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DAL Server for AS/400: Features

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TOPIC -----

This article describes the features of DAL server for AS/400.

DISCUSSION -----

The Data Access Language Server for the AS/400 is a networking software product that provides access, from an Apple Macintosh personal computer, to data on IBM AS/400 host system. The DAL server allows personal computer applications that support Data Access Language -- such as spreadsheets, query tools, and custom-developed applications -- to access AS/400 data. The AS/400 operating system, OS/400, has built-in database structures that respond to SQL query access. The most often used IBM-supplied DBMS for the AS/400 is SQL/400, which is a IBM-licensed product.

The DAL server receives requests from the personal computer application, carries them out on the AS/400 through the SQL/400 runtime facility, and sends the desired data back to the application for desktop processing. The DAL server for AS/400 works with existing SQL/400 databases and AS/400 libraries and files. It is not necessary for the AS/400 to be running SQL/400, because the runtime facilities in OS/400 support DAL access to databases.

The DAL server for AS/400 brings the powerful DAL dialect of SQL to the desktops of AS/400 users. The DAL user can access information about the databases (collection or library) belonging to the user, tables (files) belonging to the database (column) information pertaining to that table. Another important SQL extension DAL brings to the user is the ability to group DAL language statements, name them, and store them on the AS/400 host. These stored procedures can be repeatedly invoked on the AS/400 from the desktop application, reducing network traffic.

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The connection path between DAL client Macintosh computers and the AS/400 uses APPC (LU6.2) communication protocols. The LU6.2 sessions are provided to the client machines via Apple's SNA•ps gateways. The physical link can be either Token Ring or SDLC using RS-232 or V.35.

The DAL AS/400 server can be purchased from Apple Computer in either 1/2 inch 1600 bpi, or 1/4 inch cartridge tape. Pricing is based on a range of connected users, with several license size offerings from 1-5 users to 150 users. The DAL AS/400 product requires the DAL client software, version 1.3.7, be purchased separately for each Macintosh. This can be done with single licenses, 10 packs, or a bulk license for 150 users.

An important part of DAL solution is making use of the diverse number of commercially available query tools and spreadsheets that support DAL clients. As of January 27, 1993, the query tools include Clear Access, Data Prism, and GQL; and the spreadsheets include EXCEL, Wingz, and Claris Resolve.

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