

Web Database Applications with PHP & MySQL, 2nd Edition

By Hugh E. Williams, David Lane

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There are many reasons for serving up dynamic content from a web site: to offer an online shopping site, create customized information pages for users, or just manage a large volume of content through a database. Anyone with a modest knowledge of HTML and web site management can learn to create dynamic content through the PHP programming language and the MySQL database. This book gives you the background and tools to do the job safely and reliably. *Web Database Applications with PHP and MySQL*, Second Edition thoroughly reflects the needs of real-world applications. It goes into detail on such practical issues as validating input (do you know what a proper credit card number looks like?), logging in users, and using templates to give your dynamic web pages a standard look. But this book goes even further. It shows how JavaScript and PHP can be used in tandem to make a user's experience faster and more pleasant. It shows the correct way to handle errors in user input so that a site looks professional. It introduces the vast collection of powerful tools available in the PEAR repository and shows how to use some of the most popular tools. Even while it serves as an introduction to new programmers, the book does not omit critical tasks that web sites require. For instance, every site that allows updates must handle the possibility of multiple users accessing data at the same time. This book explains how to solve the problem in detail with locking. Through a sophisticated sample application--Hugh and Dave's Wine Store--all the important techniques of dynamic content are introduced. Good design is emphasized, such as dividing logic from presentation. The book introduces PHP 5 and MySQL 4.1 features, while providing techniques that can be used on older versions of the software that are still in widespread use. This new edition has been redesigned around the rich offerings of PEAR. Several of these, including the Template package and the database-independent query API, are fully integrated into examples and thoroughly described in the text. Topics include:

- Installation and configuration of Apache, MySQL, and PHP on Unix®, Windows®, and Mac OS® X systems
- Introductions to PHP, SQL, and MySQL administration
- Session management, including the use of a custom database for improved

efficiency

- User input validation, security, and authentication
- The PEAR repository, plus details on the use of PEAR DB and Template classes
- Production of PDF reports

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

PHP and MySQL go hand in hand; the former has been carefully adapted, through the efforts of the open-source community, to the latter. For situations that require dynamic content but don't merit the complexity and development time of Java or .NET enterprise applications, the PHP language and the MySQL database server fit the bill perfectly. That's the point Hugh Williams and David Lane make in *Web Database Applications with PHP & MySQL*, which combines language tutorials with application design advice to yield a comprehensive picture of its subjects at a reasonable price. Williams and Lane--both Australian academics who use an online wine store in many of their examples--deserve tremendous kudos for their way of presenting recommended coding strategies. Though the code listings themselves aren't remarkably well commented, the authors do a commendable job of explaining in prose what the code is up to.

Case in point: The ever-essential task of using PHP to open a connection to a MySQL database, submit a query to that database, receive a response, and format the returned rows, if any. The book addresses this problem with a straight code listing, followed by text that explains what's happening in five numbered steps. Similar care goes to the other popular applications of the PHP/MySQL duo: session management, shopping carts, and authentication of users. --*David Wall*

Topics covered: How to use the PHP server-side scripting language and the MySQL database engine to underlie dynamic Web sites (those that rely on database queries) and full-on Web applications, such as those that require session management and maintenance of user rosters. Tutorials in both subjects begin with the basics and proceed through moderately complicated stuff, though there's no absolutely comprehensive reference here.

Review

"As symbolized by the duck-billed platypus on the cover it is a book that will help you to survive in a rapidly changing world. Submerge yourself in proven technology and emerge unscathed once the dots have fallen out by the wayside. Recommended for its excellent examples which will save you thousands in case you need to develop a similar application." Information Security Bulletin, July 2002 "The book manages to deliver on two levels at once - the concepts, planning and design process as well as implementation. It's also surprisingly well written, and manages not to be too smug or patronizing." - Nick Veitch, LinuxFormat, October 2002

About the Author

Hugh E. Williams is a software design engineer at Microsoft's Windows Live Search in Redmond, WA. Previously, he was the Associate Professor in Information Retrieval at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. He's published over 70 research papers and holds around 10 patents, mostly in the search engine area. When not at work Hugh likes to hang out with his family, exercise, watch Richmond play footy, and learn about baseball. Hugh has a PhD from RMIT University. His home page is <http://hughwilliams.com>.

Since the mid 1990s David Lane has worked as a software engineer and IT manager with the Multimedia Database Systems group at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. In that group he has helped to develop and commercialize the Structured Information Manager, a large-scale SGML/XML document repository and

a high performance Web server. David has also worked with Australia's largest telecommunications company, Telstra, in areas as diverse as Satellite Communications, Human Factors Research, and Electronic Document Interchange (EDI). David has a Bachelor's degree in Applied Science (majoring in mathematics and computer science) from Swinburne University.

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Gerald Hackler:

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