

Step-by-Step Backup and Disaster Recovery for Website Owners using *phpMyAdmin*



By Sunny Tan

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INTRODUCTION

In every business that you can ever imagine, database is the integral part of the whole architecture of the business. Compromising the integrity of such important backbone of your business is the vital sign towards the collapse or the downfall of your profitability, if any such occurrence of disasters such as database failure, data corruptions or even external hacking attacks happens to you.

Many of the online businesses, which I observe, are built upon the foundation of creating or maintaining the growth of their databases. Your customers records, email lists, e-commerce, forums, membership sites, newsletters are all the important aspects of the continued success of the online businesses. Even the article directories, which are vastly booming up these days, are built upon databases.

Ever heard of “You gotta build your list! You gotta build your list!” phrases which often used to death in the Internet Marketing arena? Some business owners have gone to the extent of spending thousands and thousands of money on creating and collecting customer information and records, where some could have been spending years alone just to build the list. Just like what Jimmy D Brown has mentioned in his listfortraffic, that your success of your whole businesses are centered upon creating vast targeted reach of traffic and subscriber lists.

With these mind-boggling huge amount of time and resources that went into creating a large customer focused databases, don't be surprised that your entire hard-earned subscriber list in your databases can be wiped out in mere seconds.

Yes, as much as you would bit your nails and cross your fingers so this would not happen to you, but the fact is, it can happen to anyone, and that includes you. Since most of the online business owners rely on their web hosting for their database management and list building systems like auto responders, not knowing how to back or restore your own data will simply leave your business at stake, in the hands of the web hosting administrators.

While some of the great web hosting out there boast of their excellence in providing the best resources and commitment to ensure your database integrity, still, your business is dependant on those who maintain your database. It's a no brainer when anyone can learn how to backup and restore using these simple steps, which I'm going to outline to you.

I've basically divided this guide into 2 main chapters: BACKUP and RESTORATION, using common web server control management tool, Cpanel. Follow these basic instructions and you'll be able to perform these tasks with ease in your online businesses.



Sunny Tan

<http://www.tips.com.my>

BACKUP

1.1 Backup Whole Database From Server

Throughout the whole lesson, I would presume that you would have a PHP hosting with [phpMYAdmin](#) installed. It's basically a open source database management system written in PHP. In order words, you will need this to manage your website data which is running on [MySQL](#) database.

I'll try to go through the fundamentals in creating and restoring successful backups of the data from your website as simple as possible for the benefit of all. But if you still don't know what in the world I'm saying, then either you learn all about them through the links I've provided above or you've just downloaded a wrong book. ☺

Basically, to get successful backups from your server into say, your local PC, you will need 2 things.

- 1) Know where to find phpMyAdmin
- 2) How to use the “Export” function provided in phpMyAdmin.

Read the following stuff below and I'll let you know the details.

1.1.1 Accessing PHPMYADMIN From Server Control Panel

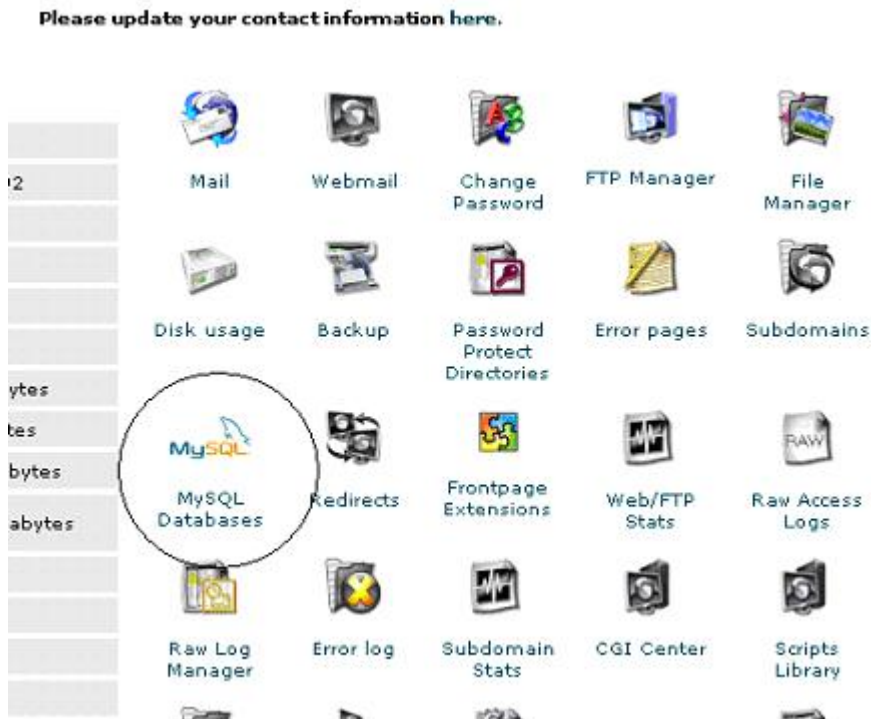


Figure 1: Locating MySQL Database control icon.

