

Re: Help with bar code

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Access/microsoft.public.access.formscoding/2005-05/msg00830.html>

- *From:* "Al" <Al@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 9 May 2005 16:32:02 -0700
-

I do not know how to thank you for going into a great length to explain this to me. It certainly helped. thanks a million
Al

"LTofsrud" wrote:

- > Hi Al,
- >
- > Sorry for not getting back to you ealier, but here goes on further
- > explaining what you need to know.
- >
- > As much mystique as there appears to be with barcode technology, it isn't
- > that bad.
- >
- > There is no setup required between Access and the barcode scanner itself.
- > All a scanner does is read the barcode label, translate it to ASCII and
- > display the encoded ID on the screen through whatever interface you are using
- > (i.e. serial, keyboard connector etc.).
- >
- > Selecting a Barcode Scanner
- > =====
- > As I mentioned in an earlier post, there are several types of barcode
- > scanners that you can purchase. If the user doesn't require mobility, then I
- > suggest purchasing a PS/2 model with a Y-connector. This will all both
- > barcode scanning capability and the ability to type in text. If the user
- > will only have one screen for input and doesn't require the ability to add or
- > edit records, ditch the keyboard.
- >
- > If they need to move about, such as in a warehouse setting, then look at a
- > wireless model. The issue with these is that they can run into interference
- > issues (always get a demo in your environment first) or require base stations
- > set up depending on the square footage of the operation.
- >
- > Barcode Encoding
- > =====
- > Most people can get away with using Code 39 or Code 128 (I usually use the
- > later). In both of these cases, I tie this code to an identifier to one of
- > my Access table identifiers (usually a primary or composite key).

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- > A barcode system at its roots is nothing more than a catalog system. The
- > link between your Access application and the barcode is through the barcodes
- > that are printed either from your application or a third party tool such as
- > BarTender. As I mentioned before, the only information encoded onto the
- > barcode label itself is an identifier (i.e. primary key) that links the item
- > that the label is attached to, to a matching item in your database.
- >
- > So how does this work?
- > =====
- > Now that we now that the barcode label provides the link between the
- > inventory item and the Access application storing a virtual record of one or
- > more of said items, we can see how we use this as part of the application.
- > We'll walk through this in a step by step manner.
- >
- > 1) The developer would create a form for capturing the scans. I suggest
- > minimizing the number of fields on the form and if speed is not a
- > requirement, create a small form with a single text box for capturing the
- > barcode (you'll see why in a minute). Make the text box modal so that it
- > cannot remove the focus until the user scans a label, or presses a Cancel
- > button.
- >
- > 2) Create a label in BarTender (or whatever application you have handy) with
- > some text (doesn't matter what but I suggest alpha numeric). While you are
- > creating the label, you should see an option to set the barcode to a
- > particular type (i.e. Code 128).
- >
- > 3) Referring to your barcode scanner manual, there will be instructions on
- > how to determine the default encoding scheme of your scanner. Usually it is
- > Code 39, it is usually easy to change. Most allow you to get into a
- > programming mode where you can set up the options by scanning barcodes in the
- > manual.
- >
- > 4) Open your new form and with the barcode scanner plugged in, scan the
- > barcode. Viola. Provided that you have configured the barcode scanner to
- > read the same encoding as the label, it will translate the many bars of the
- > label into ASCII in the text box of our form.
- >
- > Now why did I suggest that you minimize navigation in your form?
- >
- > One of the biggest pains with barcode wedges (that is the term referred to
- > ones that are plugged into the keyboard), is that regardless of what
- > application you are in the barcode scanner is still active and will place
- > text wherever the cursor is. That's right, it doesn't matter if it is
- > Microsoft Word, Notepad, Outlook, blah, blah, blah. If the application can
- > accept text, the barcode scanner will write to it.
- >
- > How do I avoid this?
- > =====
- > This is really the only difficult task you will face is ensuring that it
- > writes to the correct location, hence the limiting of navigation in a barcode

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> scanning mode. The use of modal helps since you can limit the possibility of
> writing to a totally different field.
>
> The second thing I usually do is create events for:
> – detecting when new text has been entered; I create a regular expression to
> check the text being scanned in. I always have a predetermined label syntax
> so that I can determine what is an inventory label and what is the label from
> a bottle of Coke that someone thought would be fun to test the scanner on.
> For example, I have used the initials of the application name followed by the
> primary key identifier (autonumber with unique constraint) or if I track
> inventory types, I will use type codes (for example, CER for cereal or SD for
> softdrinks).
>
> – parsing the text. Once text has been entered, parse if necessary and query
> that against a recordset of items in your database. I suggest matching the
> text against a regular expression. Since inventory systems can grow and it
> slows matches, this is where partitioning your barcode items into different
> types can really help.
>
> I hope that provides a bit more detail into what you are looking for.
>
> Lance
>
> "Al" wrote:
>
>>
>> thank you for your response. what I need to really know and I hope that
>> someone can answer is that how is the setup between access and the scanner
>> takes place? Say I create a form bound to a table in access, and the field
>> that stores this data, has the focus. now how is the scanner writes to it when
>> someone scans? is there a setup on the scanner to make it scan to access? do
>> I need to do anything in access to recognize the scanner? I need someone to
>> clarify this for me. thank you.
>> Al
>> "postman" wrote:
>>
>>> I too need to implement barcodes at some stage, so am interested in
>>> responses to this thread.
>>> As much as I understand, a BC scanner is interpreted by the OS as "like" a
>>> keyboard input, as if you were typing in numbers.
>>> To say that wherever your cursor has focus would be where the data is
>>> inputted, be it in any text application. Of course I have only just started
>>> looking into this, I have a cheap scanner from e-bay it reads & prints codes
>>> to a receipt printer when connected to it ok, but I have yet to hook it up
>>> to Access.
>>> I'll stay tuned
>>> Thanks.
>>>
>>>
>>> "Al" <Al@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
>>> news:C64CCF25-0934-43A9-A110-D8F7393E3ECF@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

