

Re: Printer Control and Print/Preview Problems

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Access/microsoft.public.access.reports/2005-11/msg00135.html>

- *From:* "Peter Hallett" <PeterHallett@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 4 Nov 2005 10:38:02 -0800
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Many thanks for that very prompt reply. It again raised an intriguing question that has crossed my mind several times in the past, when I got a response from you. Do you ever go to bed?

It will take me a while to work through your suggestions but I will certainly pass on any useful results. In the mean time, perhaps one or two additional details will clarify the reasons for wanting to do things in the way I have described.

The application creates invoices. The main copy is printed on headed stationery and given to the customer but the proprietor does not wholly trust computers (who can blame him) and wants a paper copy to stick in his filing cabinet. The snag is that the principal printer is loaded with headed stationery and it is therefore an expensive option to simply print a second copy. There was a thought of replacing the printer (for unrelated reasons) and the first suggestion was therefore to buy a new printer with multiple feed bins. That would have required the necessary printer control characters to be appended to the report print stream. The next thought was to install a second printer on the system and load it with with plain paper. The software requirements would be similar in either case. (Things were so much simpler in the 'good old days' when all you had to do was load the dot-matrix printer with two-part stationery.)

I will think over your suggestions to see if they provide a way of implementing the sort of solution now required. Printer/bin selection clearly has to be initiated from a single form and ideally be selected by means of the print and preview buttons. I doubt whether any solution which required preview and print to be initiated from different modules would be acceptable.

Passing the view mode as an argument is not really a problem but it struck me that, since the mode of display had already been selected with `acViewPreview` or `acViewNormal`, there should not really be a need to pass an argument as well. It should be possible to determine the mode implicitly within the report, but I could not find a way of doing this and was therefore forced to pass "Preview" and "Print" as explicit arguments.

The requirement to preview before print has arisen from the propensity of

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certain staff (including the proprietor, although he denies it) not to read the invoice before handing it to the customer, who often does not read it either! Consequently, the wrong amount is paid for the wrong goods (or, if you prefer, the right amount is paid for the wrong goods) and it can be some time before the mistake is discovered. (That should sound just as familiar in Australia as it does here.) Hence the new rule. Before being printed, invoices must be previewed and checked to ascertain that they are being issued to the correct recipient and that the amount is at least consistent with expectations. Whether or not that will put an end to the problem is anyone's guess.

When an invoice is previewed, the header and footer are included to provide the operator with an on-screen facsimile of the printed version. When the invoice is printed on headed stationery, however, the header and footer have to be excluded or they will overprint the pre-printed details. (The reason for not printing the whole thing on plain paper is fairly obvious. It would consume ink at an unacceptable rate and commensurate expense.) This raises questions in my mind as to whether your suggestion of printing from the preview toolbar will work. The problem is to remove the header and footer. The solution I have adopted up until now is to pass the arguments "Preview" or "Print" with the DoCmd.OpenReport command, as already described. The report VBA then sets the header and footer visibility true or false according to which argument is received. That has worked fine up until today when the user (bless him) discovered that, if the preview window is still open when the print button is clicked, the report is printed but the "Print" argument is ignored, or else overridden by the "Preview" argument associated with the still open preview window. The result was overprinted headers and footers on the invoices – another of Access's interesting little foibles. (I have Access 2003, incidentally.)

There is another solution, if nothing else seems to work, and that is to position the print/preview form so that the preview window overlaps it, obscuring the print button. There would then be no way of clicking the print button while the preview window was open – but that's a bit crude. Not being able to control the positioning of the preview window could make it tricky to implement satisfactorily. In any case it has something of the tail wagging the dog about it.

I will now study your suggestions and see if I can improve the present situation. It is a pity, in some ways, that Access will not allow developers into its works a little more freely. As an old 'C' programmer (old in both senses of the word) I miss the freedom to do more or less whatever I want. On the other hand Access's high level facilities make life a great deal easier than it used to be and I must admit that some 'C' programmers used the earlier freedoms to wreak havoc (not me of course!)

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Peter Hallett

PS I must try posting a question at around midday GMT. If I get an immediate reply from you it will prove that you do not go to bed.

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"Allen Browne" wrote:

> If you are using Access 2002 or 2003, you can manipulate the Printer object
> before you OpenReport.

