



Ad Val Advisor

The Newsletter
for Wyoming
Property Tax
Appraisers

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Property Tax Division Newsletter

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The Future of the NOV

I am sure that everyone would agree that this year's Notices of Value (NOV) have been a barrel of fun, especially for those coming on to the new CAMA system. It's probably not nearly as exciting as the appeal process that follows it, but a challenge nonetheless. However, in our collective rush to get a workable NOV out of RealWare, we solved one set of problems and inadvertently may have created another issue.

This year the Technical Services Group helped with the creation of an ad hoc NOV for RealWare for several counties. Our overall goal in assisting in the creation of this report was to help compensate for data that was not converted into RealWare. The missing data, while not available out of the State

mainframe, was necessary to produce a statutorily compliant NOV. This data included last years values, the prior year mill levy, special districts, etc.

With the very capable help of David Ray, we approached the NOV's like the old fast food burger commercial, "Have It Your Way." Subsequently, each NOV that we helped produce for the counties contained all the necessary data and



then some. Moreover, each of the reports we created was then tweaked and formatted to the individual

counties' specifications.

In there lies the rub, CCI has agreed to build and integrate *one* Wyoming NOV into its RealWare application. Therefore, it will be important for the Wyoming RealWare Users Group to come to some sort of agreement on a single NOV document. With the work already completed this year, the Technical Services Group has plenty of examples to get the process started.

Once the DOR and the Wyoming RealWare Users Group have one agreed upon format, CCI will build the report and place it into RealWare. This, however, must be completed no later than early Fall 2006 to coincide with the completion of the CCI contract.

It is then each county's choice, on whether to use the Wyoming NOV document or to create an ad hoc document. However, if the county chooses to use an ad hoc

document, the design and maintenance of that document will be the responsibility of the county.

David Chapman
Technical Services Manager
Property Tax Division

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Quote of the Month

"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."

Alfred North Whitehead
British Mathematician and Philosopher
1861-1947

~

A 3-Part Introduction to Microsoft's Popular Database Application

Part II: Working With Microsoft Access

For those of you that may have missed last month's newsletter article, we are in the midst of a 3-part introduction to Microsoft Access. This installment, "Part II: Working with Microsoft Access," will focus on the introductory technical elements of table design.

Let us pick up where we left off by discussing MS Access tables in greater detail. In working with databases, the table is probably the most important object to understand. After all, the table structure is the foundation of the database. In MS Access, there are three different ways to create a table: in *Design View*, using an MS Access Wizard, or by simply entering data in *Datasheet View*. At this point, it is important to understand that there are 2 different views available when working with MS Access tables: *Design View* (as seen in Figure 1.1) and *Datasheet View* (as seen in Figure 1.2).

The first method to create a table would be in *Design View*. As seen in Figure 1.1, MS Access' table design view allows the user to enter the field name and *data type*. The data type refers to how MS Access stores the data and in what format. For example, data can be stored in a text, number or date/time format. Table Design View also allows the user to set many of the properties associated with that data type. I.e. in Figure 1.1 you can see that under the text data type the user can adjust things like field size, format and a variety of parameters. The field size property allows the user to control how many characters can be stored in the field. The format property allows

