



## My Skepticism About the Semantic Layer

---

Let us be direct: the market for natural language querying of databases is tiny. Here is why:

**Technical users don't need it.** A DBA or developer who knows SQL has no interest in going through an AI intermediary that might generate a suboptimal query. SQL is a powerful declarative language, and its users master it.

**Non-technical users have BI tools.** Business analysts use Metabase, Looker, Tableau, Power BI. These tools offer a visual interface far more intuitive than a SQL chatbot.

**Accuracy is a problem.** A SQL query must be exact. An "approximately right" SQL query produces wrong results. LLMs are excellent for text generation, but generating precise SQL on complex schemas remains a challenge. An error in a WHERE or a JOIN can produce radically different results without the user realizing it.

**Security is a nightmare.** Giving an LLM the ability to generate and execute SQL queries in production is opening Pandora's box. Even with guardrails, the risk of a destructive query or data leak is real.

## The Real Value of SkySQL

---

While the semantic layer leaves me skeptical, the reacquisition of SkySQL has real value that is not sufficiently highlighted in the marketing discourse.

### Serverless Multi-Cloud

SkySQL offers serverless MariaDB deployment on AWS, GCP, and Azure. Scaling is automatic: you only pay for consumed resources. For startups and businesses with variable workloads, this is a massive argument.

Serverless eliminates infrastructure management: no servers to provision, no patches to apply, no backups to configure. It is the "I want a database, not an infrastructure project" approach.

### Operations Automation

SkySQL automates the most time-consuming DBA operations: version upgrades, replica management, failover, vertical and horizontal scaling. For a small business without a dedicated DBA, this is the difference between a well-managed database and a ticking time bomb.

## Integration with the MariaDB Ecosystem

By reintegrating SkySQL into MariaDB plc, the company can offer total consistency between the on-premise edition (MariaDB Enterprise Server) and the cloud edition (SkySQL). Same engine, same compatibility, transparent migration.

## What This Means for MariaDB's Strategy

---

The SkySQL reacquisition is part of a broader strategy. MariaDB plc is positioning itself as a complete data platform provider:

- **Community Server:** free, open-source, for evaluation and small projects
- **Enterprise Server:** commercial license, with Galera, MaxScale and support
- **SkySQL:** managed DBaaS, serverless, multi-cloud

This is the classic triptych of the database market: open-source, on-premise commercial, managed cloud. Oracle does it with MySQL HeatWave. Amazon does it with Aurora. MariaDB is following the same playbook.

## My Verdict

---

The reacquisition of SkySQL is a good strategic decision for MariaDB plc. Managed cloud is the fastest-growing market segment in databases. Not being present would be suicidal.

However, the marketing around SkyCopilot and AI seems like noise to me. The real value proposition of SkySQL is:

1. **Serverless MariaDB** without infrastructure management
2. **Multi-cloud** without vendor lock-in
3. **DBA operations automation**

It is less sexy than "talk to your database in natural language," but it is infinitely more useful.

---

This article was originally published on [Medium](#).