Ladybridge Systems

QM Newsletter

Another year has passed and QM continues to attract a growing number of users. Most of these have migrated from other multivalue environments but we are also pleased to welcome some that are new to this data model. We are particularly encouraged by the number of application resellers that are migrating their client base to QM.

For this year's International Spectrum Show we will be presenting two sessions; one on configuration and performance tuning a QM system, the other on how to construct a web server using CGI. As usual, we will have a booth in the exhibit hall so please come and talk to us about how QM can help in your business.

Unrivalled Pricing

At a time when businesses are striving to cut costs, we believe that QM provides the lowest total cost of ownership of any multivalue database product. In some cases this may be as little as 20% of the current costs over a five to ten year period. With low initial licence prices and no mandatory support contracts, QM can significantly reduce the strain on your IT budget.

If you do need support, this is provided at a simple hourly rate so you only ever pay for the support services that you actually need. Our support services are also reputed to be amongst the most responsive in the industry.

Platforms

The Intel Mac version of QM has attracted much interest. Alongside many small Mac licences, we have a user setting up a data centre using this version of QM on an Apple Mac Xserver with a 3.8Tb SAS fibre-channel disk array.

At the other end of system sizing, we have recently completed a port of QM to the Arm9 processor to meet the needs of a user embarking on a project that will see QM based web servers hosted on very low cost hardware.

As always, users with a potential need to run on other platforms are encouraged to talk to us about the possibility of a relevant release.

Easing Migration

Much work has been completed over the past year to make it even easier for users to migrate to QM from other multivalue environments. We have worked closely with some of our newer users to identify areas that presented difficulties during migration and either improved compatibility or introduced methods to simplify conversion.

Although QM will never be a clone of any other system and hence migration will always require some work, the process has been made significantly easier by these developments. We are keen to hear from other users who have kept notes of the changes that they needed to make while migrating to QM.

Licensing

From 1 April 2009, QM will support the option of device licensing where multiple connections from a single client can share a licence. A user needing, for example, a telnet session and a QMClient session will no longer consume two user licences. Device licensing will be available with QMClient, AccuTerm, QMTerm and Winnix.

There is a small surcharge for this capability based on the number of sessions to be covered by a single licence.

New Partnerships

This year has seen several new partnerships. More information on these can be found from the links page of the OpenQM web site.

We have worked with MITS to bring their advanced web based reporting tools to QM users. MITS Report is an interactive reporting tool that can be used without needing to understand database dictionaries or the QM query processor. MITS Discover is a set of Business Intelligence tools.

The mvToolbox development tool package is a comprehensive environment designed for programming and maintaining multivalue applications. It allows users to easily traverse code, program files and data files with a touch of a key or a simple mouse click.

The SpoolerPlus package from Sysmark Information Systems brings enhanced Pick style printing capabilities to QM, minimising modification to embedded print commands. It also provides the print spooler and print queues to ensure a flexible and efficient use of printers for all print jobs.

The Winnix terminal emulator from EasySoft can be used to provide a GUI front end to a QM application running on a PDA.

New Features

Some of the product developments over the last year are:

• Peak load management for web servers.

• Use of A/F correlatives as conversion codes.

• Option for case insensitive alternate key indices.

• User hook for hold file entry logging.

• LIST.FILES extended to allow determination of files open to each user.

• Ability to run a phantom process without a log file.

• Ability to run a phantom process with a fixed user number.

• Suspend/resume COMO file generation.

• Ability to change the user name and privileges of a STARTUP command.

• Direction of a delimited query report to a directory file record.

• Multiple SAVING clauses in a single query.

• Explosion limiters in Pick style BY.EXP and BY.EXP.DSND query clauses.

• Unique id generation using SYSTEM(19).

• Pick style select lists now use the same performance optimisation as numbered lists.

• UDP connection capabilities added to QMBasic socket functions.

• Ability to stack the current account at an EXECUTE so that an embedded LOGTO returns to the original account.

• QMBasic REMOVEF() function for high performance delimited item extraction.

• QMBasic CHILD() function to test if phantom is still active.

• Performance improvements to class libraries with very large numbers of public names.

• Support for the default file variable in QMBasic programs.

• CLEARCOMMON can be applied to a specific named common block.

• MD5 message digest function.

• Ability to open a file in non-transactional mode in a transactional application.

• Various enhancements to the QMBasic debugger.

• Enhanced terminfo definition to allow concurrent visual attributes.

Development of the QM product is driven by the requests for new functionality that we receive from our users. If there is a feature that you need, please let us know.

Self-Study Training Materials

We have received many very positive comments regarding the quality of our product documentation. Whilst it is excellent as a set of reference documentation for experienced multivalue developers, it isn't really the ideal for new users to learn about QM if the multivalue data model is also new to them.

To fill this gap, we have constructed a 'Teach Yourself QM' training package that can be used for self-study or as the basis for a trainer-led course. This material is based on experience gained over many years of delivering training courses for multivalue users. It assumes no prior knowledge, starting with an explanation of the data model and working through the command environment, dictionaries, query processing, programming and a selection of system administration topics. Each section has a set of exercises to confirm learning and culminates in the construction of a simple but realistic sales processing application.

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This package will be available from May 2009.

Package Licensing

QM now includes a feature that enables an application vendor to link the licence for their own software to a specific QM licence and to impose a limit on the number of concurrent users. This feature, known as package licensing, has two variants:

With "registered packages", an authorisation code is issued via features of the dealers area of the OpenQM web site. This would typically be used for software developed and sold by the QM dealer.

With "private packages", all aspects of the package licensing are handled by the application except that QM will track the number of concurrent users.

For further details of this feature, please contact Ladybridge Systems.

Taking multivalue where it has never been before