
Object Storage Fact Book 5.0

Object-Relational Mapping

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Barry & Associates, Inc.

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Preface

This latest release of the *Object Storage Fact Book* has been expanded to provide more complete coverage of the products in the industry. Release 5.0 includes two volumes: *Object DBMSs*, and *Object-Relational Mapping*. This is the *Object-Relational Mapping* volume.

This volume has a number of sections, each of which includes an introduction explaining what is covered in that section. References to one of the standard textbooks in the field, *The Object Database Handbook*, by Douglas K. Barry, are included. This makes it easier to get an in-depth explanation of the concepts in each of the sections for those readers who need that information.

The tables are organized to correlate to *The Object Database Handbook* so that the user can easily read this book and obtain an in-depth understanding of the concepts of object technology.

Contents

Introduction	1
About Barry & Associates, Inc.	2
Development Process	4
Using the <i>Object Storage Fact Book</i>	5
Notation	6
Authors	7
Product Releases Covered.....	7
Acknowledgments	8
Company Addresses and Phone Numbers	9
Trademarks	12
General Architecture	13
Client/Server Architecture	14
Platforms Supported.....	15
Networks Supported.....	16
Cache Location	17
Client Cache Implementation	18
Application Server Cache Implementation.....	19
Unit of Transfer between Database and Application Memory	20
Object Access.....	21
Lookahead/Prefetch	22
Lookahead/Prefetch Controls.....	23
Memory Utilization.....	24
Capacity and Scalability	25
Memory Footprint.....	26
Licensing, Metering, and Open Source.....	27
ODMG Compliance	28

Java Data Objects (JDO) Compliance	29
SQL-92 DDL and DML Compliance	30
SQL-92 Integrity and Query Expression Compliance	31
SQL:1999 DDL and DML Compliance.....	32
SQL:1999 Integrity and Query Expression Compliance	33
CORBA/XA Support	34
Java Support.....	35
Java Certification	36
Microsoft Support	37
Objects, Attributes, and Relationships	38
Objects or User-Defined Types	39
Types and Classes	40
Binding and Polymorphism	41
Inheritance and Delegation	42
Logical and Physical View	43
Persistence with Programming Languages	44
Object Identifiers	45
Object Identifier to Reference Conversion	46
Attributes and Relationships	47
Literal Attributes.....	48
Multimedia Attributes.....	49
Multimedia Data Manipulation.....	50
Collections and Aggregates	51
Composite or Complex Objects	52
Object Clustering	53
Integrity Constraints.....	54
Integrity Constraint Use.....	55
Instance Operations Extensibility	56
Class or Type Operations Extensibility	57
Procedures and Programming Language	58
Encapsulation	59
Method or Function Implementation	60
Method or Function Linking and Typing.....	61
Method or Function Execution Location	62
Object Language Integration.....	63
Application Server-Based Method or Function Language	64
Client-Based Database Method or Function Language	65
Class or Type Libraries.....	66

Object Language Class or Type Reuse by Inheritance	67
Object Language Class or Type Reuse by Changing Definition	68
Object Language Class or Type Reuse without Changing Definition	69
Object Language Class or Type Reuse using Processor	70
Object Language Class or Type Generation	71
Application Language Preprocessors	72
Procedural Languages	73
Higher-Level Language	74
Languages for Simultaneous Access	75
Languages for Simultaneous Method or Function Execution	76
Language Reference Safety	77
Language Type Safety	78
Code Management	79
Queries and Query Language	80
Query Language	81
Query Language Invocation	82
Query Language Invocation from Programming Language	83
Client-Side Programming Language Invocation	84
Application Server-Side Programming Language Invocation	85
Query Implementation	86
Data Updates and Queries	87
Query Processing Location	88
Query Scope	89
Client-Side Query Language Text Search	90
Application Server-Side Query Language Text Search	91
Query Optimization	92
Indexing	93
Access Methods	94
Concurrency and Recovery	95
Standard Concurrency Control	96
Advanced Concurrency Control	97
Custom Concurrency Control	98
Deadlocks	99
Instance Lock Modes	100
Class or Type Lock Modes	101
Lock Granularity	102
Reference Lock Granularity	103
Lock Setting, Releasing and Promotion	104

Change Notification or Triggers	105
Change Notification or Trigger Types Built-in	106
Change Notification or Trigger Execution Location	107
Change Notification or Trigger Implementation	108
Application Server-Based Change Notification or Trigger Language	109
Client-Based Database Change Notification or Trigger Language	110
Alerters or Named Events	111
Transaction Capability	112
Atomicity	113
Consistency	114
Isolation	115
Durability	116
Transaction Characteristics	117
Long Transactions	118
Shared Transactions	119
Multi-Threaded Transactions	120
Nested Short Transactions	121
Mapping Objects to External DBMSs	122
Mapping Direction: Database Table or Object Language Class or Type Generation	123
Mapping Generation	124
C++ Map Generation Processing	125
C# Map Generation Processing	126
Java Map Generation Processing	127
Perl Map Generation Processing	128
Python Map Generation Processing	129
Visual Basic Map Generation Processing	130
Smalltalk Map Generation Processing	131
SQL Generation and Support	132
Object Identifier Mapping	133
Literal Attribute Mappings	134
Multimedia Attribute Mappings	135
Table to Class Mappings	136
Class to Table Mappings	137
Collection to Table Mappings	138
Table to Collection Mappings	139