- 1) Access your control panel of your server. I'm assuming that you have [CpanelX V10](#) installed on your server. This is basically the site configuration and management software application. It's like your operating system (Windows XP, Linux etc), which you will need to when you're running your web hosting.
- 2) There are quite a few other control panels with wide variety of options for you to tinkle around but the process is almost the same.
- 3) To start out, click on the "MySQL Databases" Icon (Figure 1) and you will be brought to the next page where at the bottom of it you would see the link called "phpMyAdmin". (Figure 2). Click on the link.

Users: [Delete](#)

UserName:

Password:

Access Hosts:

Host (% wildcard is allowed):

[phpMyAdmin](#)

can use phpMyAdmin to administrate your MySQL databases in a web based environment.

Figure 2: You'll find the phpMyAdmin link at the bottom of the page.

4) You'll be brought to the main phpMyAdmin interface like figure 3 below



Figure 3: Main phpMyAdmin console.

1.1.2 Using phpMyAdmin Export function

PhpMyadmin has provided a nice interface for you to do your data export operation in a complete hassle free environment. Just a couple of clicks here and there and off you go.

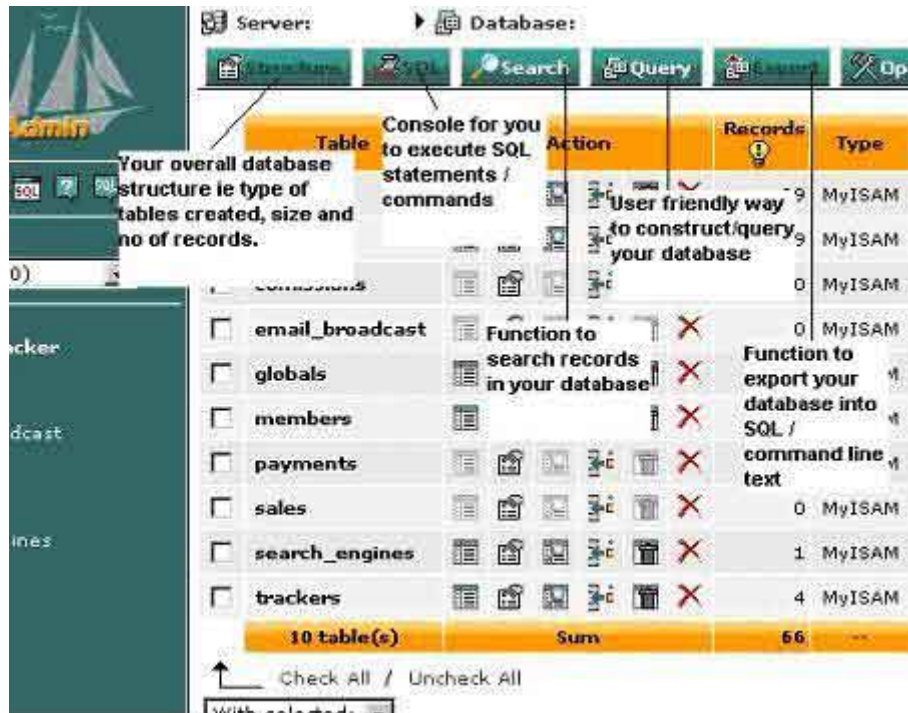


Figure 4: The main tabs of phpMyAdmin console with the corresponding functions

- 1) Go to the “Export” tab as shown on the figure below.

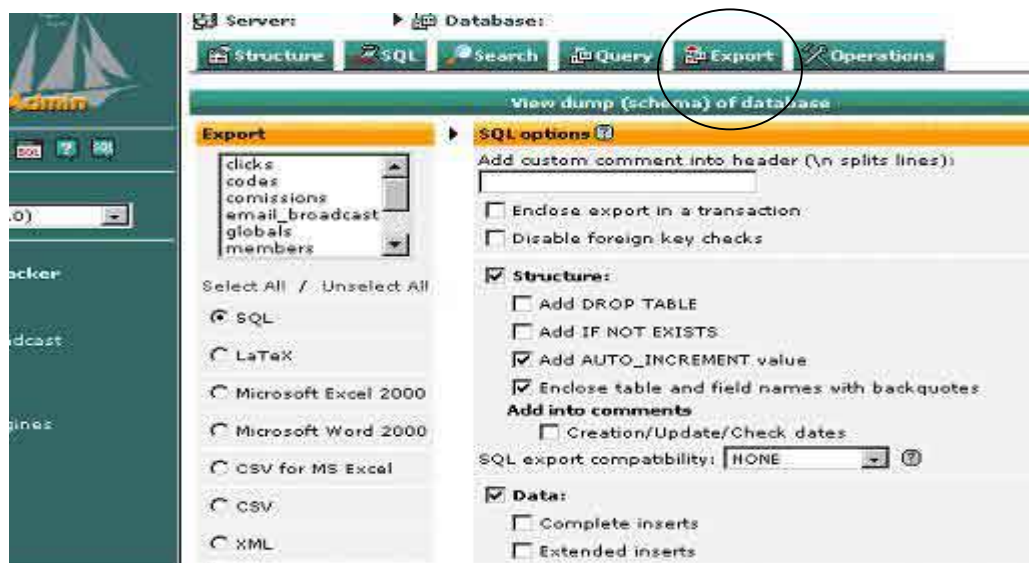


Figure 5: Location of “Export” Tab.

