

Smalltalk and Databases

R. Mark Volkmann

Object Computing, Inc.



<https://objectcomputing.com>



mark@objectcomputing.com



[@mark_volkmann](https://twitter.com/mark_volkmann)



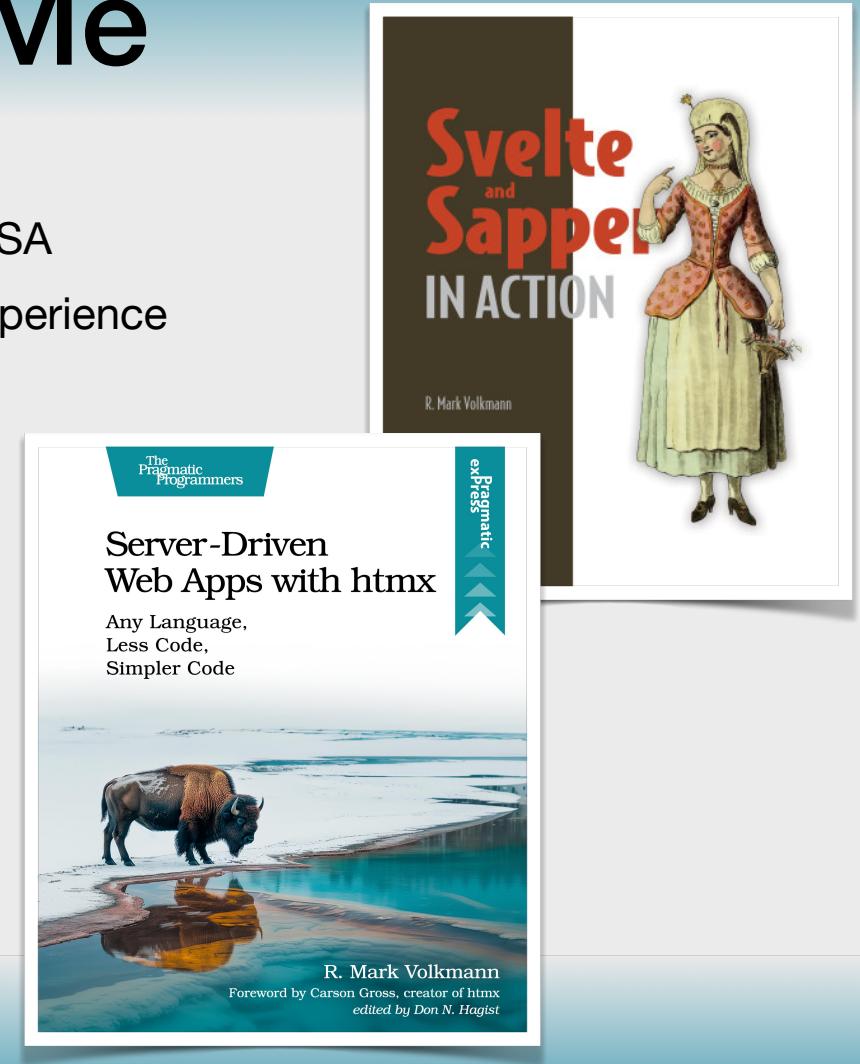
OBJECT COMPUTING
YOUR OUTCOMES ENGINEERED

Slides at <https://github.com/mvolkmann/talks/>

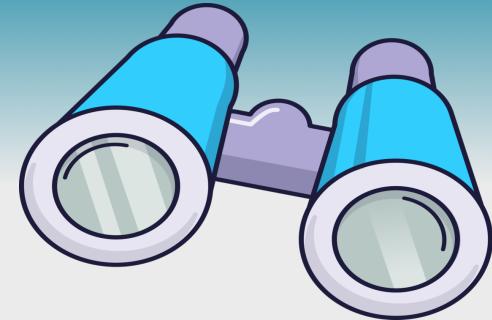


About Me

- Partner and Distinguished Software Engineer at Object Computing, Inc. in St. Louis, Missouri USA
- 44 years of professional software development experience
- Writer and speaker
- Blog at <https://mvolkmann.github.io/blog/>
- Author of Manning book “Svelte ... in Action”
- Author of Pragmatic Bookshelf book “Server-Driven Web Apps with htmx”



ODBC Overview



- Acronym for Open DataBase Connectivity
- Defines an API for interacting with databases
 - primarily used with relational databases
- Originally created by Microsoft and Simba Technologies
 - version 1.0 was released in 1992
 - version 4.0 was released in 2016 (latest)
- Supported by a large number of databases
- Somewhat slower than directly accessing a specific kind of database

Installing ODBC



- In macOS
 - install Homebrew
 - open a Terminal
 - enter `brew install unixodbc`
- This installs
 - `libodbc` library
 - `isql` command
 - `odbcinst` command

Apologies for Mac-only instructions!