External DBMS Schema to Object Model Mapping Management	140
Schema Update Time	141
Schema Change Method	142
Multiple Mappings to a Schema	143
Multiple Schema	144
Versions of Schema	145
External DBMS Schema Change Isolation.....	146
External DBMS Schema Change Synchronization.....	147
Changes to Attributes or Data Members.....	148
Add a new attribute or data member to an existing class or type	148
Drop an existing attribute or data member from an existing class or type	149
Change the name of an attribute or data member of an existing class or type	150
Change the domain of an attribute or data member of an existing class or type	151
Change the default value of an existing attribute or data member	152
Add a shared value attribute or static member to an existing class	153
Change a shared value attribute or static member of existing class	154
Drop a shared value of an attribute or static member from an existing class	155
Changes to Database Methods or Functions.....	156
Add a new method or function to an existing class or type	156
Drop an existing method or function from an existing class or type	157
Change the name of a method or function for an existing class or type.....	158
Change the code of a method or function for an existing class or type	159
Change the inheritance of a method or function in an existing class or type	160
Changes to the Superclass/Subclass Supertype/Subtype Relationship.....	161
Add a new superclass or supertype to an existing class or type	161
Remove a superclass or supertype from another class or type	162
Change the order of the superclasses or supertypes of an existing class or type.....	163
Add a new class or type	164
Drop an existing class or type.....	165
Change the name of a class or type or an external DBMS table.....	166
Create a new class or type as a generalized superclass/supertype of existing classes/types	167
Partition a class or type into new classes or types	168
Coalesce existing classes or types into one new class or type.....	169

Changes to the Database Schema	170
Adding a table used by the application	170
Dropping a table used by the application.....	171
Adding a column used by the application.....	172
Dropping a column used by the application	173
External DBMS Schema Integration	174
External DBMS Schema Integration Conflict Resolution	175
Mapping Error Handling.....	176
Data Migration.....	177
External DBMS Location Independence	178
External DBMS Data Manipulation.....	179
Data Synchronization: Refresh Options.....	180
Refresh: Invocation Points.....	181
DBMS Simultaneously Open.....	182
External DBMS Queries	183
External DBMS Joins	184
External DBMS Updates.....	185
Querying Data in Multiple Databases.....	186
External DBMS Distributed Query Processing	187
External DBMS Distributed Transaction Management.....	188
External DBMS Concurrency Control.....	189
External DBMS Locking	190
External DBMS Two-Phase Commit Optimization	191
External DBMS Updates with Two-Phase Commit	192
External DBMS Security Implementation	193
External DBMS Product Support.....	194
FrontierSuite for EJB Platform DBMS Access	195
FrontierSuite for Standalone Platform DBMS Access	196
Forte for Java DBMS Access.....	197
JDX DBMS Access.....	198
MTOS DBMS Access.....	199
ObJectBridge DBMS Access.....	200
ObJectDRIVER DBMS Access	201
ObJectSpark DBMS Access.....	202
SQL Object Factory DBMS Access	203

TopLink for Java, WebSphere and WebLogic DBMS Access.....	204
Visual BSF DBMS Access	205
External DBMS Release Support.....	206
External DBMS Access Method.....	207
Security Authorization	208
Security Granularity.....	209
United States DOD Certified Security Compliance.....	210
Security Implementation.....	211
Encoding of Schema and Method or Function Definitions	212
Private or Personal Database/Workspace Authorization	213
User or Role Authorization.....	214
Implicit Authorization.....	215
Positive and Negative Authorization	216
Strong and Weak Authorization.....	217
Day and Time Authorization	218
Web Capabilities	219
Storage of Web-Related Data	220
Server Pages.....	221
XML Capabilities.....	222
Web Load Balancing.....	223
Web Dispatcher Fail-Over Strategy.....	224
Application Server Support.....	225
FrontierSuite for EJB Platform Application Server Support	226
FrontierSuite for Standalone Platform Application Server Support.....	227
Forte for Java Application Server Support	228
JDX Application Server Support	229
ObjectBridge Application Server Support.....	230
ObjectSpark Application Server Support.....	231
SQL Object Factory Application Server Support.....	232
TopLink for Java Application Server Support.....	233
Visual BSF Application Server Support.....	234
Tools.....	235
Schema Browsing/Editing Tools	236
Data Browsing/Editing Tools	237
Query Tools	238
Report Writer	239
Multimedia Tools.....	240