- 2) Make sure you select the options as shown on the screen shot. Don't worry about the meaning of those. Just stick to what I've shown to you.
- 3) Make sure that you are backing up the entire database (All tables). One way to check this is to manually count the number of tables in your database and compare them to the “**Export**” list as shown on the figure below.



Figure 6: List of tables shown on your control panel, which are ready to be exported.

- 4) Click on “**Select All**” link and all the tables in “**Export**” list will be highlighted. (Figure 7)



Figure 7: Highlighting all tables to be exported.

- 5) On the bottom of the page click on “**Save as file**” and click on the tab which says “**Go**”. (Figure 8)



Figure 8: Clicking on the “Save as file” option and click go when ready to export.

- 6) You will be prompted to save the file in your local pc. (Figure 9)



Figure 9: Save as file dialog box

- 7) Click “**Save**” and choose the appropriate location that you would like to save the file to (Figure 10).

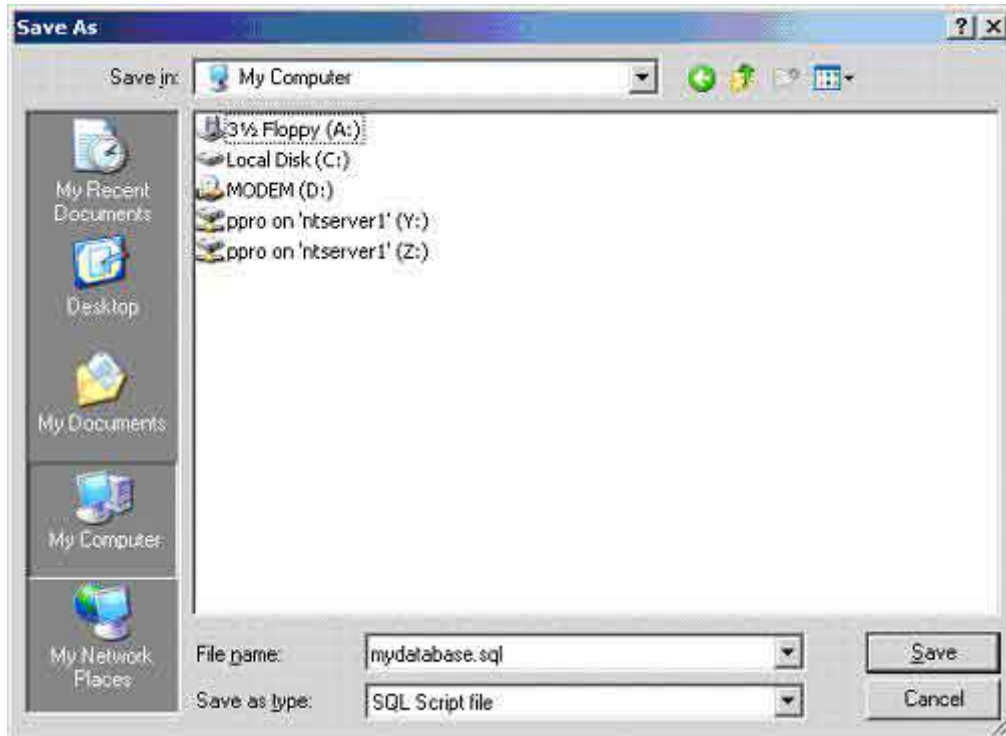


Figure 10: Choose the appropriate location in your pc to save the backup file to.

- 8) Notice that this file is saved as .sql extension. When you open the file with Wordpad, you'll see a bunch of SQL command line statements. These statements are necessary to reconstruct the whole database tables as well as the data, which are contained inside those tables.
- 9) *Do take note when you are restoring this database file into your server, make sure that you are creating a new database with no tables in it. Otherwise you would receive an error message informing you that the database already contained the tables, which you are going to recreate. More on this later.*
- 10) Now you have all the backup copy of your whole server database in your pc, it's time for you to keep it somewhere safe. You can either burn a data CD out of this or simply put them in your thumb drive or something like that.

1.2 Backup Selected Table From Server

- 1) Backing up selected table from your database is almost the same as backing up the whole database except that during this time you would choose only the table that you are going to backup.
- 2) Refer to Figure 7. Instead of selecting all the tables of your database, you would just select any one of your preferred table to back up. (Figure 11)

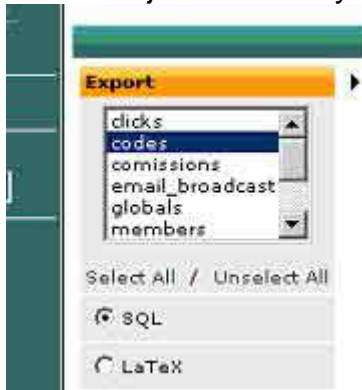


Figure 11: Select a table to back up

- 3) In the figure above, I just select the table that I would like to backup. In this case, the table is called “codes”.

1.3 Import into Local PC

There are times when you would want to view the database on your local PC or you may have applications like [Article Dashboard](#) , [Article Site Builder](#) or even content generator like [Article System](#), which are currently running on it. Importing the database (the one that you have backup from the server) into your local PC would only require you to type a command line.

