

The future of SQL Server Express?

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- *From:* "Mitchell S. Honnert" <news@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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In the early days of .NET development, I could react to user's hesitancy to download the Framework with reassurance that it would eventually be included in a future service pack. I also pointed out that once the Framework was installed, later .NET applications could be installed without another hefty download. I knew that any pushback I'd get would be moot in a few months when the Framework was integrated into Windows.

I'm wondering if I'll be able to give similar types of reassurances for SQL Server Express. Does anyone know if Microsoft has any plans on including SSE in...

....a future service pack for XP?

... as part of the installation of an MS application? (As in, maybe MS will "eat its own dog food" and use SSE as the back-end to Outlook or another of its applications.)

....in Vista?

I know there are larger (i.e. legal) issues at play here, but from a programmers standpoint, it'd be fantastic to know that the primary OS of my target users already included an available local database engine.

Thanks,

– Mitchell S. Honnert

PS: As a bit of background, I'm using SSE as the back-end of a standalone "audio file manager" application. I use SSE to cache the MP3 tag metadata in a user's audio file collection. I used to use MS Access, but when SQL Server Express became available, I jumped at the chance to use a "real" database. But I'm starting to rethink that decision to switch databases. I may have had to implement some semi-kludgy workarounds to get Access to do what I wanted, but I didn't require my end users to have to download and install a component that dwarfed my own application. But even more importantly, with MS Access I just had to include a template database file, whereas with SSE, I now require my users to install a service that keeps on running in the background even when they're not using my application.

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