About Advantage Database Server®

PRODUCT FACT SHEET

WHAT IS A DATABASE?

A database is an organized collection of information. Some simple non-electronic personal examples might be your address book, the file cabinet with your old tax papers or that box of old baseball cards in the attic. In the business world, a computerized database might consist of your client or customer records, billing information, inventory, etc.

Databases are the underlying core of an application. To use a car analogy, a database is the engine of your application. The non-engine parts of the car including the appearance, controls, seats and usability are the application. To make the engine go and get you to your destination you need use the car's controls and other comfort features. Without the engine the car wouldn't go and without the rest of the car the engine wouldn't be useful. This is much like the database in an application. The database provides the core data storage and speed but needs the application to interface with the user and make the information useful to the application's business.

WHAT IS ADVANTAGE DATABASE SERVER (ADS)?

Advantage Database Server is a high-performance relational database management system. It is in essence the software that manages your data, including how it is created, accessed, updated and maintained within an application. The database has a dramatic effect on an applications performance, stability, and reliability.

Advantage Database Server has been developed over the past 16 years. It is one of the most reliable, secure and highest performing client/server databases in its class. Thousands of businesses throughout the world rely on it to manage their data. Advantage allows multiple users to access large and small quantities of data with lightning speed and accuracy while maintaining integrity. Often times you don't hear its name, only the name of the application on the box, but Advantage Database Server is there working hard under the covers in many applications.

WHAT IS ADVANTAGE LOCAL SERVER (ALS)?

Advantage Local Server is a scaled down file/server version of Advantage (not a client/server database). Advantage Local Server is built on the same quality architecture as Advantage Database Server, however, it is designed for smaller implementations, with few users, less data, and does not contain the central data management technology built into the full version of Advantage.

WHY SHOULD I USE ADVANTAGE DATABASE SERVER INSTEAD OF LOCAL SERVER?

There are many reasons to use Advantage Database Server over Advantage Local Server. ADS provides drastic improvements in stability, security, and performance, especially as the number of users and amount of data grows.

Stability with ADS is improved because the chance of database corruption is greatly reduced. ADS manages the data at a central location on the server instead of spreading around management tasks to the individual PCs like ALS. With ALS, the management of data is spread out amongst many PCs. If one of those PCs were to fail in the middle of adding or changing data,a corruption or the loss of data is more likely.

Performance with ADS is dramatically improved for a number of reasons. First with ADS, the computing tasks are shared between the server and PC. With ALS, all application tasks are performed at the PC level including any database tasks (for example, searching for a specific customer). Conversely, with ADS those operations are intelligently divided between the PC and server. ADS becomes a central point of control for all access on the server. Processing requests for data are completed at the server instead of the PC (think of it as two processors are better than one!). Secondly, network performance is increased because the amount of data transmitted between computers is drastically reduced. With ALS when searching through a table of customers to find a specific one, all of the customer data in your database is transferred to your PC and then your PC finds the specific customer you are looking for. This results in a large amount of unnecessary data being transferred across your network. With ADS, the searching of the data is done at the server where the data is stored and only the small amount of data contained in the results are transmitted back to you. This increases performance by decreasing the amount of network traffic and allowing for the data processing to be at done at the same location as the data.

There are other negatives to having large amounts of data transferred back and forth across your network with ALS. This leaves more potential for something to fail during the process. For example, while data is being transferred you could have a network failure resulting in data corruption. ADS has transaction support that prevents data from being corrupted in the event of a hardware or software failure. Another negative is found in data locking. While data is transferring back and forth it is locked so no other user can change it at the same time. While the data is locked other users have to wait to access it causing slow performance. ADS helps eliminate that waiting.

Finally, Advantage Database Server can be used to provide better database security. When using ADS, the database no longer needs to be shared on your network where harmful direct user access can occur outside of the application. Removing shared rights to the data essentially hides it from users except when accessing it throught an Advantage-enabled application. By ensuring that data can only be accessed through Advantage or directly from the server, security is improved and unauthorized access to the database is eliminated.

All of this functionality leads to better security, improved performance, less network traffic and increased stability. That means the data your business runs on is in better hands and can give you the peace of mind knowing that you are getting the best performance and most accurate results with the less amount of downtime.

WHEN IS IT TIME TO SWITCH FROM ADVANTAGE LOCAL SERVER TO ADVANTAGE DATABASE SERVER?
ADS can improve performance, security, stability, and corruption in almost every situation. However, it is especially important to if you have a multiple user environment, have accumulated large amounts of data because you have been using your application for awhile, have concerns about security or backing up your data and keeping it safe, or if you are experiencing issues with slow performance or data corruption.

Migrating from Advantage Local Server to Advantage Database Server is quick and seamless. The low cost associated with Advantage Database Server is easily recovered by giving you back your valuable time with increased application performance and eliminating the time currently spent dealing with data corruption.

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