I need to get access to Linux and Windows computers to verify their installation steps.

Installing DB-specific Drivers

- **For Postgres** in macOS
 - in Terminal, enter `brew install pqodbc`
 - creates files `psqlodbcw.so` and `psqlodbca.so` in `/opt/homebrew/lib`
 - “w” stands for “wide”, meaning it supports Unicode characters
 - “a” stands for “ASCII”, meaning it only supports 8-bit characters
- **For MySQL** in macOS
 - in Terminal, enter `brew install mariadb-connector-odbc`
 - creates file `/opt/homebrew/lib/mariadb/libmaodbc.dylib`
- **For SQLite** in macOS
 - in Terminal, enter `brew install sqliteodbc`
 - creates file `/opt/homebrew/lib/libsqlite3odbc.so`



compatible with MySQL

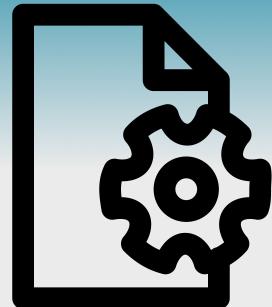
I was unable to get the official MySQL ODBC driver from <https://dev.mysql.com/downloads/connector/odbc/> to work.

WARNING: Driver libraries may be installed in `/usr/local/lib` instead of `/opt/homebrew`.

Defining DSNs

- Acronym for Data Source Name
- DSNs and drivers they use are configured in text files
- To determine files that must be created
 - in terminal, enter `odbcinst -j` -j prints config info
 - see “DRIVERS” in output
 - mine is `/opt/homebrew/etc/odbcinst.ini`
 - see “USER DATA SOURCES” in output
 - mine is `.odbc.ini` in my home directory
- Create those files with content similar to next slide

Configuration Files



```
[MySQL]
Description = MySQL ODBC Driver
Driver = /opt/homebrew/lib/mariadb/libmaodbc.dylib

[PostgreSQL]
Description = PostgreSQL ODBC Driver
Driver = /opt/homebrew/lib/psqlodbcw.so

[SQLite]
Description = SQLite ODBC Driver
Driver = /opt/homebrew/lib/libsqLite3odbc.so
```

WARNING: Driver libraries may be installed in `/usr/local/lib` instead of `/opt/homebrew`

maps driver names to library files

```
~/.odbc.ini
```

maps data source names to drivers and databases

```
[MySQLTodosDSN]
```

```
Description = MySQL database for a Todo app
Driver = MySQL
Database = todos
User = root
```

alternatively, can set to driver path

```
[PostgresTodosDSN]
```

```
Description = PostgreSQL database for a Todo app
Driver = PostgreSQL
Database = todos
```

```
[SQLiteTodosDSN]
```

```
Description = SQLite database for a Todo app
Driver = SQLite
Database = /Users/volkmannm/todos.db
```

modify for location of your database

Listing Data Sources

- To list all configured DSNs,
enter `odbcinst -q -s`
- To list all configured ODBC drivers,
enter `odbcinst -q -d`
- To view details about a specific data source,
enter `odbcinst -q -s -n {dsn}`

`-q` for query
`-s` for source (DSN)
`-d` for driver
`-n` for name



Creating Postgres Database

- Install Postgres: `brew install postgresql@14`
- Create required files: `initdb` directory defaults to /opt/homebrew/var/postgres
- Start database server: `brew services start postgresql@14`
- Create database: `createdb todos`
- Enter interactive mode: `psql -d todos`
- Create todo table
 - ```
create table todos (
 id serial primary key,
 description text unique,
 completed boolean
);
```
- Exit by entering `\q`

# Creating MySQL Database

- Install MySQL commands: `brew install mysql`
- Start database server: `brew services start mysql`
- Enter interactive mode: `/opt/homebrew/bin/mysql -u root`
- Create todo table
  - ```
create table todos (
    id int auto_increment primary key,
    description varchar(100) not null,
    completed boolean,
    unique (description)
);
```
- Exit by entering `exit`

may be installed in `/usr/local/bin`

must use `varchar` instead of `text`
to add unique constraint

Creating SQLite Database

- Install `sqlite3` command: `brew install sqlite`
- cd to directory where database will be created
- Create database and start interactive mode: `sqlite3 todos.db`
- Create todo table
 - `create table todos (`
 `id integer primary key autoincrement,`
 `description string unique,`
 `completed numeric`
`) ;`
- Exit by pressing `ctrl-d`

