

WHAT IS TESTTRAX?

TestTrax is a methodology that allows tracking, analysis, and reporting of standardized student test scores. It crosses multiple years, allowing the establishment of growth and performance trends for a single student, as well as classroom, school, and district groupings of students.

TestTrax is based on a concept known as a “data warehouse”, which is a computerized database of information that is already subdivided and summarized in many possible ways. This allows instantaneous access to information that might otherwise take many hours to compile by hand.

This wide range of pre-calculated information takes much more computer storage space than would a single grouping of test scores requiring the calculation of summaries and averages as requested. The TestTrax data is therefore only available on large storage media such as a MS Windows NT Server SQL database.

This database starts with the information a district receives on computer tape, diskette, or CD-ROM from a testing service (such as Riverside Publishing for the ITBS test or Harcourt for the SAT-10). It is then combined with information provided to TestTrax by a school district such as student demographic information, classroom teacher information, and school data. This insures the accuracy of the information and allows true multi-year tracking. It then goes through a very comprehensive and intensive process to actually construct the variety of databases available in TestTrax. This requires an amount of computer processing power not available on a personal computer, and therefore is run on a large mainframe computer system. In fact, an average district with 15,000 students tested will generate a database with well over 2 million data records.

This database is then compressed and optimized to maximize storage use and transferred back to a web server environment where it can be easily accessed by the TestTrax software within a browser.

HOW DO I GET THIS INFORMATION TO MY USERS?

As indicated before, there are a couple of options available to implement TestTrax:

1. LOCAL WEB-BASED SOLUTION. The TestTrax database is much more robust in a file server SQL Server environment, where many more users can access the information simultaneously, and data access is much faster. For locations running Microsoft's NT Server, Windows 2000, or Windows 2003 Server, Internet Information Server, and SQL Server, the TestTrax database and web-hosting software can actually be loaded at your location, where it can be accessed from any networked computer with an Internet browser (Internet Explorer 4.01+ or Netscape Navigator 4.0+). This "Intranet" solution provides access to a wider base of user machines (PC or Macintosh), with the higher speeds of local network connectivity. Plus, there is no client software to install, and the data remains securely within the confines of your own network environment.
2. TESTTRAX WEB-BASED SOLUTION. For districts not wishing to host their own web-site, TestTrax can actually store your database on our own web site, making it available to any authorized users via the Internet. This allows for the added benefit of making data available to users regardless of their location, and database and software updates are available immediately with no intervention needed by the district. Our web servers are in a secure, fireproof environment with redundant connections to the Internet. Secure communication to the web browser using the SSL encrypted protocols is supported.

HARDWARE AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

For each of the TestTrax solutions, the following specifications must be met:

1. LOCAL WEB-BASED SOLUTION

Server

Microsoft NT Server 4.0 / 2000 / 2003
Microsoft Internet Information Server 4/5/6
Microsoft Active Server Page support
Microsoft Front Page 98/2000 Extensions
Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 / 2000
Up-to-date Service Packs on above
5 mb storage per 1,000 students per year

Client

Network connectivity
Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 +
Netscape Navigator 4.0 +

2. TESTTRAX WEB-BASED SOLUTION

Internet access
Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 +
Netscape Navigator 4.0 +