Basically you would type in MySQL command lines in your local PC just like when you are typing DOS commands.

Since most of the command lines found in Mysql itself are quite complicated (They have loads of options for each command), I will only present you the most basic and the frequent ones that I always used to restore / import back into my local PC.

Here is the command line that I frequently use to import the MySQL data into my local pc database.

mysql -u {database username} -p -D {database name} < {location of file}

Legend:

{database username} = The username you would use to login into your local MySQL database.

{database name}= The name of the database which you are going to restore the backup file to.

{location of file} = the location to the backup file you saved to.

Example of usage:

Let's say I have a database called "mydata" already created on my local PC, my database username as "john" and the location of my backup file is "C:\back.sql" (This is the file you would save from your server). Here are the steps that I would do.

- 1) I would go to my Windows XP run command and type "cmd". This will lead you into Windows DOS environment.



Figure 12: Logging into DOS prompt.

- 2) Go to the path of your MySQL folder to access the sub folder called bin (Figure 13).



Figure 13: Path of MySQL version 4.1

- 3) My version of Mysql is 4.1. For previous version, you would only need to go c:\mysql.



Figure 14: Path of MySQL (previous version).

- 4) Press Enter and all the SQLs in back.sql will be executed. In other words, the original tables in your server database will be recreated in your local PC, with all the corresponding data. By now, you should be done with your import process.
- 5) To view the data on your local PC, you can download and install [MySQL administrator](#). The interface looks like the one below.

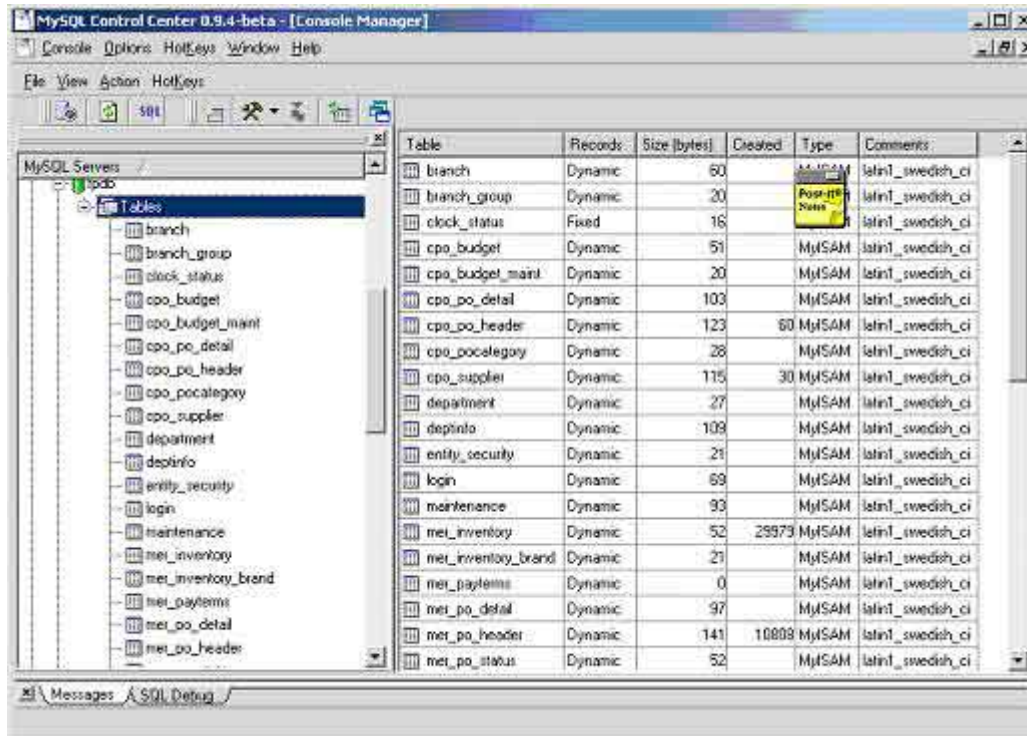


Figure 15: MySQL Administrator / Control Center – Graphical User Interface to administer MySQL data in your PC.

RESTORATION

2.1 Restore Whole Database To Server

- 1) Log on to your Cpanel again. Go to the phpMyAdmin control panel.
- 2) Make sure you have recreated a blank database for you to restore back the tables, otherwise you will encounter errors.
- 3) This is because the backup file, which you created earlier, would presume that you have a blank database to restore to.
- 4) To override this setting and you would want the script to replace any existing tables as well as inserting the backup sets of data, all you need to do is to enable the options “**Add DROP TABLE**” and “**Add IF NOT EXISTS**” during the backup process you did on **Chapter 1.1.2**. Refer to figure below

