

RE: Managing a Database using Word / IIS

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From: Symbeont (*Symbeont_at_discussions.microsoft.com*)

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Aaron,

You have plenty of choices here, but you probably need to be a little more specific concerning the data and the documents and what you're ultimately trying to achieve. If the client is simply trying to manage list type data, then I'd be more inclined to recommend a small intranet Web app with simple forms to manage the user entered data rather than Word. However, if the data is less structured, and there "data" is more easliy managed via flowing text documents, then you have several options:

Option 1 would be to use the new XML capabilities of Word where you design a schema to associate the data fields within the Word doc that will map to the database. You then attach the schema to the word document and essentially place the schema fields in the doc where you want data inserted. Then you would need to use XML parsing routines (XPath queries) to cycle through the Word doc and insert the data. This option will require a little development time though.

Option 2 would involve using the new SharePoint Services for Windows 2003 to manage your documents and data. It's a free addition to the Windows Server platform and offers some very production options for document management. Also, this option could allow your client's users to use Document Workspaces to work with documents on a shared Intranet site, all from within Word.

You actually may need to use a combination of both of these if you really need the ability to insert data and then "mine" the changed data out of a Word document.

Hope this helps.

Randy

"Aaron G" wrote:

- > *I have a fairly ambitious client who would like to offload the management of*
- > *intranet content to other individuals in the organization. For the project*
- > *to be successful, the data management must be as painless as possible.*

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- > Accordingly, the ideal interface for data input is Microsoft Word, as most
- > users are extremely comfortable working with it.
- >
- > I would like to be able to create word templates/forms which are dynamically
- > populated with data from an database, then downloaded to the client PC. Once
- > the data is updated, I would like the user to upload their files back to the
- > server, which will in turn update its database and maintain an audit-trail of
- > all changes.
- >
- > Can this be done? I'm assuming that if I install Office on the server, it
- > would be feasible using the office API, but I would love to be able to do
- > this without office on the server..
- >
- > any hints / suggestions would be HUGELY appreciated!
- >
- > Thanks,
- >
- > Aaron