MySQL and mSQL

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By [Tim King](#), [George Reese](#), [Randy Yarger](#)

Databases for Moderate-Sized Organizations & Web Sites

MySQL & mSQL

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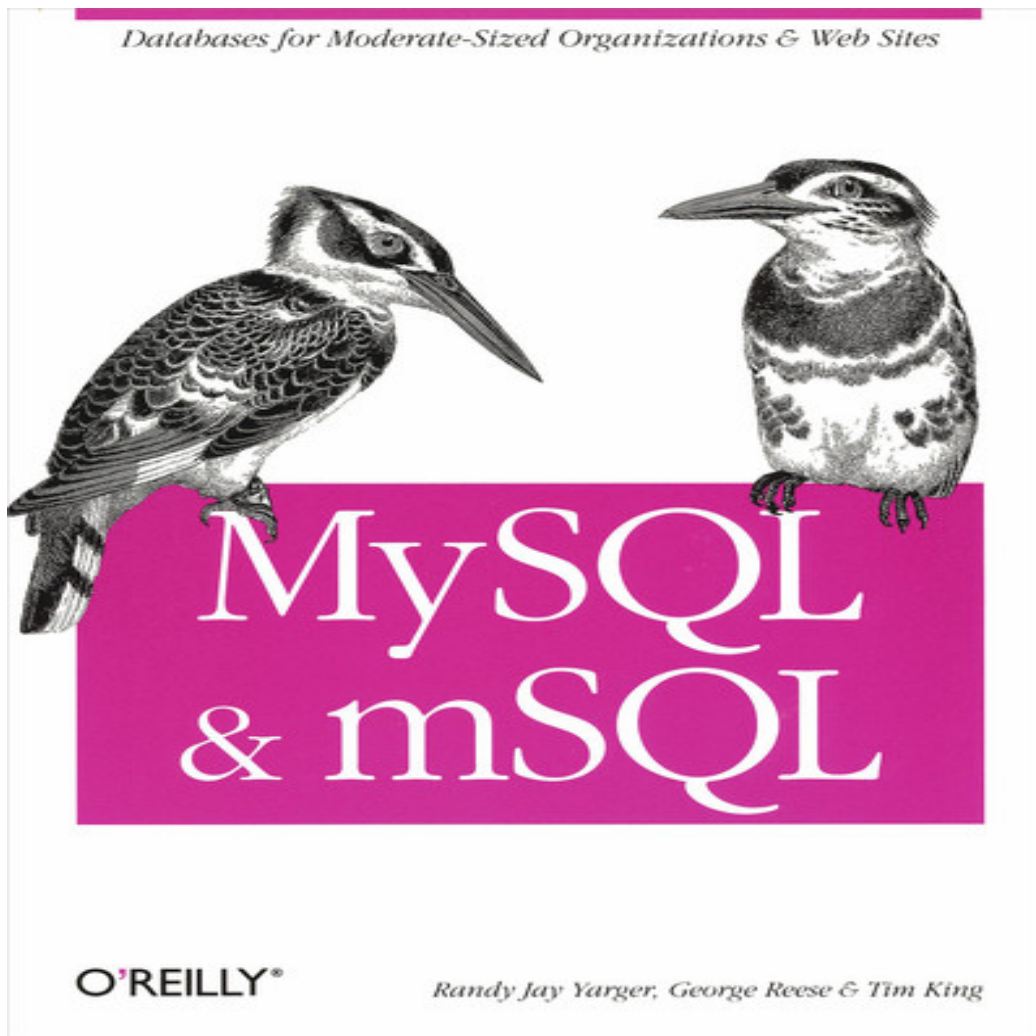
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MySQL and mSQL are popular and robust database products that support key subsets of SQL on both Linux and Unix systems. Both products are free for nonprofit use and cost a small amount for commercial use. Even a small organization or web site has uses for a database. Perhaps you keep track of all your customers and find that your information is outgrowing the crude, flat-file format you started with. Or you want to ask your web site's visitors for their interests and preferences and put up a fresh web page that tallies the results. Unlike commercial databases, MySQL and mSQL are affordable and easy to use. If you know basic C, Java, Perl, or Python, you can quickly write a program to interact with your database. In addition, you can embed queries and updates right in an HTML file so that a web page becomes its own interface to the database. This book is all you need to make use of MySQL or mSQL. It takes you through the whole process from installation and configuration to programming interfaces and basic administration. Includes reference chapters and ample tutorial material. Topics include:

- Introductions to simple database design and SQL

- Building, installation, and configuration

- Basic programming APIs for C, C++, Java (JDBC), Perl, and Python

- CGI programming with databases in C and Perl

- Web interfaces: PHP, W3-mSQL, Lite, and mSQLPerl

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MySQL & mSQL

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Chapter 2. Database Design

Once you install your DBMS software on your computer, it can be very tempting to just jump right into creating a database without much thought or planning. As with any software development, this kind of ad hoc approach works with only the simplest of problems. If you expect your database to support any kind of complexity, some planning and design will definitely save you time in the long run. You will need to take a look at what details are important to good database design.

Database Design

Suppose you have a large collection of compact discs and you want to create a database to track them. The first step is to determine what the data that you are going to store is about. One good way to start is to think about why you want to store the data in the first place. In our case, we most likely want to be able to look up CDs by artist, title, and song. Since we want to look up those items, we know they must be included in the database. In addition, it is often useful to simply list items that should be tracked. One possible list might include: CD title, record label, band name, song title. As a starting point, we will store the data in the table shown in [Table 2.1](#).

Table 2-1. A CD Database Made Up of a Single Table

Band Name	CD Title	Record Label	Songs
Stevie Wonder	Talking Book	Motown	You Are the Sunshine of My Life, Maybe Your Baby, Superstition, . . .

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