

## Web-based database apps (slightly off topic)

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Fox/microsoft.public.fox.programmer.exchange/2005-03/0478.html>

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*Date:* 03/10/05

Date: Thu, 10 Mar 2005 19:32:18 GMT

My company's database applications have all been written in VFP. We've sold these commercially and have been generally happy with the power and rapid development we can do with VFP.

We are launching some new development projects and management is considering switching from a desktop database approach to a web-based application where users would access the database \*and\* application over the internet. We have never done this type of development. Java and .Net come to mind, but we have no current in-house knowledge on what technology is best suited to a database application that must do data importing, number crunching, analysis and reporting over the internet. VFP is actually a perfect fit for these applications except for the fact that it doesn't \*easily\* support two strongly expressed goals:

- 1) The application is not installed on user desktops
- 2) Data is centrally stored and accessed via the internet

A few things of concern to me as a developer are:

- a) Web interfaces don't seem to have a very rich set of controls
- b) How reporting would be done it a complete mystery
- c) On the surface, the development would be orders of magnitude more complex and time-consuming than VFP.
- d) Customers would now be required to have some services running on internet-accessible servers which might be expensive and greatly complicate application installation

Any guidance in this area would be great – success stories, book recommendations, industry trends, pitfalls, etc.

thanks,  
— TRW

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