>

> You could try setting the printer, e.g.:

> Application.Printer = Application.Printers(0)

> and then see if the PrintOut command respects that.

>

> You could also try:

> Application.Printer.Copies = 2

> Haven't actually tried that, so it would be interesting to know how you go

> following that with an OpenReport using acNormal.

>

> Passing the view mode in the report's OpenArgs sounds like a good solution

> for knowing the mode. If necessary, you can pass a delimited string in

> OpenArgs, and use Split() to parse it.

>

> If the report must be previewed, it might make sense to print it from the

> preview toolbar only, i.e. don't provide a button on the form to print the

> report. It would be simple enough to set the Enabled or Visible property of

> a command button in the report's Open (or Close) event, but I don't see that

> this approach is going to catch every case for whatever reasons underlie

> your requirements to preview before printing.

>

> If you are interested in an example of how to manipulate the Printer object

> to set the printer and have the report remember that setting for next time,

> download the example from this article:

> Printer Selection Utility

> at:

> <http://allenbrowne.com/AppPrintMgt.html>

>

> For older versions, see:

>

> http://msdn.microsoft.com/archive/default.asp?url=/archive/en-us/dnaraccessdev/html/ODC_MicrosoftOfficeDevelop

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> Allen Browne – Microsoft MVP. Perth, Western Australia.

> Tips for Access users – <http://allenbrowne.com/tips.html>

> Reply to group, rather than allenbrowne at mvps dot org.

>

> "Peter Hallett" <PeterHallett@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message

> <news:1CFB2E5D-3610-403A-A45E-8C1CFEA15FBB@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

>> I have two problems when printing reports.

>> 1. By providing separate print preview and print command buttons on a

>> form,

>> it is simple to preview or print reports by means of the appropriate View

>> parameters in the DoCmd OpenReport command strings associated with the

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>> buttons. However, a need has now arisen for (a) multiple copies and/or
>> (b)
>> the facility to send these copies to different printers, or to different
>> paper feed bins. DoCmd OpenReport does not offer multiple copy selection.
>> Nor can I see how to redirect a print or send command characters to the
>> printer. I note that PrintOut does enable the number of copies to be set
>> but
>> it is not apparent how this can be used in conjunction with DoCmd
>> OpenReport.
>>
>> I employ a terminating argument in the OpenReport command line to
>> determine
>> whether or not the report header should be output. (This is displayed on
>> Preview but not on Print, which is done on headed stationery.) The
>> argument
>> takes the form "Preview" or "Print", which is read by the report VBA,
>> using
>> the OpenArgs command. (I cannot see how to read the View parameter
>> directly,
>> which would save the need to pass a separate argument.) This works well
>> for
>> single printer, single sheet, single feed bin situations but I am at a
>> loss
>> to see how to combine printer selection, paper feed bin selection multiple
>> copy selection and argument transfer.
>>
>> 2. It is a requirement that reports be previewed before being printed.
>> This
>> is achieved by interlocking the preview and print buttons on the form.
>> The
>> print button is not made visible until the preview button has been
>> clicked.
>> Ideally, the print button should not be made visible until the report
>> preview
>> window has been closed but the preview window appears to remain under the
>> control of the OpenReport command and I cannot see how to determine its
>> status or use this to control the visibility of the print button. (I have
>> an
>> IsFormOpen subroutine which will identify whether a form is open, or not,
>> but
>> it is not apparent how anything like this could be used with the print
>> preview window, which I cannot currently identify.) I therefore have no
>> option but to make the print button visible as soon as the preview button
>> is
>> clicked. This was just about acceptable until it was found that, if the
>> print button is clicked while the preview window is open, the print takes
>> place OK but the "Print" argument is ignored. The "Preview" argument
>> associated with the open preview window controls the print which, in the
>> case
>> described above, means that the header is printed over the top of the
>> pre-printed header on the headed stationery. I need a method of making

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>> the
>> print command button visible only after the preview window has been
>> closed.
>> This would then automatically resolve the problem of transferring the
>> appropriate argument with the OpenReport print command.
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>> Peter Hallett
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- *Follow-Ups:*

- ◆ *Re: Printer Control and Print/Preview Problems*
◇ *From: Allen Browne*

- *References:*

- ◆ *Re: Printer Control and Print/Preview Problems*
◇ *From: Allen Browne*

- Prev by Date: *Re: Report to PDF without PDF or EPS Printer*
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