Interactive Mode

- To interactively access a data source,
enter `isql {den}`
 - to list existing tables, enter `help`
 - to see column names and their types in a specific table,
enter `help table-name`
 - enter SQL statements like `select * from todos;`
 - to exit, enter `quit` or press ctrl-d

ODBC from Smalltalk



- In a Workspace, evaluate `Feature require: 'ODBC'`
- Evaluate code like the following

```
| connection resultSet sqlString |  
  
connection := ODBCConnection dsn: #SQLiteTodosDSN user: '' password: ''.  
  
sqlString :=  
    'insert into todos (description, completed) values (''buy milk'', 0)'.  
connection execute: sqlString.  
  
resultSet := connection execute: 'select * from todos'.  
resultSet asTable do: [:row |  
    row at: #description :: print  
].  
  
connection close.
```

Active Record

- Design pattern described by **Martin Fowler** in book “Patterns of Enterprise Application Architecture”
 - “An object that wraps a row in a database table or view, encapsulates the database access, and adds domain logic on that data.”
 - “The classes match very closely the record structure of an underlying database.”
- Famously implemented as part of **Ruby on Rails** framework
- **Automatically discovers table column names and types**
- Ruby implementation uses `method_missing`
- Smalltalk implementation uses `doesNotUnderstand`:



Assumptions

- All tables have an auto-increment `id` column
- All table names are snake_case, plural version of corresponding class name
 - `Todo` -> `todos`
 - `GearShiftKnob` -> `gear_shift_knobs`
 - `Person` -> `people`

“
**Assumptions
are made and
most
assumptions
are wrong.**

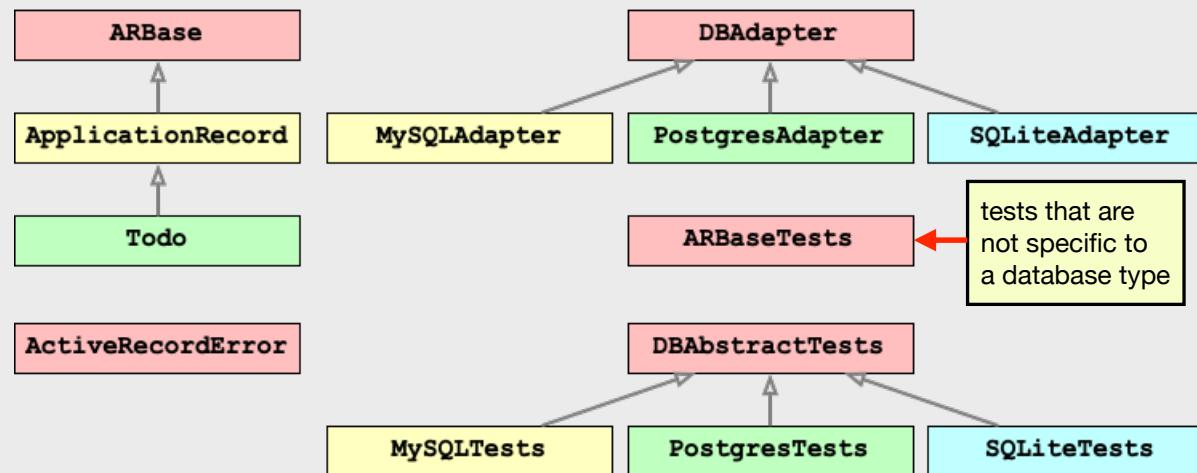
- *Albert Einstein*

My Package

- Currently supports MySQL, Postgres, and SQLite
 - to support a new database, implement new subclass of `DBAdapter`
- Currently only tested in Cuis Smalltalk
 - hopefully only minimal changes will be needed for Squeak and Pharo
 - relies on having an ODBC package
- To install in an image
 - clone repository at
<https://github.com/mvolkmann/Cuis-Smalltalk-ActiveRecord>
 - open a Workspace and evaluate
`Feature require: 'ActiveRecord'`



Classes



Example Usage ...

