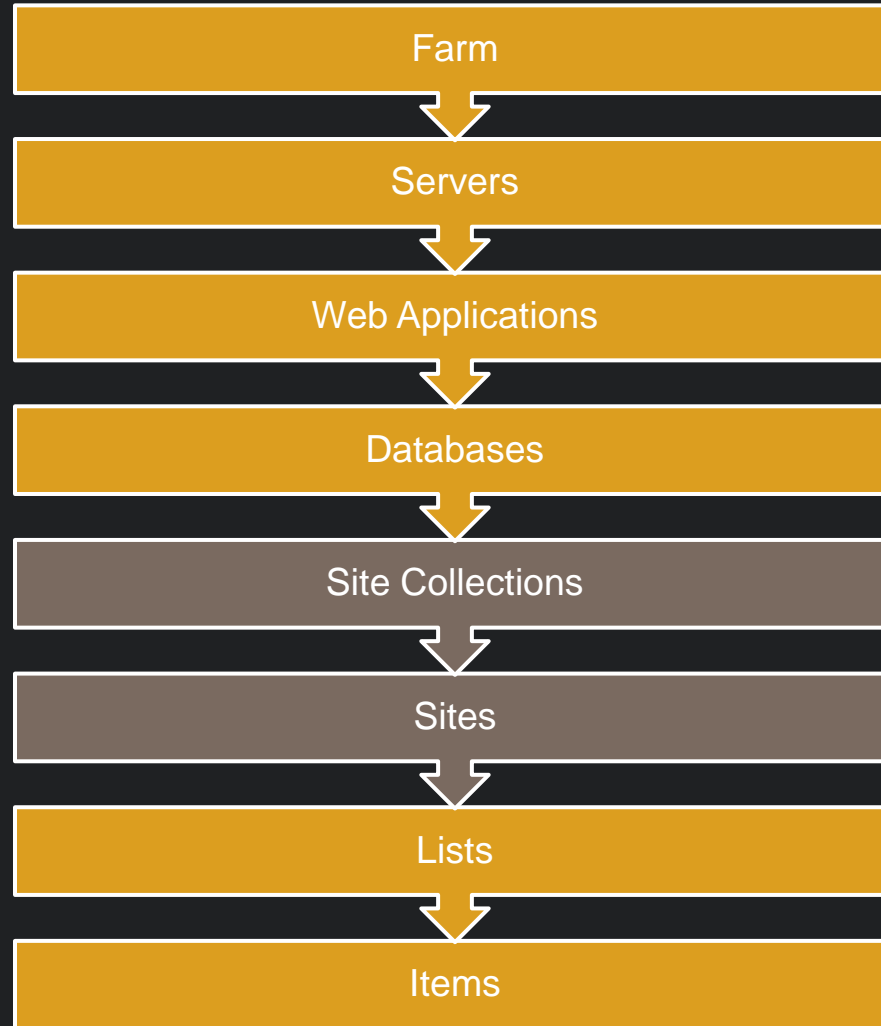# Sub-Site or Site Collection?

About Me

- SharePoint MVP
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Agenda

- Site Collections vs. Sub-Sites
  - What you need to consider
- There can be only one
  - Considerations for making multiple Site Collections "appear" homogenous
- Dealing with change
  - Converting to or from Site Collections

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Site Collections vs. Sub-Sites

Farm

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Servers

↓

Web Applications

↓

Databases

↓

Site Collections

↓

Sites

↓

Lists

↓

Items

Considerations

- Scalability
- Backup/Restore
- Security
- Search Settings
- Audit/IRM Settings
- Feature Scope
- Recycle Bin
- Content Type / Site Column Scope

- Branding
- Navigation
- Content Rollup and Aggregation

Scalability

- The single most critical reason for using multiple Site Collections is scalability
- Limit Content Databases to 200GB
- Limit Site Collections to 100GB
  - If you must go over 100GB then use only 1 site collection in the content database
  - You will encounter performance issues and possibly deadlock conditions
  - Split Site Collections approaching 100GB into a new Site Collection in a separate content database (PowerShell)
- Watch out for the second stage recycle bin!

Backup/Restore

- Full fidelity backups are only possible at the Site Collection level
- SharePoint 2010 Allows Sub-Site and List/Library Recovery
  - Not Full Fidelity
    - Cannot restore recycle bin, workflows, alerts, personalization settings, auditing data
- 3rd party solutions offer full fidelity recovery at more granular levels

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Security

- Site Collections allow security groups and permissions to be isolated from each other
- Management is more complex with Site Collections
  - Difficult to see what access a user has across Site Collections
  - No OOTB way to synchronize across Site Collections
- Avoid breaking inheritance where possible
  - May result in unforeseen/undesirable consequences
  - Site Collections can reduce the need to break inheritance
- For large deployments Site Collections can help overcome SharePoint group limitations
  - Cannot go over 2000 users or AD groups in a single ACL

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Search Settings

- Search Scopes are defined at the Site Collection level
  - You can create shared scopes via the SA but they must be "activated" at each Site Collection
- Best Bets and Keywords are Site Collection scoped
  - Use a single search center
- Settings must be manually (or programmatically) synchronized across site collections

