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Shared Database Operation

Can multiple users access the same database simultaneously?

Yes. Each user can search, select, sort and analyze the data independently using Panorama's blazing fast RAM based tools. The server acts as a facilitator and traffic cop to share data and co-ordinate between users.

What if two users try to edit the same data at the same time?

The Panorama Enterprise Server only allows one user to edit a record at a time. If you try to edit a record that someone else is already editing, an alert

will appear notifying you that you'll have to wait until they are finished.

What if someone starts editing a record but never finishes?

If someone becomes distracted (phone call, lunch, etc.) and neglects to finish editing a record the system can be configured to automatically finish and release the record after a specified period of inactivity.

Can I use my existing single user Panorama databases?

Yes. Your existing databases can be converted and uploaded onto the server in a few minutes. Most of your existing forms and procedures will continue to work exactly as before, and in many cases will be just as fast as before (see next question).

Do I need to run the server software on a separate computer?

For most installations we recommend that you run the server software on a separate, dedicated computer (a computer that is not actually in use by a person). However, if you have a very low volume, low activity network you can run both the client and server software simultaneously. In that situation we highly recommend enabling the "Automatically hide server when launched" option. You'll find this option in the *Advanced Options* section of the Server Administration wizard.

Are multi-user databases slower than single user databases?

For most operations, multi-user databases are just as fast as single user Panorama databases. Sorting, searching, selecting and analyzing data all take place in RAM on the client computer, and are just as fast as single user databases. Procedures that modify large amounts of data (for example using formula fill or search and replace) will run slower in multi-user mode. In many cases most of this speed can be regained through a few simple programming changes.

How do summary records work in a shared database?

While normal data records are shared, summary records are not shared. Each user can have their own, independent summary records. In other words, each user can group, total, average and otherwise analyze a shared database any way they want at any time. These operations are just as fast when using a shared database as they are when using a single user database.

Can a unique number be assigned to each record (invoice number, etc.)?

Yes. If the default for a numeric field is set to +, then the server will automatically assign numbers in sequence. Each new record will automatically get a guaranteed unique number, no matter what client is used.

Can the design of a shared database be modified?

Forms, procedures and most field properties can be modified at any time. If you want to add or remove fields, or change the data type of one or more fields, you must convert the database back to single user mode, make the changes, then convert back to shared mode (this called making a *New Sharing Generation*). This process only takes a few minutes.

Will data be lost if the server crashes?

The Panorama server is RAM based for high performance, but it also keeps a disk based transaction journal for full data recovery after any kind of power failure or system interruption of any kind (the journal is a simple sequential file with minimal impact on performance). The server will automatically recover any unsaved data when the system reboots — no manual intervention is necessary.

Can images be shared?

Since images aren't stored in the database itself, they cannot be shared like regular data. We recommend two methods for sharing data: 1) If all of the clients are on a local network then you can place the images on a file server, accessing the images through the Flash Art mechanism. 2) Panorama 5.5 (or later) Flash Art supports displaying images directly from the web simply by specifying the URL of the image, so images can be shared by placing them on a web server.

What are the capabilities and limitations of the Panorama Enterprise demo?

If the Panorama Enterprise Edition Server has not been activated with a serial number, it acts as a demo version. For a limited time (usually 15 days, but possibly more if you have a special coupon) the server is fully operational (with a limit of up to two simultaneous users).

Once the limited time period is over the server can still be used, but only one user can be connected to the server at a time.

Can I share databases on multiple computers with my personal use license?

Yes, but you can only access the server from one computer with a personal use license at a time. If you want to switch to a second computer (for example from your desktop to your laptop) you'll need to log off the first computer before you can make the switch. See [Personal Use License](#) for more information about this type of license.

Can I share databases on both Macintosh and Windows PC computers?

Yes. Any computer running Panorama 5.5, 6.0 or later (or Panorama Direct 5.5, 6.0 or later), whether Mac or PC, can access and modify databases on a Panorama Enterprise Server. (Note: The server itself, however, must run on Mac OS X. We do not currently have any plans to make a server version for Windows.)

