

# Creating/Altering Database Schemas via Code

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- *From:* "bill" <[wmlanza@xxxxxxxx](mailto:wmlanza@xxxxxxxx)>
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I have a conundrum. Where I am employed, the decision has been made, against my protests, to create/alter the database for a suite of applications in the VB code! (VS 2005/SQL Server 2005)

That is,

- 1) when the "main" application starts it checks if the DB exists (on the server in an INI file)
- 2) If it does not exist, it creates it, not using SQL Scripts, but by running the methods explained in step 3
- 3) Each table that is needed is associated with a VB class. Everytime an instance of that class is created it checks to see if the table exists, if not it creates it.
- 4) Tables are "versioned". The "version" of each table is hardcoded in the VB code, and stored in a table in the DB.
- 5) Thus the same Major.Minor release of an application can be using different table "versions"
- 6) If "versions" in the DB and the App do not match, then "ALTER Table" sql statements are supposedly created automagically and can then be run by an "administrator" -- Please note that an "administrator" is not necessarily a programmer or DBA, it can Customer BettySue who has admin privileges for the application.

Is it just me or is this crazy?

I have never heard of major applications (a suite of at least 9 client server and windows services -- used in the Public Safety Sector of all things) managing their databases in this way. If this is common practice, please let me know.

Any suggestions/links/horror stories I can use to help stop this madness?

If this is the wrong place to post this, i apologize. Let me know where to post.

Thanks,  
Bill

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