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Auditing/IRM

- Policies are created at the Site Collection scope
  - Compliance and regulatory requirements can be enforced in a consistent fashion
- No built-in mechanism for synchronizing policies across Site Collections
  - Will have to be done manually or programmatically

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Feature Scope

- Features can be scoped to a Site Collection or Web (or Farm or Web Application)
- You can prevent access to certain functionality by using Site Collections
  - Some Features must be scoped to a site collection
  - You might have to activate a Feature thereby (potentially) making functionality available to all users/contributors/designers of a site

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Recycle Bin

- Each Site Collection has a First and Second Stage Recycle Bin
  - First Stage counts towards the Quota
  - Second Stage does not count towards the Quota
    - Be aware of the defaults – 30 days in the first stage and 50% of the Site Collection Quota for the second stage
    - If there's no quota then the second stage will grow infinitely
- For large Site Collections change the 2nd stage to ~20% and Quota to < ~80GB
  - This will reduce the amount of additional data over the recommended 100GB allotment

Content Types / Site Columns

- Two Options:
  - Content Type Syndication
    - Can "Publish" Content Types across Site Collections
    - Requires Metadata Service Application (Enterprise License)
    - Don't mix with Features
    - Only Propagates Site Columns associated with Content Types
  - Use Features to deploy to multiple Site Collections
    - Not recommended if Content Type Syndication is used
    - Can be used to propagate Site Columns not associated with Content Types

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Demo

Content Type Syndication

There can be only one!

- You want people to think that there's only one [Site Collection]…

- …but in reality there's a whole mess of them that we just didn't want users to know about

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Branding

- Masterpages and CSS can be used to enforce a consistent branding experience

- Use Features to deploy branding
  - Use Feature Stapling to automatically apply the branding to new Site Collections / Sites
  - This provides a seamless experience for the end-user

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Consistent Navigation

SPXmlContentMapProvider

- Uses an XML file to store the navigation
- Easy to implement
- Navigation is hard coded
- Changes should be deployed via a Feature
- Does not support security trimming or audience targeting

Custom SiteMapProvider

- Can get the navigation from a "source" site or list
- Requires a lot of custom code
- Could support security trimming or audience targeting

Manual

- Viable for small numbers of Site Collections

Content Aggregation

- Out-of-box
  - Search Results Web Part for cross Site Collection
  - Content Query Web Part or Data Form Web Part for single Site Collection
- 3rd Party
  - Many different options
    - Example: Lightning Conductor Web Part
- Custom
 - Make sure you load test (users and content)!

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Windows PowerShell

- Learn it!
  - You'll need to eventually
- Great for making sweeping changes and cross Site Collection reports
- Download My custom PowerShell Cmdlets and Scripts
  - http://stsadm.blogspot.com/

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Demo

Reporting with PowerShell

Dealing with Change
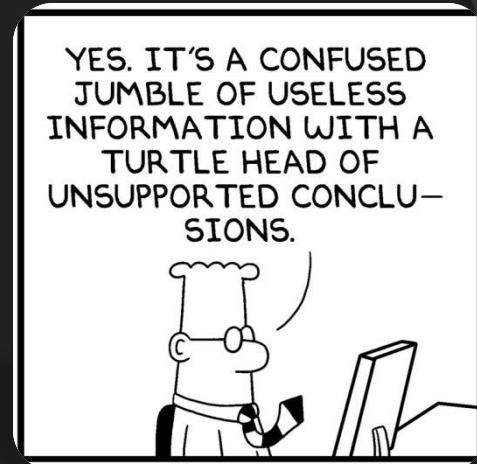
Managing Content Databases

- Remember to set the Max # of Site Collections per DB – don't use the default
  - This will help to enforce the 200GB Content Database sizing guidelines
  - Use Quotas!
- Move-SPSite PowerShell Cmdlet
  - Move a Site Collection from one Content Database to another
- Use New-SPSite to create a Site Collection in a specific Content Database

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Converting to/from Site Collections

- ◉ Not a conversion but a migration
- ◉ Use Export-SPWeb & Import-SPWeb PowerShell Cmdlets
  - Export/Import Sites and Lists/Libraries
  - No Workflow Tasks/State
  - No Personalization Settings
  - No Alerts
  - No Recycle Bin Items
  - No Audit Information
- ◉ Non-publishing sites are simple(r)
  - Watch out for Web Parts which reference Lists via a GUID
  - Watch out for Features scoped to the Site Collection that may need to be activated
- ◉ Publishing Sites migrate with numerous errors…
  - If Lists/Libraries are all you need then you can avoid a lot of trouble by focusing on them only
    - ○ Watch out for Lookup Columns!

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Publishing Site Migration Errors

- File not found errors on pages that map to the wrong Page Layout path and/or missing Page Layouts
- Page Layouts and Settings page produces an XML parsing error
- Page Layouts do not have the correct Content Type assigned
- File not found errors for missing master page files
- ContentType field for the Master Page Gallery library is corrupt and will need to be reset (wrong field type)
- Site Collection scoped Features may need to be activated
- Global Navigation will be corrupt or missing
- Web Parts that use a GUID to refer to the target item will be broken
- And more….

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ConvertTo-SPSite / Repair-SPSite

Resources

- TechNet – Plan for Software Boundaries
  - http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc262787.aspx
- My PowerShell Cmdlets & Scripts
  - http://stsadm.blogspot.com

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