Can I use my existing Panorama 3&4/Butler multi-user databases?

Yes, however, first you'll need to use Panorama 3 or 4 to convert the database back to single user mode.

If you've used the Panorama/Butler system you'll already be familiar with many aspects of the Panorama Enterprise Edition Server system. However we also think you'll be delighted by some of the major changes in this all-new system:

- **Speed:** Because it is RAM based, the Panorama Enterprise Server is much faster than Butler, especially for mass operations like creating new shared databases, synchronizing, importing and appending records. For these operations, the Enterprise Server gains speed not only because it is RAM based but because it can handle large numbers of records as a single unit. For example, when creating a new shared database, Butler would have to handle each record separately, sometimes resulting in conversion times measured in hours. The Panorama Enterprise Server uploads even the largest databases in a few minutes.
- **Database Configuration:** If you are used to Butler's complex configuration dialog you'll love the setup for Panorama Enterprise. For most databases, clicking one checkbox is all you need to do!
- **Data Storage Flexibility:** The Butler system was much less flexible than Panorama for data storage. It required that you specify a maximum field length in advance, and could not store binary data in a field. It also could not store an empty numeric cell (only zero). These restrictions caused problems for many existing single user Panorama databases. Fortunately all of these restrictions are completely eliminated with the new Enterprise system. The Panorama Enterprise system is just as flexible about what you

put in database fields as the single user version of Panorama. It allows unlimited length text, binary values in a text field, and both zero and empty numeric values.

- o Client Subsets: The Panorama/Butler system allowed you to create "subsets" where some or all clients would only contain a subset of the entire database, with only the server containing the entire database. The Panorama Enterprise Edition Server does not support subsets -- all clients use the entire database.
- o Program Compatibility: Because the most common Butler programming statements also work in Enterprise, 99.99% of Butler shared databases will work with Panorama Enterprise server with no changes. The LockRecord, LockOrStop, UnlockRecord, ServerUpdate, ServerLookup, and ServerTimeout statements all work exactly the same as they did under Butler, as do the info("servertimeout") and info("serverstatus") functions. The Panorama Enterprise server also includes a number of new programming capabilities, including the ability to set up server variables, the ability to find out what other users are currently using a database, the ability to do fast formula fills, the ability to find out what records are currently locked and more.

Web Publishing Operation

Can I publish my existing Panorama databases on the web?

Yes. For simple applications (data entry, searching) this can be done with no programming at all. More complex applications (shopping cart, on-line forum, etc.) will require some custom programming.

Can I display my existing forms as web pages?

Panorama Enterprise Edition includes a wizard that converts your existing Panorama forms for use on the web. This wizard allows you to use Panorama's powerful graphic editing tools to create web based forms.

Since web browsers don't have all the capabilities available in Panorama forms, some features cannot be translated. You may find that you want to create special forms specifically for use as web forms, just as you normally create special forms for printed reports. Nevertheless you'll find that this capability allows you to leverage your existing skills (and much of your existing forms) to rapidly develop web based databases.

Can I display the data sheet as a web page?

The data sheet cannot be displayed directly as a web page. However, a wizard is included that makes it easy to design custom tabular web pages (for example price lists or directories).

Can I use advanced Panorama features like Clairvoyance, Smart Dates, Super Matrix, Elastic Forms, Word Processing, Custom Menus, Automatic Capitalization, and Phone Dialing on the web?

No. These features are not supported by web browsers. They can, of course, be used in database sharing mode.

Is a dedicated server required for web database publishing?

We recommend that any public web database server be used only as a server. This eliminates the possibility that client activity could interrupt web publishing. It's ok, however, to run other servers (e-mail, file sharing, ftp, etc.) on the same computer.

Can the server be located in my office?

Yes, and many users do have servers in their offices (or even at home). However, keep in mind that to run a publicly available web server you'll need a static IP address. Usually this means you'll have to make arrangements with your ISP to get a static IP address (some providers, especially cable companies, do not support static IP addresses at all, while others charge a small additional fee). If the server computer is connected to the internet through a router, you'll also need to configure the router to forward port 80 to the web server computer.

