

The name of the textbox (customername) and the value entered in the textbox (Fred) are now visible on the URL line. Actually, customername is now a parameter and Fred is now the value the parameter holds. This is the result of using the GET process.

When we click the Google Search button or the Search button in our simple example, the requested information is sent via the GET HTTP process. All information (and variables) needed for the receiving program are sent on the actual URL line to be received by the program on the web server that will process the initial request.

Why does the Google search engine send information via GET instead of POST (which would have hidden the information)?

The main reason is to save server memory. Just think of the millions of requests that Google has for information. If all of these requests resided in memory, the servers would soon crash. Also, since the user is doing a “public” search for information, there is no reason to hide the information. In later chapters, we will discover how to read both GET and POST parameters within PHP programs.

However, for now let’s get back to our discussion of Apache, PHP, and DBMS.

PHP can access information from many types of DBMS systems, including Oracle and SQL Server. However, the most popular combination (as mentioned already) is to pair PHP with MySQL. I bet at this point you can guess why? Yes, it’s open source and free. MySQL is also one of the easier DBMS systems to use.

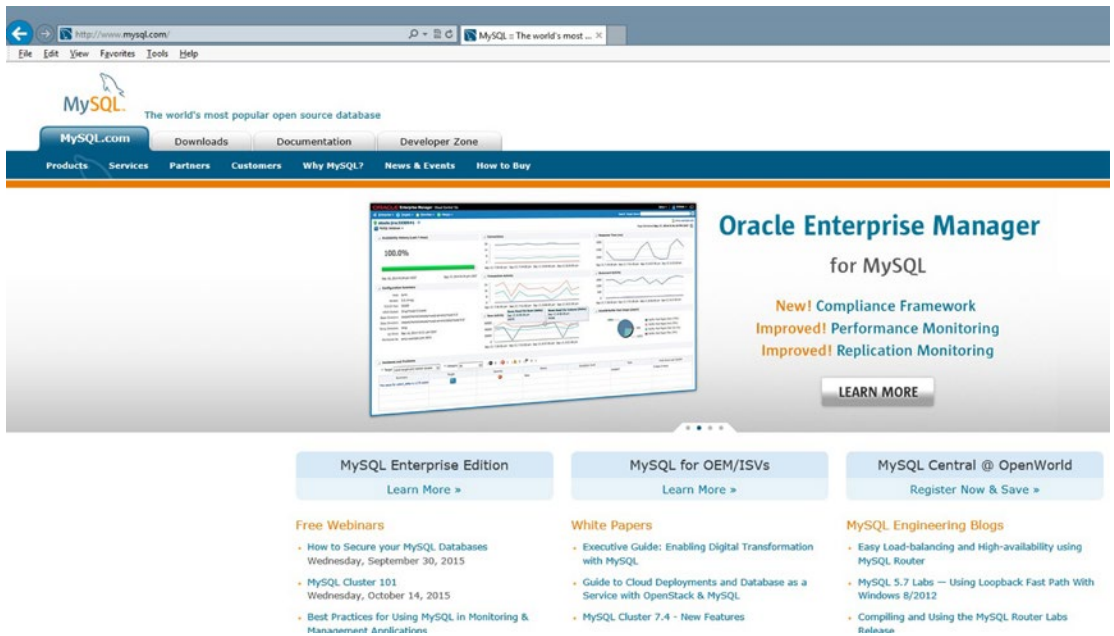


Figure 1-20. www.mysql.com (09/24/15)

Just like all the open source products we have discussed, the user can go to the official web site (www.mysql.com) to download the latest versions. Also, as you can probably guess, you can join in on the fun of helping to develop new versions of MySQL and related products. Documentation of current and several previous versions are available for download. The documentation is pretty intense and not for the weak of mind or the beginner. Also, as you probably are tired of reading it is not recommended that you download a new version of MySQL individually until you have more experience. Stick with the WAMP, LAMP, and MAMP packages, at least for now.