CHAPTER 6

Using SQL Server 6.5

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SQL Server and Microsoft Access result in not being able to just jump from one system to another very easily. Consequently, you need to understand how to use SQL Server.

SQL Server can be administered using text-based SQL commands. These commands can be extremely difficult to master and are aimed at users that have extensive knowledge of the system as well as a full understanding of what these commands are capable of (i.e., trained database administrators). Fortunately for us Access users, SQL Server has graphical interfaces to perform many of these administration tasks. These interfaces can make administrative functions accessible for just about anyone. Because these utilities can handle most of what we need to do to migrate to and maintain an application in SQL Server, I will concentrate on the graphical, rather than on the textual commands, that are available to you.

No single chapter can do the administrative functionality in SQL Server justice. Because there is so much that can be done within SQL Server, I can only hope to introduce you to some of the basic concepts you will need to know for your migration. This chapter introduces you to the core concepts of how to manage the different objects within SQL Server 6.5 and how this management pertains to you, the developer.

Using SQL Server 6.5

The graphical administration utility for SQL Server 6.5 is called SQL Enterprise Manager, and it can be found in your SQL Server Utilities group on your Start menu. When you start Enterprise Manager, the application automatically opens the Server Manager window (see Figure 6-1), showing you a list of each of the server groups you have created and all of the servers registered within each group.

To see the different categories of administration within a particular server, you can expand the server name by clicking on the plus (+) sign beside it, as you would with any other tree view component in Windows. For a description of each area of administration and instructions on how to add your server if it is not already listed, see “Using Enterprise Manager (SQL 6.5)” in Chapter 1.

Within Enterprise Manager, you have the ability to create all of the objects that your database requires. You also have the ability to fully administer your servers and any databases that they contain.
Managing Devices

Before you can create a database or back up an existing database, you must create the devices that will house these databases and backup objects. Devices are operating system-level files that contain a database, its logs, or a database backup. There are two types of devices that you will find in SQL Server 6.5:

- **Database devices** are used to hold database and transaction logs. Each database or transaction log can be spread over multiple devices. A single device can also house multiple databases.

- **Dump devices** are used to store database backups. A single backup device can house multiple backups from multiple databases.

When you create a device, SQL Server creates a physical file on disk according to the specifications that you provide. The size of a device, as far as SQL Server's automated tools are concerned, is static and can only be changed with user intervention. Although you can enlarge a device if necessary, you cannot reduce the size of a device. You should ensure that you make the devices large enough for the data being housed on them, but not so large that they interfere with other system requirements. For a complete discussion on choosing a device size, see “Device Selection” in Chapter 4.