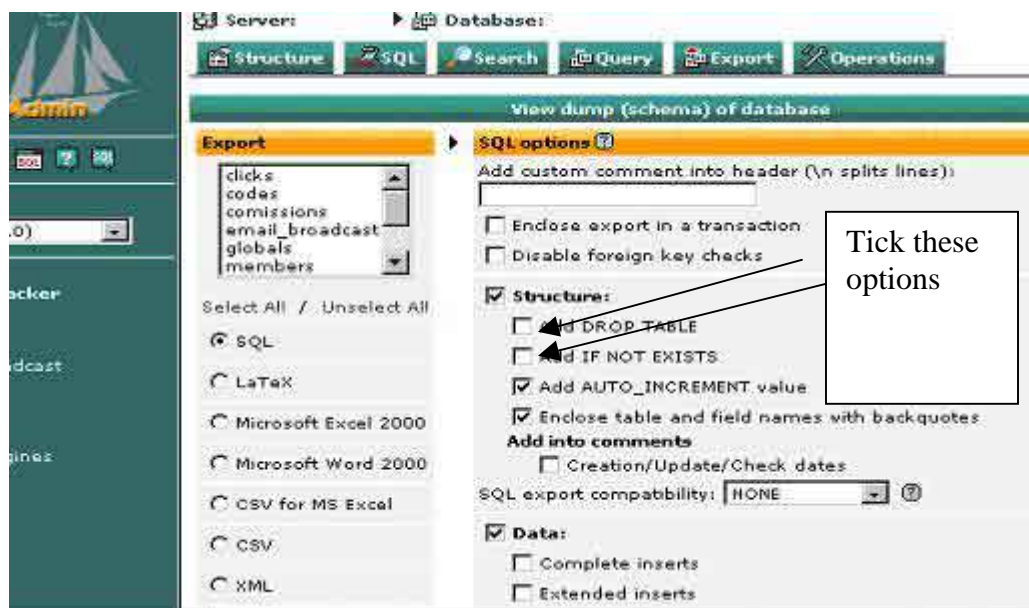


Figure 16: Options to replace any tables during restoration.



Figure 17: When your database is empty you will see the something like this.

5) Click on the “SQL” tab.

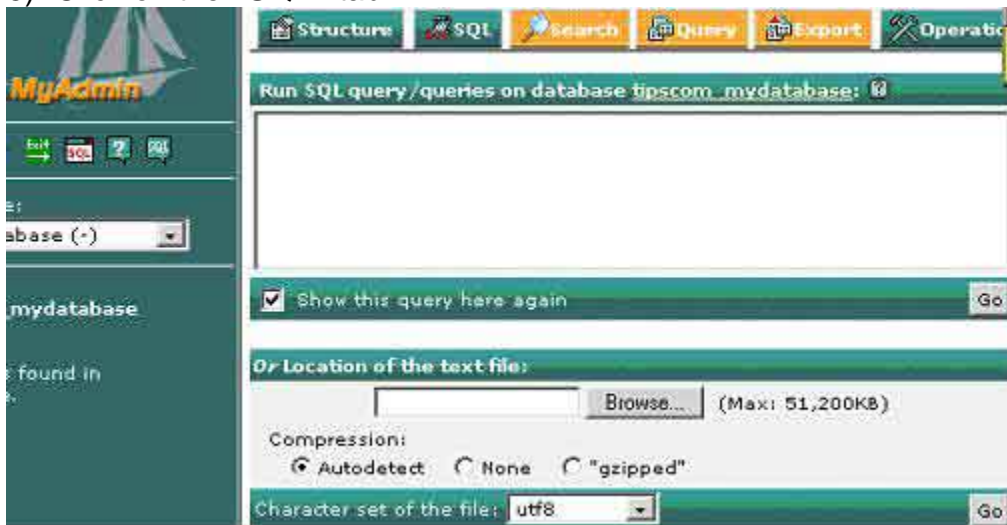


Figure 18: SQL operation interface.

6) Click on the “Browse” button and select the backup file where you have saved.

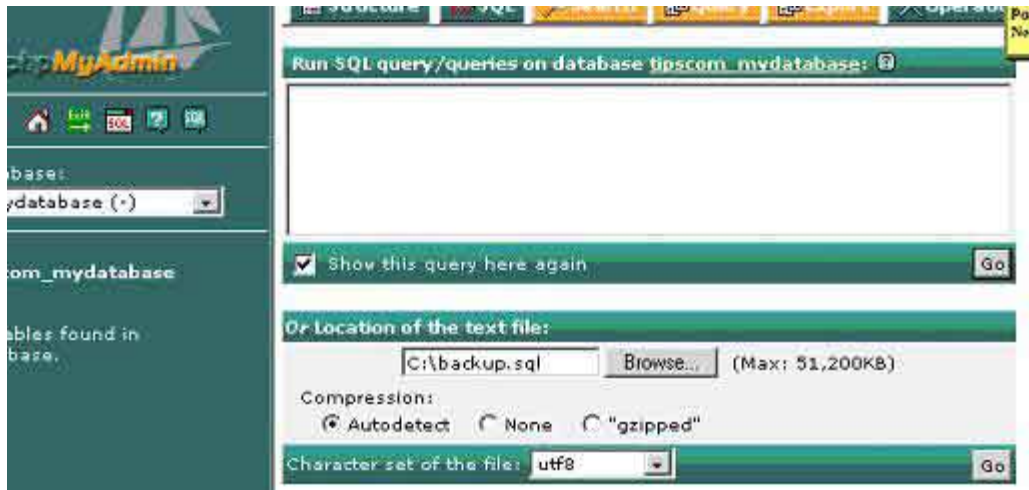


Figure 19: After selecting the backup file you wish to restore, click ok and the filename will be displayed in the field as shown above.

