

## Re: OT?: Application Architecture Question

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**Date:** 07/30/04

Date: 30 Jul 2004 10:08:00 -0700

"CJM" <cjmnews04@newsgroups.nospam> wrote in message  
news:<uLj2kAidEHA.2696@TK2MSFTNGP09.phx.gbl>...

> *I have a potential client who has a Access-based DB which they use for  
> recording orders, customer details etc...*

>

> *They want to provide some of this information online, eg. customer account  
> details and stock-levels etc, whilst retaining their existing functionality.*

> *They also want to retain the Access front-end but want to migrate the DB to  
> SQL Server.*

>

> *AFAIK, they dont have local, dedicated web servers, but use a hosting  
> package of some description.*

>

> *I'm trying to think of different ways to tackle this, but no 'silver-bullet'  
> solution.*

>

> *1) Host their own web server. Access (via and Access Data Project or ODBC)  
> could communicate with the same SQL Server as the ASP application. Not sure  
> if the have the will/money/technical capacity to host their own servers, but  
> I suspect not.*

1. I agree this is the best and easiest solution for combining the  
Access DB with the SQL info. Expenses are a web server, a db server,  
bandwidth, and if necessary a few hours with a security specialist.

The current expense really depends on if the company has spare  
hardware and bandwidth that will handle the average traffic for their  
site. They may have a box or two lying around somewhere, of course  
maybe not.

You may run into problems if they have a network guy, and he doesn't  
know web or DB servers of course.

>

> *2) Scrap Access and redevelop all there back-end & UI to use ASP/SQL Server  
> online – requires a lot of re-work, and means that the whole operation is*

> *vulnerable if the site goes down.*

2. This is harder, I'm used to developing most stuff in ASP to begin with. I have seen a fully-functioning CRM tool that uses an Access DB, but has the data in it linked to SQL tables.

If the DB architecture isn't going to change much this may be your silver bullet. The only problem anyone noticed with the setup is that it took a little bit of fiddling around (resetting the link sometimes) for architectural changes to propagate to Access.

I still know the guy who's using this system, I may be able to get you an email of someone's experience with this setup.

>

> *3) Keep existing systems, and periodically update online SQL Server DB with the needed information. Not sure yet how much data we are talking about here, and not sure how we could synchronise the online-offline DBs*

>

3. If as you mention below it is a really small group then hand updating the online DB may be a good option. It depends what 6 hour old data is going to do to the business.

Very small businesses are either small enough that there are people using the data late because the main couple of people at the company are at the office all the time, or they are just big enough that the main people that are going to be using the data are done at 4:45 pm.

If the latter is the case then you're set. If the current online SQL server gives you permissions to use DTS, then set up a DTS package on a SQL server at their location to pull the data out of Access at midnight. Then setup another DTS package to ship the data to the online SQL server at 1am.

Otherwise your job is to hand pick the data every 'business' night up to the online server, in which case you need some kind of stipend right?

> *Can anybody think of any alternatives? Any comment on these?*

>

> *It seems this is a relatively small org trying to think bigger, but I fear*

> *I'm going to dash their hopes. Without making the project a lot more*

> *complicated and expensive, I'm not sure how we can do what they want.*

>

> *I'd also be appreciative for comments on the synchronisation idea. How could*

> *we go about synchronising and Access & SQL?*

>

> *Does anybody have any experience in this whole area that they can share?*

>

> *Thanks in advance*

microsoft.public.sqlserver.programming: Re: OT?: Application Architecture Question

>

> *Chris*

Hope that's what you're looking for.

Zeke