DBA Tools	241
DBA Alerts	242
DBA Notification Method	243
Statistics	244
Tuning.....	245
CASE Tool Integration	246
Internationalization.....	247
Internationalization of Interactive Tools.....	248
Internationalization of Batch Tools	249
Internationalization of Error Messages.....	250
Internationalization of Object Names and Strings	251
References	252
Index	254

Introduction

The *Object Storage Fact Book* is the most comprehensive comparison of features for object storage. Aimed at development, production and maintenance concerns, the *Object Storage Fact Book* contains a superset of possible features for products that store objects. It provides data to sort through the complexities of the products so that feature strengths are matched to application needs; this is essential for making an informed product selection. The *Object Storage Fact Book* also accelerates the product selection process because the arduous and time-consuming task of gathering product data is completed for you.

About Barry & Associates, Inc.

The *Object Storage Fact Book* is published by Barry & Associates, Inc. The mission of Barry & Associates is to provide facts on object DBMS, object-relational mapping, and XML data server products. We do this through consulting, publishing and education. Founded by Doug Barry in 1992, the firm is particularly focused on strategic decision making about these kinds of products.

Facts about the Market and Industry

Barry & Associates is deeply familiar with products that store objects. Using the facts in this book and our breadth of experiences with applications requiring object storage, we help our clients with an unbiased perspective. Over the last eight years, Barry & Associates has worked with many clients who had many different applications. Over that time period, our clients have chosen a wide variety of products.

When you use Barry & Associates consulting services, you're getting an unbiased point of view. We have no "preferred" products and no financial stake in any of the companies. That means the focus will be on your application needs.

According to Doug Barry, "People often ask me which is the best product for storing objects. The answer is that it depends on your application needs. All of the products have strengths and weaknesses. The challenge is to help you find the product that has the strengths you need and the weaknesses that won't matter." This is accomplished with facts. Barry & Associates helps

clients determine the critical features needed for their application. This is then matched, in an iterative process, to products that have those features in their product.

Mentoring

It can be hard to get started in an application that uses a DBMS for storing objects. In situations like this, Barry & Associates can provide people to work as a mentor to the group. They can provide direction and information to such a group, giving them pointers to get started and assisting them along the way. Our goal is to help a group get started on their project and help them become specialists quickly. This arrangement can be short or long term.

Providing Answers

Sometimes people just need a chance to get unbiased answers about the many questions they have about this new technology. It may be that they are at the early stages of considering products or maybe they are not sure how to start.

In situations like these, Barry & Associates offers half to full day roundtable discussions for small groups. The purpose is to provide facts and information in response to specific questions. The structure of these sessions includes a short introductory outline of the basics concepts of products that store objects to create a common baseline for communication. The remaining time is an open question and answer session.

Product Selection

Through a two-day selection program, Barry & Associates has helped many organizations choose a product or narrow the universe of products down to a manageable list of two or three candidate products.

Barry & Associates has found that its selection model makes it possible to focus on key issues. We use our product and industry background with this selection model to focus your efforts on matching your application needs to product features instead of researching the products and the industry.

On the first day, the group will be guided through an analysis of application database needs and an initial determination of critical success factors is made. During the second day, the critical success factors are verified, an assessment of which products match the application needs is completed and a determination of any extraordinary requirements that require follow-up with vendors is made.

At the end of the second day, you'll have a strong grasp of your application database needs and the products that could meet those needs.

Implementation Stories

How exactly are these new products being used? Are companies using them in real, mission-critical applications? Are there limitations to the situations

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in which they can be used? As in the introduction to any new technology, there are plenty of myths about products and lots of concern about jumping into the object or object-relational mapping world.

Using an implementation model, Barry & Associates has formally interviewed developers to learn about their experiences. Barry & Associates combines the interview data with its experiences to provide you with a balanced view of how these products are being used.

More Information

More information on the services that we offer can be obtained by contacting us at the address below or by checking our web page.

Development Process

Vendor Participation

The *Object Storage Fact Book* contains details on product features. Many vendors participated this release through a review process. Many provided excellent suggestions for further expansion of the feature listing to provide coverage for all of their products' features. Each vendor was given an opportunity to critique the responses of their competition.

Companion Book

The *Object Storage Fact Book* has been organized to be used in conjunction with *The Object Database Handbook*, John Wiley & Sons, 1996. This publication is cross-referenced to the book and the terminology is consistent with the book, providing the reader a source for more information on specific topics. The sections in this publication are ordered to match the order of sections in *The Object Database Handbook*. This organization allows more complete specification and explanation while maintaining the concise format and reference utility of this publication itself.

