

Re: Access reports or Word Document

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- *From:* "chris.nebinger@xxxxxxxx" <chris.nebinger@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 30 Aug 2006 13:54:48 -0700
-

Paul,

No, you can not import a Word document into a Report.

As far as the subreport, maybe if you explained what you wanted to do, we could give better advice. I generally try and stay away from subreports if at all possible due to difficulties getting things lined up.

I'll throw my \$.02 into the pot.

Access has a great report writer. It's limited in output capability, however. I've had clients who required Word versions because that's how the report was circulated. I argued, but the client requirements are what I went with.

Also, Access reports are "banded." For flexibility, Word often is better. It is also easier to do complex formatting in Word. If it is going to be a printed report, then Access wins hands down.

Access reports are very fast to create. I estimate 5 hours per report when I am creating a budget. If Word (or Excel) is involved, I easily triple my estimates.

Both items are tools in the toolbox. If you ask "Which is better, a hammer or screwdriver?" the answer will depend on "Are you using nails or screws?"

Chris Nebinger

Paul H wrote:

Larry,

Thanks for your advice and your comments about subreports. I will give this a try and reply back if I can't figure it out. One more thing, is it possible to "import" a Word document format into an Access report given that

Re: Access reports or Word Document

the document format is relatively straight forward. I'd like to save some formatting time if possible.

"Larry Linson" wrote:

"Paul H" wrote

- > I'm new to the database world and I could
- > use some advice as to which is better.
- > Should I use Word mail merge to produce
- > documents from data in Access or produce
- > reports directly from Access.

I am sure that, in retrospect, you realize that there is no general answer to this question. It's somewhat like asking, "Should I use a jet plane, a truck, a car, or a bicycle to move my package from place to place?"

I've used Microsoft Access daily since 1993, created many database applications for clients, and worked on many others. In none of those cases did we have to use Word to produce documents instead of Access' Reports, but most of those were "typical business database applications." There are certainly cases where it can be beneficial to employ Word, either with mail merge, or via COM automation, for particular purposes. If I were producing "nicely formatted client letters," then mail merge might be the choice; if I were producing brochures (intended to impress with fancy formatting) then driving Word via COM automation might be appropriate; for useful business reports, Access' Reports are often perfectly satisfactory.

- > There are a couple of things
- > I need to contend with first.

- > I need to produce a report that uses multiple
- > data sources (two or more queries) and puts
- > them on a single page.

Access has a Subreport capability, so that you can embed Reports within a Report. And, depending on how the information is related, you might be able to join Tables or Queries so that only one Query produces the information you want to Report. In general, I can say "this should not be a problem," but I don't know the specific details.

- > If I use Access does it have the formatting
- > capability to reasonably reproduce the
- > "look" of the documents we currently produce
- > in Word.

Access' Reports are very good, very flexible, and arguably the best reporting engine ever. But Word's 'purpose in life' is formatting text, and its capabilities far exceed any reporting engine. And, of course, we have no

Re: Access reports or Word Document

idea how much of the capability of Word you actually use in your documents, so we couldn't possibly answer this question.

> We use Office 2000 software.

If you use the Access 2000 that is included in Office 2000 Professional, I strongly suggest that you make certain you have applied all the Service Packs and updates to both Access and the Jet database engine. I trust you are aware that Access 2000 is "out of support," so full support is no longer available from Microsoft, and you cannot even rely that security updates will be available in the future.

Larry Linson
Microsoft Access MVP