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The data base concept derives from early military on-line systems, and was not originally associated with the specific technologies of modern data base management systems. While the idea of an integrated data base, or "bucket of acts," spread into corporate data processing and management circles during the early 1960s, it was seldom realized in practice. File-processing packages were among the very first distributed as supported products, but only in the late 1960s were they first called "data base management systems," in large part through the actions of the Data Base Task Group of the Committee on Data Systems Languages (CODASYL). As the DBMS concept spread, the data base itself was effectively redefined as the informational content of a packaged DBMS. Throughout the process, managerial descriptions of the data base as a flexible and integrated repository for all corporate data stood in sharp contrast with the useful but limited nature of actual systems.

Today, administering a database has become a very big deal as the Internet is nothing but a humongous set of databases. A data base management system is a very complex piece of system software. A single DBMS can manage multiple data bases, each one usually consisting of many different tables full of data. The DBMS includes mechanisms for application programs to store, retrieve and modify this data and also allows people to query it interactively to answer specific questions. Specialists, known as Data Base Administrators (DBAs) control the operation of the DBMS and are responsible for the creation of new data bases and the definition of the table structures used to store data. One of the most important features of the DBMS is its ability to shield the people and programs using the data from the details of its physical storage. Because all access to stored data is mediated through the DBMS, a data base can be restructured or moved to a different computer without disrupting the programs written to use it. The DBMS polices access to the stored data, giving access only to tables and records for which a given user has been authorized.

Hence, Database Administration becomes the function of managing and maintaining database management systems (DBMS) software. DBMS software such as Oracle, IBM DB2 and Microsoft SQL Server have an ongoing requirement for their database management. Therefore, corporations using DBMS software often hire specialized IT (Information Technology) personnel called Database Administrators for this purpose and get their work going.

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[Zoltan Mesko](#) - About Author:

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