Can the Panorama Enterprise Server run on an ISP's computer?

Only if the ISP uses Macintosh computers with OS X. The Panorama Enterprise Edition Server software will not run on Windows, Linux or UNIX. If your ISP does not already use Macintosh computers, another option is to "colo" (colocate) your own computer at their location. In other words, you rent power, bandwidth and space on their rack from the ISP and supply your own Macintosh computer. Keep in mind that you don't have to use the same ISP for serving that you use for internet access, in fact, it's not even necessary to collocate your server in the same city, state, or even country.

Can I access web published/generated data on my desktop?

Yes. If the database used for web publishing is also a shared database then the data will synchronize automatically each time you open the database from the desktop. Any data modifications made on your desktop will show up immediately on the web site, and changes made via web browsers will show up on your desktop after a quick synchronization process. If the database is not shared then you can easily download or upload the data manually.

Can the same database be used both as a shared database and for web publishing at the same time?

Yes. This makes it incredibly easy to maintain your web databases. Any changes made on your desktop will automatically show up on the web site, and vice versa.

Does Panorama Enterprise support cookies?

Yes. If you are not familiar with "cookies", this is a technology that allows web servers to keep track of different users accessing the site. Cookies can be used to store customer preferences, for shopping cart items, and for many other applications that require keeping track information about visitors to the site. (Note: The information is actually stored by the user's browser, not on the server.)

Can the design of a web published database be modified?

Yes, you can change the design at any time. All changes are made offline and then uploaded to the server. There's no need to shut down or suspend the server to make changes, and physical access to the server computer is not necessary (in other words, updates can be performed remotely).

How can I test and debug my web published database?

The Panorama Enterprise Edition Server system includes a simulator that allows you to test and debug your web application before you upload it to a live web server. When using the simulator you have access to all of Panorama's debugging features, including breakpoints, single-stepping, examining variables, and more. You'll have everything working perfectly before you flip the switch and "go live."

What are the web publishing limitations when using the server in demo mode?

If the Panorama Enterprise Edition Server has not been activated with a serial number, it acts as a demo version. The demo version is fully functional for web

database publishing, but only for 30 minutes. Every 30 minutes you must "put another coin in the meter" by choosing **Refresh Demo** from the Admin menu on the server.

Questions about ordering Panorama Enterprise Edition

How can I place an order?

The best way to place most orders is through our on-line [order form](#). You can also order by telephone, see the [Contacts](#) page for the latest information.

What are the server licensing options?

We know that one size doesn't fit all, so there are several licensing options for the Panorama Enterprise Edition Server.

- o A **Database Sharing** license allows the server to be used for database sharing. A sharing license can be purchased for a specific maximum number of users (6-user, 12-user, etc.) or for an unlimited number of users.
- o A **Web Server** license allows the server to be used for web database publishing. Web server licenses come only in one flavor, allowing unlimited web access (limited only by your bandwidth and CPU).
- o A **Combination** license combines both database sharing and web database publishing on a single server. The sharing portion of a combo license may be for a specific number of users or unlimited. The web server portion of the license is always unlimited.

For current pricing of each of these option see our on-line order form.

What are the client licensing options?

In addition to the server license, each computer that will be used for database sharing must have a licensed copy of Panorama 5.5 or Panorama Direct 5.5 (or later). You can purchase or upgrade to the latest version of Panorama using this [order form](#).

If you have a personal use license it can be used to access shared databases, but only from one computer with a personal use license at a time. If you want to switch to a second computer (for example from your desktop to your laptop) you'll need to log off the first computer before you can make the switch. See [Personal Use License](#) for more information about this type of license.

Is there an upgrade from the Butler server?

The Panorama Enterprise Edition Server is an entirely new system, not an upgrade from Butler. However, if you purchased your copy of Butler after June 2006 a discount will be available, please contact us for details.
