

# Re: Option groups, radio buttons and reports...oh my!!

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Access/microsoft.public.access.gettingstarted/2009-02/msg00481.html>

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- *From:* [ken@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:ken@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)
  - *Date:* Fri, 20 Feb 2009 14:20:35 -0800 (PST)
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I'm afraid that your problems are rather more fundamental than appear at first sight. It sounds like you've made the common mistake when designing a 'questionnaire' database of using separate columns for the questions. Its what's known as 'encoding data as column headings'. A fundamental principle of the database relational model, 'the information principle' is that data is stored as explicit values at column positions in rows in tables, and in no other way. In a relational database one approach would be to have a table of Questions, a table of Answers and a table QuestionAnswers which models the relationship between them by having two foreign key columns, each referencing the primary key of the Questions and Answers table. In combination these two columns constitute the composite primary key of the table.

Consequently each question will be represented by one row in Questions, each answer by one row in Answers and each possible combination of a question and answer by one row in QuestionAnswers.

For each respondent's set of answers you need another table, Responses say, with ResondentID, QuestionID and AnswerID columns, the first being a foreign key referencing the primary key of a respondents table, the latter two a composite foreign key referencing the composite primary key of QuestionAnswers. If each respondent can give only one answer to each question then the primary key of this table is a composite one of RespondentID and QuestionID; if a respondent can make multiple answers per question then the primary key is a composite one of all three columns.

You might also want to introduce a QuestionCategories table so that you can categorize each question by means of a foreign key column referencing the primary key of Categories. This would help you sort the data for reporting purposes.

With a model such as the above querying the database becomes very much simpler as it is simply a matter of joining the tables as necessary and aggregating the relevant data, e.g. to count the number of instances of each answer to each question would require a query

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grouped by question then answer and counting the rows per answer with COUNT(\*)).

For data input the simplest way would be a subform based on Responses within a single view form based on Respondents. The subform would have combo boxes for question and answer so its just a case of inserting a row for each question answered by selecting from the combo boxes. This is fine if the data is being input by an operator on the basis of paper questionnaire forms completed by the respondent, but less suitable if the respondent is inputting the data directly into the database via an Access form. For this a better solution is to use an unbound form, which can use option groups as you've done, and to read/write the data to the table in code behind the form. This is not difficult but does need some knowledge of writing VBA code using either DAO or ADO.

If you don't want to design your own from scratch you can download an application (Duane Hookom's 'At Your Survey') which demonstrates how to design your own survey database from:

[http://www.rogersaccesslibrary.com/forum/forum\\_posts.asp?TID=3](http://www.rogersaccesslibrary.com/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=3)

It includes sample surveys and a brief manual.

Ken Sheridan  
Stafford, England

On Feb 19, 7:27 pm, La Diva <La D...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Hello all!

I am up the creek and need your assistance asap! I have created an access database with a survey form that contains 15 option groups each with 4–10 radio buttons. I need to be able to print reports based on what is returned.

My issues are:

a) for the smaller option groups, instead of printing 1, 2, etc. for my returned value, I need it to state for instance the actual city name on the report (because 1=Las Vegas, 2=New Jersey, etc.) and then group/sort in the report according to that city name (all records with Las Vegas will have Las Vegas as a subtitle and then the rest of the associated data for each associated record underneath).

b) I still need the larger option groups to retain their numbers of course as they are ratings (1–10), but how can I count how many records have rated the service a 7?

I really appreciate your help on this.  
Thanks in advance,

La Diva

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