Pass Summit 2020?

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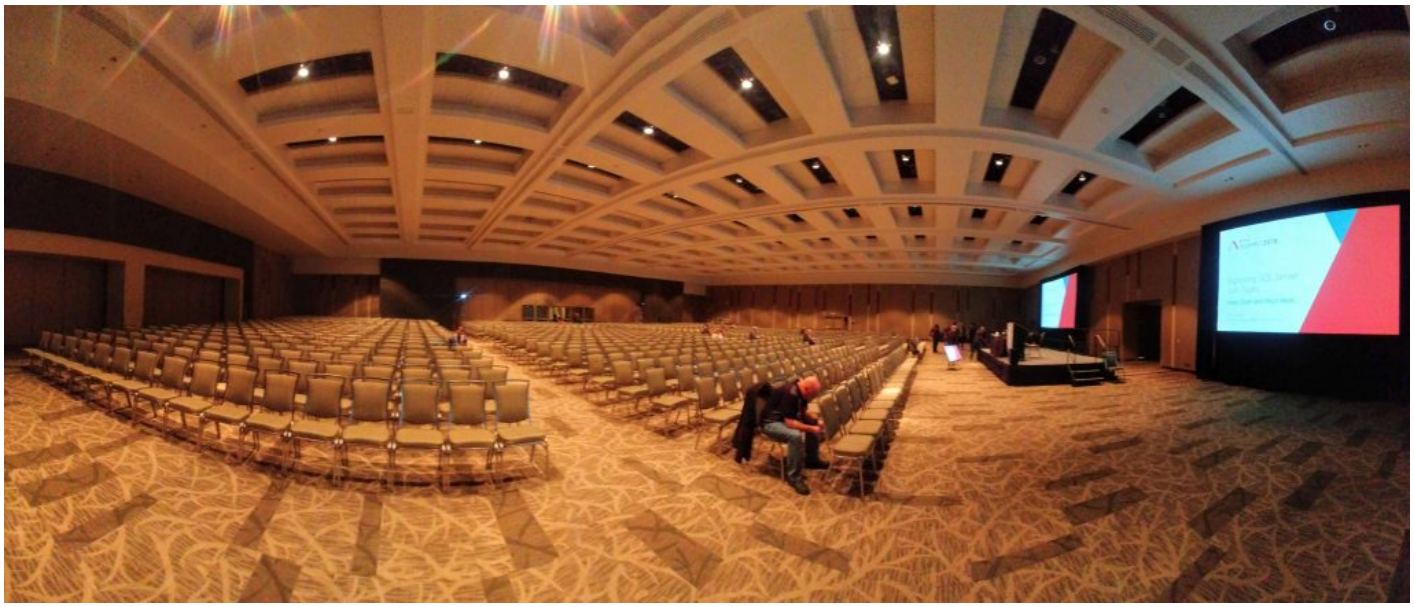
What are your thoughts on PASS Summit 2020 as a virtual conference? I am curious to see what you think. We certainly cannot have a conference if this size in person due to the current Coronavirus issues.

First I want to say that I value the PASS organization and what they have done in the past for my SQL Server education and networking. Also, I have presented at 3 PASS Summit conferences in the past, and I have really enjoyed it.



I know that PASS is in a very difficult situation attempting to take their annual conference and convert it to a group of online web based presentations attempting to fill the same calendar week (precons and regular sessions) as it would have normally filled.

When attending a conference, the things that I see as being super valuable are the following:

- Networking with others.
- Meeting the vendors and talking with them at their booths.
- Meeting and chatting with other members in the community zone.
- Meeting up with friends and colleagues that I only have a chance to see once a year.
- Getting together with a group of like minded professionals and going to dinner and getting to know each other.
- After an interesting session, being able to chat with the presenter, ask questions and get a better understanding on the topic.

Not sure how to get those benefits without attending in person.

You might notice that I did not list the sessions as the “super valuable” part of the conferences. My take on it is you can always by the sessions for around $350 and watch what you want to watch later. I have even heard previous pass leaders say the real value is in the networking, and it is a good thing to miss a session and have a chance to talk with someone, you can always catch the session later on the recordings.

I guess my question is, what does attending the virtual PASS Summit 2020 offer you that you can't get by buying the session recordings?

- If you buy the session recordings, you can watch what you want to watch, you never have to make the decision of session a or session b that are scheduled at the same time.
- With the recordings you can watch when you want, you don't have to take a week off work. This is incredibly valuable for those of us who do not get paid for the week off.

The chicken and egg problem? Which came first? This comes down to enough people must register to run the conference as PASS Summit 2020, or their will be no session recordings.

It appears that pass has attempted to take the same conference and jam it into a virtual space rather than in person.

I just don’t get it, and I personally don’t see the value to pay $599 to $999 to attend the 3 day or 3 day plus pre-con for this virtual session. I don’t think I will be attending (virtually) this year.

Please let me know what you think. This is just my opinion, please share yours by commending below.