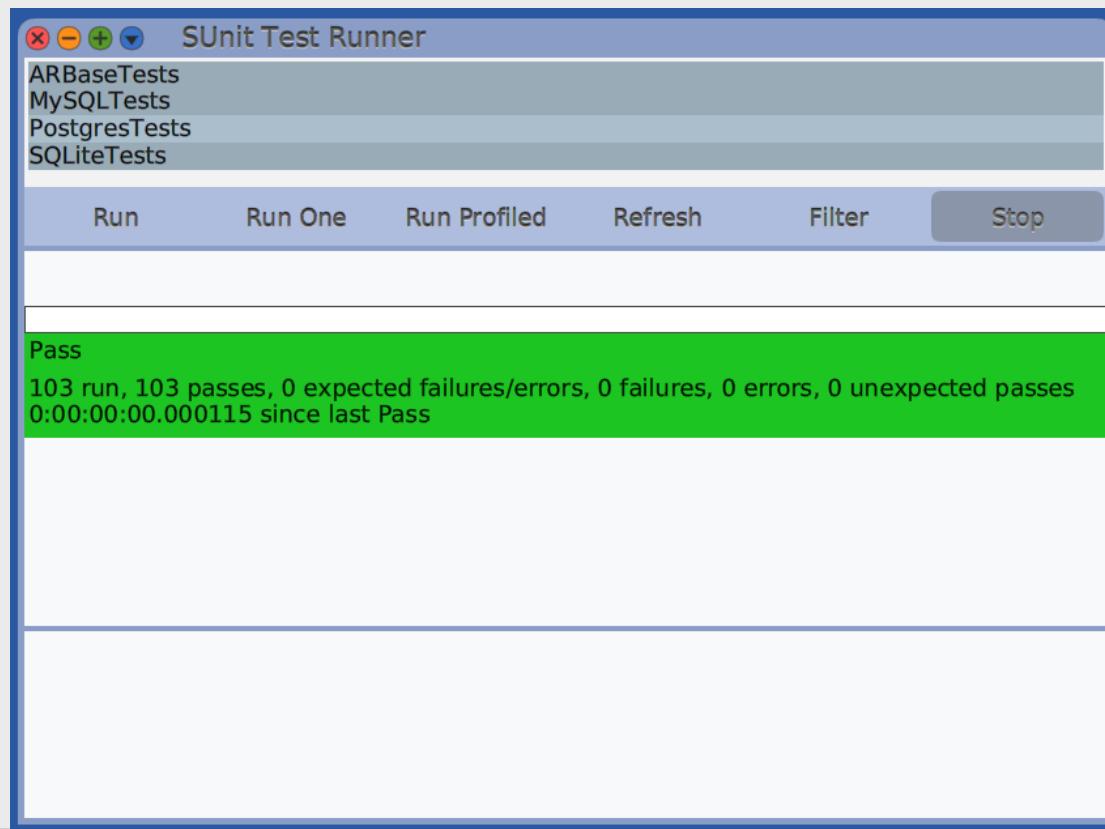
- Mimics Ruby on Rails implementation as closely as possible
- **Todo** class
 - maps to `todos` table
 - only needs to be a subclass of `ApplicationRecord`
 - no instance variables or methods are required

```
ApplicationRecord subclass: #Todo
  instanceVariableNames: ''
  classVariableNames: ''
  poolDictionaries: ''
  category: 'Demo'
```

... Example Usage

```
| id todo todos |  
  
ARBase logSQL: true. "logs all SQL statements to Transcript"  
  
Todo establishConnection: #SQLiteTodosDSN dbType: #SQLite.  
id := Todo create: { #description->'eat tacos'. #completed->0 }.  
id := Todo create: { #description->'cut grass'. #completed->1 }.  
id := Todo create: { #description->'buy milk'. #completed->0 }.  
id := Todo create: { #description->'study Smalltalk'. #completed->1 }.  
  
could this be  
determined  
from DSN?  
  
todos := Todo all. "gets all rows"  
todos do: [:todo | todo inspect print].  
outputs lines like  
Todo completed: 1.0, description: 'buy milk', id: 19579  
  
todos := Todo findWhere: {'completed = 0'}. "gets all matching rows"  
  
todo := Todo find: 19. "finds one row by its id"  
todo description: 'go for a run'. "sets description column"  
todo description. "gets description column"  
todo destroy. "deletes row"  
Todo destroyBy: #description->'buy milk'. "deletes all matching rows"
```

Comprehensive Test Suite



Rails Features Not Yet Implemented

- Describing table relationships
 - to support joins
- Transactions
 - currently all changes auto-commit
- Overriding assumptions
 - `id` column
 - mapping from classes to table names
- Table creation
- Migrations



Wrap Up

It's a good start, but
there is much more work to do
to match the functionality of the
Ruby on Rails implementation.