

Re: outer Join and NULL values...?!?!!!

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Vanderghast,

<epiphany moment>

You can use functions/expressions in the ON phrase of a JOIN expression in JET SQL??!!

</epiphany moment>

Well DANG! Why didn't somebody tell me that a few years ago?
(and why can't the Query designer give me a clue/ability to do that more easily!?)

YOU are one Awesome dude, V.! Thanks!

"Michel Walsh" wrote:

Hi,

If you want null matching another null, you can coalesce, Nz(), them to a value that is known to not present in your data, such as -1 for a field having only positive values:

```
FROM .... SOME JOIN ....  
ON  
a.f1=b.f2 AND  
a.f4=b.f4 AND  
Nz(a.f3, -1) = Nz(b.f3, -1)
```

If you want a null matching any thing:

```
FROM .... SOME JOIN ....  
ON  
a.f1=b.f2 AND  
a.f4=b.f4 AND  
Nz(a.f3 = b.f3, true)
```

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and if you want a null matching nothing, well, just leave it as it is.

```
FROM .... SOME JOIN ....  
ON  
a.f1=b.f2 AND  
a.f4=b.f4 AND  
a.f3 = b.f3
```

Null are as useful as 0 is, but you probably just re-experience what the introduction of the 0 has been 400 years ago (in Europe, that is). And since no one is born with that knowledge, many of us, like you, just got "that moment". And since it would hardly kill you, I hope it won't, it will just make you stronger! :-)

Hoping it may help,
Vanderghast, Access MVP.

"Mark Burns" <MarkBurns@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message news:5617CBD3-343F-4951-BEBF-6BC27868471C@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Marsh,

Thanks for the speedy reply....I think... :-\

So, just so I have this straight, according to Jet's internal Join arithmetic,

```
Table B Table C  
F2 = "Smith" = -> F2 = "Smith"  
F3 = Null = -> F3 = Null  
F4 = "QA" = -> F4 = "QA"  
...in an outer join = "No Match"?
```

```
...but  
Table B Table C  
F2 = "Smith" = -> F2 = "Smith"  
F3 = Null F3 = Null  
F4 = "QA" = -> F4 = "QA"  
...in an outer join = "Match"?
```

...I just KNEW these damn Nulls would drive me INSANE one day...

So, how do you suggest I handle that small %age of data records where F3 = Null?

...build another, separate query to handle just those records? <Grrrr...>

"Marshall Barton" wrote:

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Mark Burns wrote:

OK first the question: why are the NULLs screwing up my query results?

The problem:

I am constructing a series of append queries to dissect non-normal data from

some older tables to fit it all into a new normalized structure. I have

3

tables:

A, B, and C. I am importing data from table B into table C (referencing table A in the process).

To avoid importing duplicate records I am joining tables B and C in my query

as an outer join B.F2->C.F2 + B.F3->C.F3 + B.F4->C.F4 (the query also matches

B.F1->A.F3, but that's not the problem here... also, importantly, I

check

for B.F2 is not null AND C.F1 IS Null).

When I run this query the FIRST time, I get 80 records inserted into table C

as expected.

I expect that when I run this query again immediately, I will get ZERO

records qualified (because all the outer joins will now match table C records

which made C.F1 NOT Null.

...BUT I still get 15 records qualifying to be inserted into Table C

from

Table B!

The 15 records all contain NULL values in B.F3 (and, in C.F3).

I know this is the problem because if I remove the Outer Join B.F3->C.F3

I

get exactly the ZERO qualifying records I expect?!? HUH?!?!

So...Jet 4.0 does not think Null=Null here, or

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what??

(and...they are all nulls, the fields are set
'allow 0 length strings =
false')

Well, it is true that Null = Null is never True. It is also
the case that Null <> Null is never True.

Think of it this way. Null sort of means Unknown. So, is
an unknown value equal (or not equal) to another unknown
value? The answer is unknown so it can not be either True
or False.

—

Marsh
MVP [MS Access]