ADVANTAGES OF USING THE ORACLE VERSION OF ADB v.2

Introduction

The Access version of the ADB v.2 was developed to help states that cannot currently support Oracle, and therefore are unable to use the Oracle ADB v.2. However, Microsoft Access was not intended to be a full-blown data server. Because of this, Access is missing many of the features and benefits that are gained by having an Oracle data server. The limitations of the Access version of the ADB v.2 will be discussed in the following section.

Access Limitations

1. **Security**. Oracle provides a far more secure environment for data storage. Within Oracle, users can be created with specific data privileges. The management of these users is also relatively simple. Oracle also provides the ability to restore lost or corrupted data. An Oracle database running on a server has a significantly lower chance of becoming corrupted than does an Access file running on a local hard drive. Oracle also provides back-up features that Access does not.

2. **Performance**. In some tests on an Access version of the ADB v.2, performance of the software was slightly lower with the Access version running locally as opposed to the Oracle version running locally. This performance gap would be significantly more if the Access database were sitting on a server and having to run over a network with multiple users.

3. **Limits of Access**. Access has a limit of 2 Gigabytes of storage space. It would be unlikely that a state would ever have that much data in their ADB. However, since the ADB is capable of storing several assessment cycles, the size of a state's database can grow significantly from year to year. Eventually, the ADB v.2 will have performance issues as the Access database gets larger (long before it hits the 2 Gigabyte limit).

4. **Web Servability**. By a state opting to use the Access version of the ADB v.2, they give up Oracle's significant abilities to serve data on the web. One of the great benefits of having the data in Oracle is that a state would easily be able to develop websites that run off of the Oracle ADB and serve up assessment information to the citizens of their state. The Web-server capabilities of Access have significant limitations.