

Server Selection Considerations

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Traditionally, SOS has supported its software on both Windows and Novell server platforms. Nevertheless, support of the Novell server platform becomes even stickier for Adaptive Server Anywhere 9, which is the database version included with SOS 2005. As a result, SOS will no longer support installing or running the database on anything other than a Windows system. On most networks (up to ten or more SOS workstations) the database may be run on a Windows XP or Windows 2000 system dedicated to this purpose. On networks with more than twenty SOS users, we recommend Windows 2000 Server or Windows 2003 Server. A Windows-based database server may be integrated into an existing Novell network. For backup convenience, you may want to schedule a copy of the SOS data files to a directory on the Novell file server each day.

In case you are interested, some of the reasons for our decision are:

- w** ASA 9 requires Novell 5.1, Service Pack 6 or higher. Of those SOS customers running the database on a Novell server, many do not meet this requirement.
- w** If the database is run directly on a Novell server, all SOS software installations and updates are more complicated. Even starting and stopping the database on a Novell system requires additional knowledge and special procedures. Instead of selecting an item from a menu or clicking a desktop shortcut as on a Windows system, the user must load the appropriate NLM or create a NCF file to do so.
- w** Routine support tasks are more easily done by untrained office staff in the more familiar Windows environment. When the database is run on a Novell server, support frequently requires the services of a consultant familiar with Novell.
- w** Upgrades, such as the current transition from the older Sybase Adaptive Server Anywhere 7 database to the new Sybase Adaptive Server Anywhere 9 database can be problematic on Novell servers, often requiring that the database be copied to a Windows machine for upgrading, then copied back to the Novell system.
- w** Performance is better on the Windows platform because the file system allows growth of the database files to proceed more smoothly than on the Novell file system.
- w** Performance of the database is highly dependent on appropriate database cache settings. These settings are dynamic and automatically adjusted as needed by the database engine on Windows platforms, but must be managed manually on Novell.
- w** When installed on a Windows 2000, XP, or 2003 NTFS partition, each database file may grow with virtually no limit in size. On other disk formats, each file is limited to 2 GB.

- w SOS's Sybase database will take advantage of multiple processors in a Windows 2000 or Windows 2003 server. Additional processors in a Novell server will not significantly improve performance of the database.