The material in this publication is primarily covered in Part 3 of *The Object Database Handbook*.

Evaluation

The development of the *Object Storage Fact Book* involved working with the vendors to ensure that their product features were represented fully. Barry & Associates has spent thousands of hours compiling and evaluating the data. This often required re-working feature descriptions, adding more features and verifying each of the changes with the vendors. The goal of the evaluation process was to provide feature descriptions that allowed a “normalization” of terminology among the vendor products.

Using the *Object Storage Fact Book*

You can use the *Object Storage Fact Book* in many ways. Here is a standard process for using the book to select a product. A more complete selection model can be found in Chapter 7 of *The Object Database Handbook*. This model was originally developed for object DBMSs, but works equally well for object-relational mapping products. A summary of the model can also be found at <http://www.object-relational.com/select.html>.

1. Determine Critical Application Needs

It is important to first determine your application needs. Although this may appear easy on the surface, once you dig into the detail of the features found in this book you may find that your specific needs may be different than you originally anticipated.

2. Feature Understanding

The *Object Storage Fact Book* also can be used to provide background on possible product features that you may have not considered. It is important to have a full understanding of the possible features available before you determine features critical to your application needs.

3. Determine Your Critical Features

Once you have an understanding of application feature needs, you can use the *Object Storage Fact Book* to determine products that you should investigate further. One way to do this is to determine the features that products must have for consideration; these are your critical features.

4. Product Selection

Though the feature comparisons here are quite complete, it is important to discuss your application with vendor representatives before making a product selection. This will ensure that any product concerns that you have are properly covered.

Notation

When you review the tables, you will see that they contain check marks and sometimes clarification comments. A check mark indicates the feature is in the shipping release of the product. Sometimes comments are included to show the product has a capability that provides a portion or "building blocks" for a particular feature.

Many of these products allow you to add a feature or something approaching a feature by coding methods or using other means. It is best to discuss such "extensions" to their products with the vendors.

Authors

Joshua Duhl has provided analysis of and guidance in the application of object and database technologies for over 12 years. At Stillpoint Consulting, he works with companies using object technology including object databases, tools, application servers, or integrating objects with relational data into Web applications. In addition, he provides strategic marketing consulting to software companies and is an industry analyst associated with International Data Corporation (IDC). Duhl was one of the five original authors of the ODMG-93 object database standard. He has written and presented extensively on the ODBMS and object-relational mapping tool markets, trends, companies, products, applications and issues. Joshua has managed development projects, implemented the first comparative benchmark of object and relational databases, and co-developed one of the first implementations of Object SQL. He can be reached by email at: jduhl@mediaone.net.

Doug Barry has worked in database technology for over twenty years, with an exclusive focus on the application of database technology for objects since 1987. As principal of [Barry & Associates](#), Doug has focused on helping clients make fully informed decisions about the application of object technology. He emphasizes the need to match product feature strengths to application needs in order to ultimately field a successful product. Doug is also the author of [*Object Database Handbook: How to Select, Implement, and Use Object-Oriented Databases*](#), published by John Wiley & Sons; the [*XML Data Servers: An Infrastructure for Effectively Using XML in Electronic Commerce*](#), published by Barry & Associates, Inc.; and was for many years the *Databases* columnist in [*Object Magazine*](#) and the *ODBMS* columnist in [*Distributed Computing Magazine*](#). In addition, Doug serves as the Executive Director of the [Object Data Management Group \(ODMG\)](#), a consortium of vendors and interested parties working on object storage standards.

Product Releases Covered

AZ Software	MTOS	1.0
Infobjects, S.A.	ObjectDRIVER	2.2.1
ObjectFrontier, Inc.	FrontierSuite for EJB Platform	2.0
	FrontierSuite for Standalone Platform	2.0
Objectmatter, Inc.	Visual BSF	2.3
ONTOS, Inc.	ObjectSpark	4.0
POET Software Corporation	FastObjects SQL Object Factory	7.0
Software Tree, Inc.	JDX	2.1
(Open Source Project hosted at Sourceforge)	ObJectBridge	0.3.x
Sun Microsystems, Inc.	Forte for Java	2.0, Internet Edition
WebGain, Inc.	TopLink for Java	3.5
	TopLink for WebLogic	3.5
	TopLink for WebSphere	3.5

Note: ObJectBridge is not developed by a company but by an international OpenSource community. Initial author, architect and maintainer is Thomas Mahler (<mailto:thma@users.sourceforge.net>). The project is hosted by the Open Source mediator Sourceforge (<http://objectbridge.sourceforge.net>).

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ONTOS, Inc.
POET Software Corporation
Infobjects, S.A.

AZ Software
Itellium GmbH (lead for ObjectBridge open source code)
Software Tree, Inc.
Sun Microsystems, Inc.
ObjectFrontier, Inc.

WebGain, Inc.
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