

File Fun

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/PHP/comp.lang.php/2005-06/msg00049.html>

- *From:* "dracolytch" <dracolytch@xxxxxxxxxx>
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Ok, I'm mulling over different techniques to solve a problem, and thought that insight from other PHP/MySQL gurus would be of value.

I'm weighing and experimenting with storing data in a MySQL database instead of my usual file "cache". My normal technique for doing this kind of interaction is to rename/store the file on a portion of the server somewhere, and just store the path to the file in the DB.

In this particular case, I'm mostly working with images, and sometimes it'd be nice to interact with them like they were data in the database, though it's probably sometimes easier or more efficient to store them on the server drive.

Securing the data is kind of a mixed bag... You can always store the file in a non-servable portion of the drive and write a page to serve it up to authorized users. This would require both a DB interaction and a file read. If the data is in the DB, it'd save the file access (but the data still has to be read from the HDD anyway). In either case, the data read/serve is indirect (controlled by PHP).

The biggest advantage to storing the data in the database is portability from one server to another. If the files are separate, you have to deal with a mysql db, plus a bunch of other files, and make sure the new system is pathed/secured correctly. If everything is part of the DB, you really only have one file to worry about.

It's probably a lot more efficient to read the file directly off the FS, instead out of a DB. I haven't seen any benchmarks showing HOW much more efficient though. It's most likely significant.

I like the idea of being able to maintain all of my data in one place (not having to do file system deletes/copies/etc). It also allows me to do some pretty funky stuff like, run an update statement on my images (in this case, not particularly practical, but it could be interesting for working with things like evaluation routines in genetic algorithms).

Are there pros or cons that I've missed? Has anyone actually TRIED it? I've read about a 47kb limit problem that some people have. Anyone know

anything about this?

~D

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- *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ **Re: File Fun**

- ◆ *From:* Mike Willbanks

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