- 7) Click “Go” button when you are ready to upload the file.
- 8) Once completed, you will see the following message displayed.

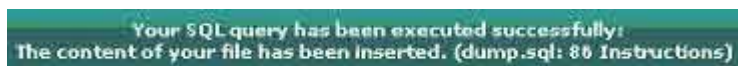


Figure 20: Successful restoration process.

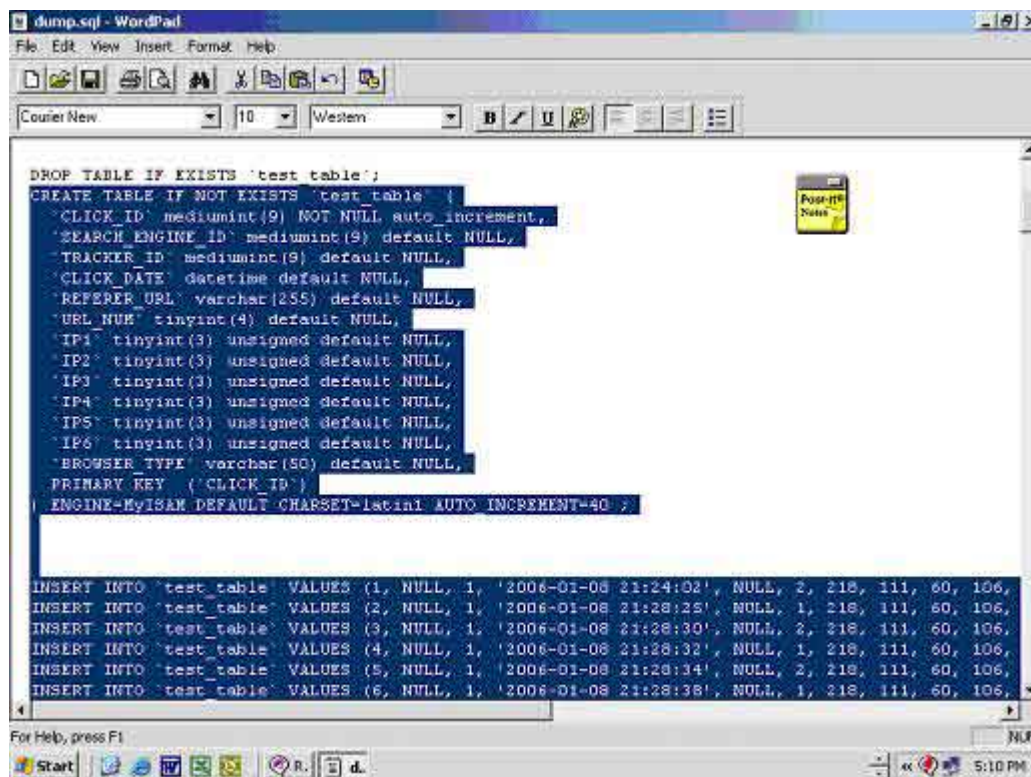
- 9) The list of tables created will be shown to you on the left hand panel as well.

2.2 Restore Selected Table to Server

At times you would just need to restore only selected table, instead of going through the process of recreating the whole tables in your database.

There are 2 ways for you to restore only selected table to the server.

- 1) During the backup from the server to your local PC, instead of selecting the whole database to backup, you should only select the table that you wish to backup. After that, the process of restoring the table to the server would be the same as restoring the whole database to the server.
- 2) You can edit the backup file. Locate the corresponding SQL statements that create the particular table as well as the INSERT statements. Highlight and copy them (Figure 20) and finally paste the command lines onto the phpMyAdmin query console (Figure 21)



```
DROP TABLE IF EXISTS `test_table`;
CREATE TABLE IF NOT EXISTS `test_table` (
  `CLICK_ID` mediumint(9) NOT NULL auto_increment,
  `SEARCH_ENGINE_ID` mediumint(9) default NULL,
  `TRACKER_ID` mediumint(9) default NULL,
  `CLICK_DATE` datetime default NULL,
  `REFERER_URL` varchar(255) default NULL,
  `URL_NUM` tinyint(4) default NULL,
  `IP1` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `IP2` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `IP3` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `IP4` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `IP5` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `IP6` tinyint(3) unsigned default NULL,
  `BROWSER_TYPE` varchar(50) default NULL,
  PRIMARY KEY (`CLICK_ID`)
) ENGINE=MyISAM DEFAULT CHARSET=latin1 AUTO INCREMENT=40 ;

INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (1, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:24:02', NULL, 2, 218, 111, 60, 106,
INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (2, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:28:25', NULL, 1, 218, 111, 60, 106,
INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (3, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:28:30', NULL, 2, 218, 111, 60, 106,
INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (4, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:28:32', NULL, 1, 218, 111, 60, 106,
INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (5, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:28:34', NULL, 2, 218, 111, 60, 106,
INSERT INTO `test_table` VALUES (6, NULL, 1, '2006-01-08 21:28:38', NULL, 1, 218, 111, 60, 106,
```

Figure 21: The SQL statements in your backup file.

