

# Online Database Management for Authorware

prepared by Integration New Media <http://www.IntegrationNewMedia.com/>

A number of alternatives can be used for the management of databases from Authorware pieces and shocked (web packaged) Authorware pieces over TCP/IP. The solutions range from simple and limited Text file downloading techniques to advanced database managers with full-text search ability. The following is a comparison of the most popular solutions:

1. Built-in ODBC connectivity
2. Integration New Media's GoldenGate Database Connector
3. Datagrip Net
4. Ensodex's HotSockets
5. Using network functions to query an ODBC-compliant database through an HTTP server and CGIs

Solution #5 is based on an evaluation of Microsoft's Internet Information Server, Active Server Page, ADO drivers and MS Access, but a large number of variations are possible on this theme. Other solutions such as Text file downloading through an HTTP server, or using Authorware custom Xtras are not listed as they often do not implement most of the basic functionality of a database, such as searching, sorting, record transfer (as opposed to file transfer), etc.

FEATURE	Authorware ODBC capabilities (1)	GoldenGate (2)	Datagrip Net (3)	Ensodex HotSockets (4)	Network functions, HTTP Server, Gatewayed Database (5)
Scripting skills required	Advanced	Intermediate (No SQL required)	Advanced	Advanced	Advanced
Knowledge of network programming	Beginner	Beginner	Advanced	Beginner	Advanced
Network type	LAN	Any TCP/IP	Any TCP/IP	Any TCP/IP	Any TCP/IP
Server OS	N/A	Win NT/2K	Win 98/NT	Win 3x/9x/NT/2K and UNIX	Win 9x/NT/2K
Client OS	Windows only	Mac OS/Win	Windows only	Windows only	Mac OS/Win
Server Install and config	Depends on implementation	Easy	Easy	Moderate to Difficult	Difficult, time-consuming
Client Install and config	Easy to Difficult (unpredictable, requires ODBC driver and DSN)	Automatic	Easy to Difficult (unpredictable, requires DCOM)	Easy to Difficult (unpredictable, requires HotSockets client driver)	Automatic
Dependence on other technologies	ODBC-compliant database	ODBC-compliant database	Microsoft DAO drivers, MS Access file (.mdb)	ODBC-compliant database, server-side ODBC driver	HTTP server, middleware*, ODBC-compliant database

\*: .ASP, .JSP, Tcl, JavaScript, Cold Fusion, PERL, Ruby, Python, etc

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Feature comparison (continued)

FEATURE	Authorware ODBC capabilities (1)	GoldenGate (2)	Datagrip Net (3)	Ensodex HotSockets (4)	Network functions, HTTP Server, Gatewayed Database (5)
Query language	SQL (powerful but complex)	Similar to V12 (simple) or SQL (powerful but complex)	SQL (powerful but complex)	SQL (powerful but complex)	Usually SQL (powerful but complex)
Server-side scripts	No	No	No	No	Mandatory (PERL, TCL, JScript, VBScript)
Query encoding	N/A	Built-in	Built-in	Built-in	Must be custom designed and implemented
Mac/Windows character set recognition	Mac not supported	Built-in	Mac not supported	Mac not supported	Must be custom designed and implemented
Results parsing	Must be custom designed and implemented	Built-in	Built-in	Must be custom designed and implemented	Must be custom designed and implemented
Load on server CPU	Moderate to High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate to High	High
Max record size				65K	Limited by configuration
Project maintainability (ability to debug, upgrade and modify)	Difficult	Easy	Moderate	Difficult	Difficult
Database Administration tools	Wide range of third party tools (depends on database engine)	Wide range of third party tools (depends on database engine)	Microsoft ACCESS	Wide range of third party tools (depends on database engine)	Wide range of third party tools (depends on database engine)
Client-side overhead	OK (included)	Approx. 200K for client Xtra	350K for Datagrip Net Xtra	Requires HotSockets driver client (Installer: 6 MB)	OK (included)
Product Support	Community-based	Vendor and Community-based	Vendor and Community-based	Vendor and Community-based	Community-based
Project Support and Services	Freelancers	Freelancers and Vendor	Freelancers	Freelancers and Vendor	Freelancers
Maintenance costs	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Expensive (time and cost)