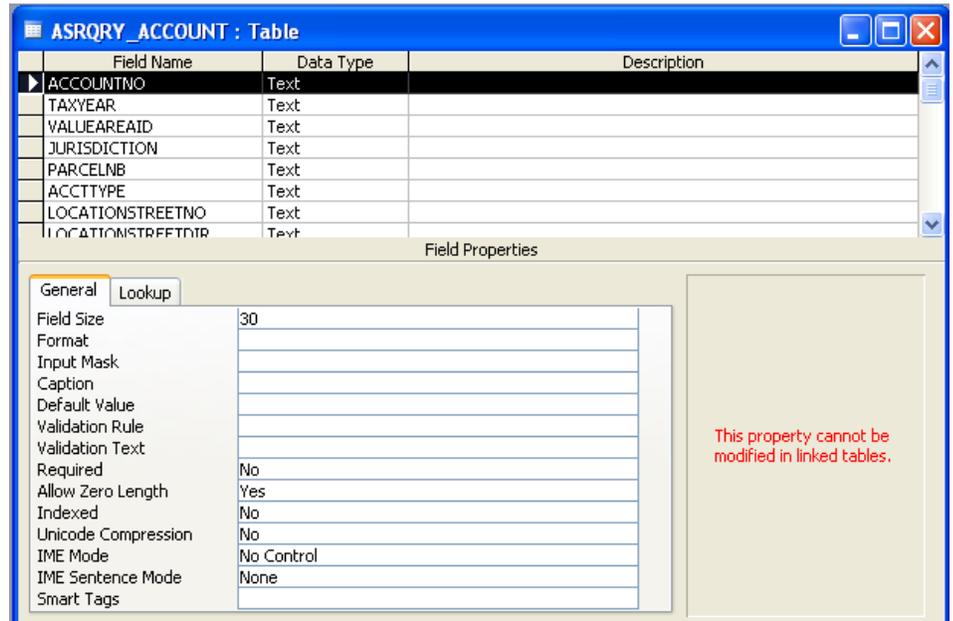


Figure 1.1 – MS Access Table in Design View

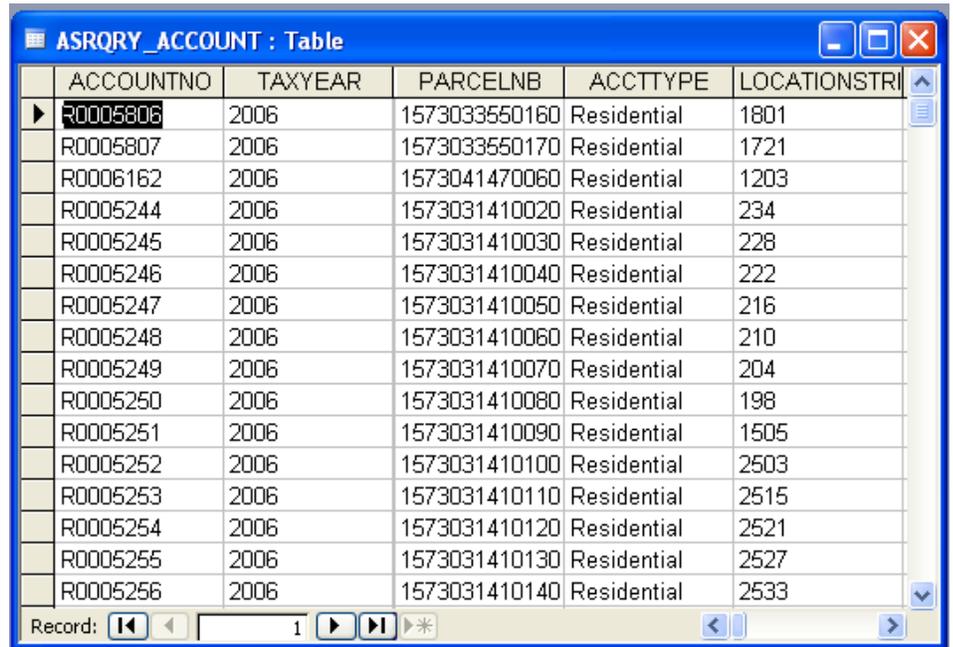


Figure 1.2 – MS Access Table in Datasheet View

the user to store the data with specific formatting (e.g. decimal places, commas, dollar signs, etc.). A user can also decide if the field should be required or *indexed*. A field that is indexed allows the user to search quicker and more efficiently through the data. In design view, a user can also declare a *primary key*. A primary key, or unique identifier, is a field (or combination of fields) that uniquely identifies each record. For example, in a personnel database each employee

may be uniquely identified by their Social Security Number (so the SSN field would be the primary key for that particular table). We will discuss how a primary key can be used to query across multiple tables in "Part III: More Complex Queries."

The second method for creating a table is to use an MS Access Wizard. MS Access provides "wizards," to help beginning users to step through some of the more basic tasks (e.g. creating tables and queries).

A wizard is a graphical interface that will ask the user a series of questions to help them create a basic object, like a table or query. A table wizard will ask the user things like: What to name the data fields? How many to include? Whether or not to set a primary key? Then the wizard will create a basic table based on the user's input. This method is often the least intimidating for new Access users; however it provides the least flexibility.

The final method for creating a table is through Datasheet View (as seen in Figure 1.2). MS Access will allow the user to open up a "blank" table in Datasheet View. For users familiar with MS Excel or some other spreadsheet program, datasheet view is very similar to a spreadsheet. Creating a table in Datasheet View is as simple as entering the data and renaming the column headings (i.e. field names). However, for further customization, the user will still have to go to Design View to adjust other properties of the table.

We have begun to examine how basic tables are designed. In our next installment, a continuation of "**Part II: Working with Microsoft Access**," we will look at the basic elements of query building. This will include an introduction to the different views available in a query and methods to design a simple query.

David Ray
Appraiser
Property Tax Division

Upcoming Property Tax Division Sponsored Education

06/20/06 - 06/21/06
"Access for Assessors"
Cheyenne, WY

07/13/06
Sales Verification and
Sales Time Trending
Laramie, WY

08/07/06 - 08/11/06
IAAO Course 311
Residential Modeling Concepts
Rock Springs, WY

08/22/06 - 08/25/06
SPSS/LEA
Cheyenne, WY

09/11/06 - 09/13/06
Uniform Standards of Professional
Practice/Code of Ethics
Casper, WY

9/14/06
Uniform Standards of Professional
Practice/Code of Ethics-Refresher
Casper, WY

10/02/06 - 10/06/06
Wyoming Agricultural Land
Riverton, WY

10/17/06 - 10/18/06
CCI/DOR Follow-Up Training
(3rd tier implemented counties)
Cheyenne, WY

11/13/06 - 11/17/06
IAAO Course 601
Advanced Mapping Methods and
Applications
Douglas, WY

11/13/06 - 11/17/06
Basic Appraisal of Public Utilities
Cheyenne, WY

12/04/06 - 12/07/06
Personal Property - Marshall &
Swift Residential - Depreciation and
Effective Age - Mapping for Tax
Districts and Special Districts.

12/12/06 - 12/13/06
"Access for Assessors"
Buffalo, WY

01/09/07 - 01/11/07
New Assessor Orientation
Cheyenne, WY

01/22/07 - 01/26/07
IAAO Course 101
Fundamentals of Real Property
Appraisal
Thermopolis, WY

For information on classes, please
contact
Jim Felton at (307) 777-5438, or
email: jfelto@state.wy.us

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