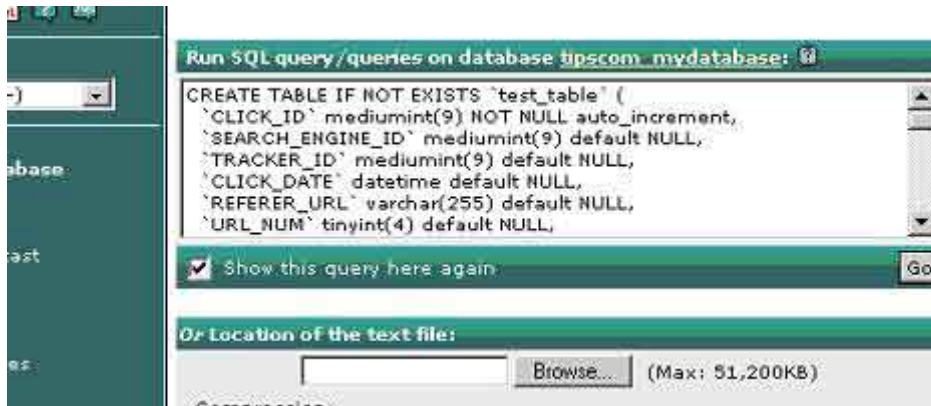


Figure 22: phpMyAdmin query console.

- 3) Click on the “Go” button when you are ready.
- 4) Once done, you will see the message like the one below

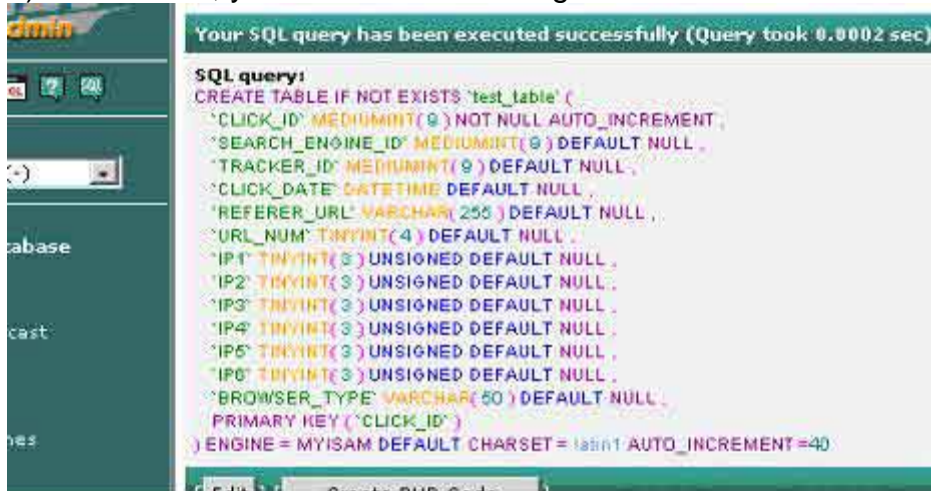


Figure 23: Successful creating of your backup tables.

2.3 Restore From Local PC To Server

There are times when you would need to export the data from the MySQL database on your local PC into the server. For example, if you were performing a certain sets of data conversion of data patching on large volume of records using your own customized scripts, you would basically need to reflect these data on the production environment ie your server.

To restore data from local PC to the server, just follow these sets of instructions

- 1) Click on the Run command and type the command “**cmd**”.



Figure 24: Logging into DOS environment.

- 2) This will bring you to the DOS console.
- 3) Go to the path where your MySQL resides. In my case, it's on c:\program files\mysql\mysql server 4.1\bin

- 4) Type the following command.

mysqldump -u {database username} -p {database name} -r {filename}

Legend:

{database username} = The username you would use to login into your local MySQL database.

{database name} = The name of the database which you are going to restore the backup file to.

{filename} = the name of the file and the location to the backup file you saved to.

- 5) For example, if you want to export data from a database called “mydata” and wish to export the whole database into a file called “bac.sql”, then you would type the following command as highlighted in the figure below.



Figure 25: Exporting database from MySQL which resides on local PC.

- 6) In the example above, the database from your local PC will be exported as a file called “bac.sql” and will be saved into your hard drive in C:\
- 7) You would then use this file and import this file back into your server the same way you would do when you are restoring data as shown in the previous examples. **(Chapter 2.1)**
- 8) The example shown above is used when you are trying to export the whole MySQL database from your local PC. The steps to just export a table from the database would be the same except that this time you would add the additional table name just like the command below.

**mysqldump -u {database username} -p {database name} {table name} -r
{filename}**

Legend:

{table name} = The name of the table you would like to export from your local
MySQL database.

That's it. That's really how simple it is to be able to perform backup and restore operation of your website data. You can perform this every other day or even everyday as your website grows bigger.

This is especially true if you are running data intensive systems on your website like article directory or forums. Don't be surprise if you hear people backup up couple of times in a day!

Well, if you are lazy like me who would rather backup my site automatically not only to my own site but span across multiple sites, I urge you to check out this software called [Database Backup Generator](#).

A friend of mine, Michael Ambrosio, has a video to show you how he could wipe out his entire mailing list and restore it from other backup site in a matter of seconds. You can view the video [here](#).

