

Jupiter

Information Technology

Tutorial

Why Approach MySQL?

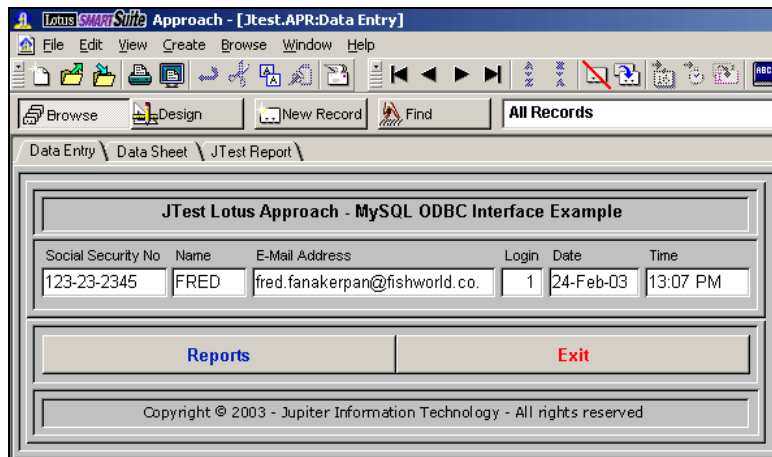
25 February 2003

Copyright © 2003 Jupiter Information Technology
All rights reserved

18 Church St
Swansea. SA4 3EA
United Kingdom

+44 (0)1792 875340
info@jup-it-er.co.uk
www.jup-it-er.co.uk

Here we have an example of using Lotus Approach as a Client, or Frontend, into MySQL. Notice that we can use the client facilities to present our data in any way we like. For example, in this example, we present the data in the



Name field in Uppercase. Notice also, the Date and Time fields. Lotus Approach has automatically split the MySQL Time field into two parts, without any programmer intervention.

Another useful feature of Lotus

Approach, and other similar packages, such as Microsoft Access, is the excellent reporting facilities available.

A question we have to ask ourselves at this point, is why use an industrial strength, backend database management system if we can get all the functionality that we want from Lotus Approach or Microsoft Access, et al?

Well, there are a number of reasons.

The first, and probably the most important, is data security. Using a system like MySQL, Oracle, Postgresql, or Interbase, enables an organisation to keep a central repository of data that is available to the entire organisation (perhaps across national boundaries), but we can control who has access to what data in quite a fine grained way, so confidentiality is pretty much assured.

SS Number	Name	E-Mail Address	Last Login Date	Time
123-23-2345	FRED	fred.fanakerpan@fishworld.co.uk	24 February 2003	13:07 PM
234-12-1234	JOEY	joe@fishworld.com	24 February 2003	13:07:18 PM
123-34-5678	FRED	fred@fanakerpan.com	24 February 2003	13:19:47 PM
AB123456A	LAURENCE	laurence@jupiter	24 February 2003	16:28:47 PM

4

Second, because data is stored centrally, it can be managed and maintained centrally, typically by a database administrator. We can be fairly certain about the integrity of the data. That is, when a report tells us that Customer A owes us £5000, and hasn't paid for 5 weeks, we can trust what the report is telling us.

Third, since all data processing is carried out on a dedicated database server, this allows desktop applications such as Lotus Approach to do what they are good at – that is, present data in a convenient and graphical manner. When desktop database applications are used for moderately intensive data processing using their own, native tables, performance tends to suffer, even on high powered desktop computers. So we gain in efficiency.

And, since the data is independent of the client, we can use whatever desktop application we like, on whatever platform we like, to access the data. We could use Lotus Approach, Microsoft Access, or Open Office, or we could use a web browser, and it does not matter what version of Windows we are using, or if we are using Linux, or a PDA or even, now, the latest generation of mobile phones! So long as we have some kind of network connection, we have the potential to access corporate data in almost any way we choose. So we gain in availability.

Everytime you log onto a web site you are accessing a commercial database, and the chances are very high that it will be running under the MySQL Data Base Management System (DBMS).