

Dear SAP DB community,

Yesterday 4.6.2003, the five of us core members of the MySQL AB and SAP AG teams met in Berlin. The topic of our meeting was the integration of SAP DB and MySQL, with the main emphasis being on the additions to be implemented in SAP DB to enable it to better work together with MySQL.

All of us have been following the SAP DB mailing list, although we haven't so far personally participated in much of the discussions. During the meeting, we felt the need of issuing a joint statement to complement the two initial messages by Marina Montag of SAP (28.5.2003) and Zak Greant of MySQL (30.5.2003).

First, the renamed version SAP DB offered by MySQL AB will be an extension of SAP DB. We foresee no changes causing incompatibilities when upgrading from SAP DB 7.4. The extensions will fall into two categories: Those making it easier for SAP DB and MySQL to work together, and those making it easier to migrate from MySQL to SAP DB.

Second, we expect to announce the details of the extensions and enhancements to SAP DB within August 2003. Before that, we are not prepared to issue any more detailed statements than we have done so far. However, we clearly appreciate your input on what kind of interoperability and compatibility issues you would like to see solved.

Third, the MySQL-SAP cooperation will result in clearly bigger changes happening in the MySQL server than in SAP DB. The changes to MySQL will take place over a long time perspective. Quite as in the case of SAP DB, the plan is to keep compatible to earlier versions, only extending its feature set.

Fourth, the issue causing the most visible debate within the SAP DB community seems to be the change from LGPL to GPL as the licensing scheme. We understand your concerns and the desire to continue to be able to exploit the benefits of a great database system without any obligations. However, had the licensing and business model for SAP DB proven itself viable, we wouldn't today have any partnership between SAP AG and MySQL AB. Bear in mind that neither SAP AG nor MySQL AB are charities.

The license model of MySQL AB is based on dual licensing, GPL and commercial. This model requires users to decide whether they work with the ethics and values of the Free / Open Source Software world, themselves distributing Free / Open Source Software, or whether they work with the ethics and values of commercial software, where a commercial license does not require opening the source code of the surrounding application. We feel these options give users plenty of freedom and plenty of choice.

Fifth, community: Both SAP AG and MySQL AB genuinely value the contributions, the opinions, and the activity of the SAP DB user community. We feel confident that the vast majority of the community will find itself at home in either of the two worlds, the Free / Open Source Software world or the commercial software world.

We will now go back to our respective development labs, to work on improving the interoperability of SAP DB and MySQL. We will of course continue to listen to the SAP DB mailing list, but don't expect us to be able to detail our above statements until August.

Best regards,

Kaj Arnö, Patrik Backman (MySQL AB)
Rudi Munz, Jürgen Primsch, Jörg Hoffmeister (SAP AG)

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