Last but not least, I hope you've learnt couple of things about backup and restore process using phpMyAdmin. If there's anything else you would like to know, you can always “find” me at my website <http://www.tips.com.my>.

For your success,



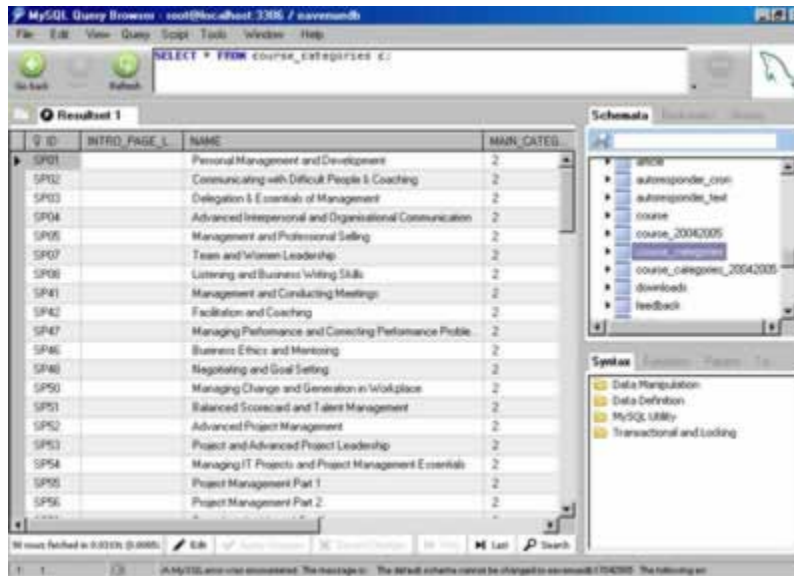
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Recommended Tools

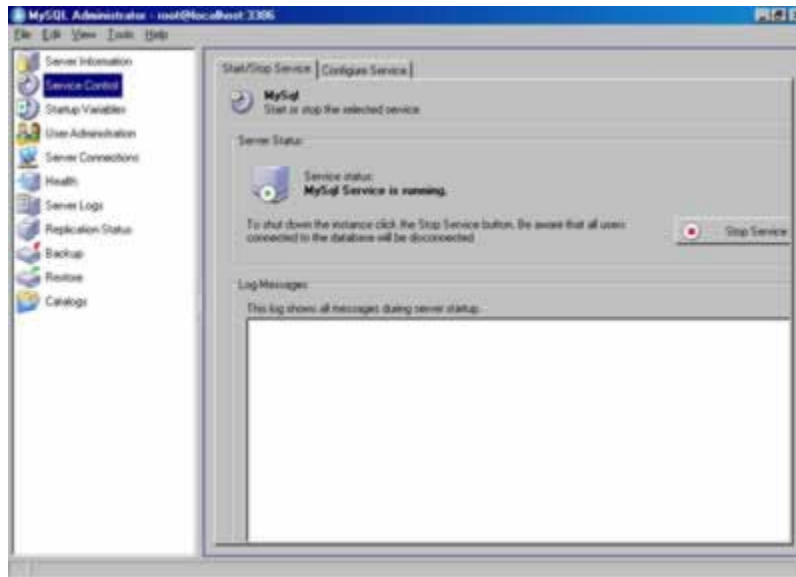


[MySQL Query Browser](#)- A newer version of MySQL Control Center. With this tool, you can simply create and execute your SQL commands in the control panel. You'll see the results of your tables in seconds. If you feeling a bit slack in your SQL commands, there are already tools available to help you construct your SQL commands.

Benefits

- You can use the Query Toolbar to query your database tables.
- All of the tables in your database can be easily viewed in Database Explorer.
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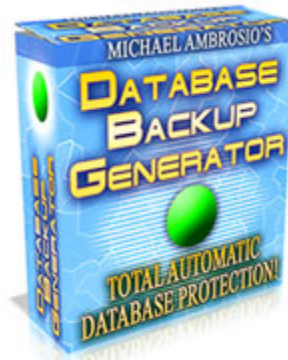


[MySQL Administrator](#) – Powerful visual administration console that enables you to easily administer your MySQL environment and gain significantly better visibility into how your databases are operating.

Benefits

- Easy to manage with simple user interface for your backups and restore. This means you can forget about the mysql backup and restore DOS command lines.
- All the things you need to know about your local pc MySQL are presented in one main page via server information panel

[Download MySQL Administrator now.](#)



[Database Backup Generator](#) – Hassle-free backup system created for website owners having newsletters, membership sites, E-commerce sites or even forums which are running on MySQL databases.

Benefits

- You can auto backup daily, weekly or even monthly of your databases even if they reside different servers. Imagine being able to **perform backups of all your website databases all in one location!**
- Forget about logging in your server to download the backups. This piece of software will **send you the download link of your backups straight into your mailbox**. You can even set it to send to multiple email accounts in case the link did not get through your mailbox.
- The owner of the system, Michael Ambrosio, has even gone up the full length to give you the full video tutorials to walk you through the process of installation, set up and maintenance.
- You can restore your backups immediately just a click of a button. You can view how [Michael restore his mailing list database in a couple of seconds](#).

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