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>>>> Thank you very much this was very helpful. I learned from both replies.
>>>> However, I still do not understand, how the scanning works with access.
>>>> what
>>>> I mean is this. we are going to have 2 scanners to scan medication bar
>>>> code
>>>> that is already on the containers, when the scanners scan the bar code how
>>>> does it get into access. what are the necessary steps that I need to do to
>>>> capture what the scanner scans?
>>>> thanks
>>>> Al
>>>>
>>>> "LTofsrud" wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> Hi Al,
>>>>>
>>>>> I have been on several projects that have required bar code technology
>>>>> and
>>>>> here are a couple of suggestions that you should consider after you have
>>>>> done
>>>>> a bit of research:
>>>>>
>>>>> 1) Most people adopt the Code128 format for simplicity and it is usually
>>>>> more than enough for most people
>>>>>
>>>>> 2) A good vendor that I have used is for all of my projects is Seagull
>>>>> Scientific(<http://www.seagullscientific.com/asp/welcome.aspx>). They
>>>>> make a
>>>>> product called BarTender that is great for creating barcodes. I have
>>>>> used
>>>>> different versions of their software and depending on your needs, I have
>>>>> found it excellent for both small VB/Access applications where I used it
>>>>> for
>>>>> just creating a format that can print single label to sending batches
>>>>> through
>>>>> a command line. In Enterprise situations where you need a client server
>>>>> or
>>>>> n-tier solution, I used their Enterprise edition to host and send large
>>>>> batches of labels to a dedicated barcode printer. Personally, I strongly
>>>>> suggest staying away from the free fonts that you find on the web. I had
>>>>> nothing but problems with them.
>>>>>
>>>>> 3) If you are thinking of using a 'regular' printer for sending your
>>>>> print
>>>>> jobs to, purchase some Avery or similar labels and test them first with
>>>>> whatever barcode hardware you are going to be using. Sometimes not all
>>>>> of
>>>>> the inks can be read by the reader.
>>>>>
>>>>> 4) If you are only using a single entry point for barcode reading, you
>>>>> can
>>>>> go the easy route and use a barcode wedge which allows you to attach it

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>>>> to
>>>> the keyboard port (there is also a Y-splitter you can use so that you
>>>> don't
>>>> lose the keyboard altogether). If the user needs mobility (say for
>>>> getting
>>>> up high or longer distances than the tether will afford), then look at
>>>> either
>>>> a wireless device or a handheld device. A great wireless device that I
>>>> have
>>>> purchased in the past is the Symbol wireless Phaser units (P370 I think).
>>>> May be a bit of overkill, but you can make that decision. If you are in
>>>> a
>>>> warehouse type of situation where they will be gone for extended periods
>>>> of
>>>> time, try a handheld PDA such as the Intermec 700 series. I did this on
>>>> one
>>>> project where they then placed the PDA into a docking device with a modem
>>>> and
>>>> they transferred it via modem to an Access database. Of course it adds a
>>>> bit
>>>> of extra coding since you need a UI and backend on the PDA (Intermec
>>>> offers a
>>>> software development package called MCL but I would stay away from it;
>>>> easy
>>>> but it was Alpha quality when we used it – go with AppForge Crossfire
>>>> instead).
>>>>
>>>> Thats about all I can think of for now, but while it is really cool
>>>> developing applications that use this technology, it can also be
>>>> frustrating
>>>> if you don't do the research ahead of time.
>>>>
>>>> Let me know if you have any other questions in regards to my post.
>>>>
>>>> Lance
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> "Al" wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> My company decided to incorporate a bar code system into our access
>>>>> database.
>>>>> I have been an access programmer for long time, but I have never worked
>>>>> with
>>>>> bar code. Does any one know how it works with access? Is there a
>>>>> literature
>>>>> on how to incorporate this into access database. I work in access2002
>>>>> Thanks
>>>>> AL
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• **References:**

- ◆ **Help with bar code**
◇ *From: Al*
 - ◆ **RE: Help with bar code**
◇ *From: LTofsrud*
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◇ *From: Al*
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