ACCESS ‹‹‹‹‹‹

By Patricia Cox

Master Budget Project: Errors and Reverse Engineering Reports

When finishing up work on the Cash Budget report last month, I noticed a few Year and Total amounts were incorrect and corrected them. I mentioned it in the article, but this month we will take a closer look to go over the details of the changes.

When you use an existing query to develop a new one, a common mistake is forgetting to change a heading or ending up with a calculation that doesn't get the result you want. When one of these errors is discovered in a report, you need to follow it back to the original source, often in a query or subreport.

Begin by opening the main report in Design view. If the error is on the report directly, you can correct it there. But if the source of the error is a subreport, you'll need to identify which subreport it is and open that in Design view. Then re-

peat the same process: Correct the error if it comes from that subreport directly, or identify the source. If the error comes from a query, you can go to the subreport's Property Sheet to locate the Record Source. This is the query that is supplying the data for the subreport. Once you have the name of the query, close the subreport and main report and then open the query in Design view for editing. When making changes, be sure to change only the calculations. Don't change the column headings because the report uses them to locate the data.

Correcting the Errors

Last month, I discovered that the values in the Total column for all three cash available line items were incorrect. Here's what you need to do to fix the problems. To get the Cash Available from

Normal Operations Total (or Year) column, I added the Cash Budget Total field to the Cash Budget table. Then I opened the Cash Available from Normal Operations query and used the Cash Budget Total value to calculate the Cash Available Total. In the field I typed: Cash Avail Total:Sum([Cash Budget TOTAL])+Sum ([Outflows Total])/2.

To get Cash Available After Investments Total (or Year), I first added a text box to the Reports Menu form to sum the investment values on the form. I set its Control Source property to sum the Equipment values for each quarter (=[PEEQ1]+[PEEQ2]+[PEEQ3]+[PEEQ4]) and named the text box PEETotal. In the Cash Available After Investments query, the Total column should be Cash Avail Total: Sum([Cash Budget TOTAL])+Sum ([Outflows Total])/2-[Forms]![Reports

Figure 1. Correcting the Total Cash Before Line of Credit Subreport
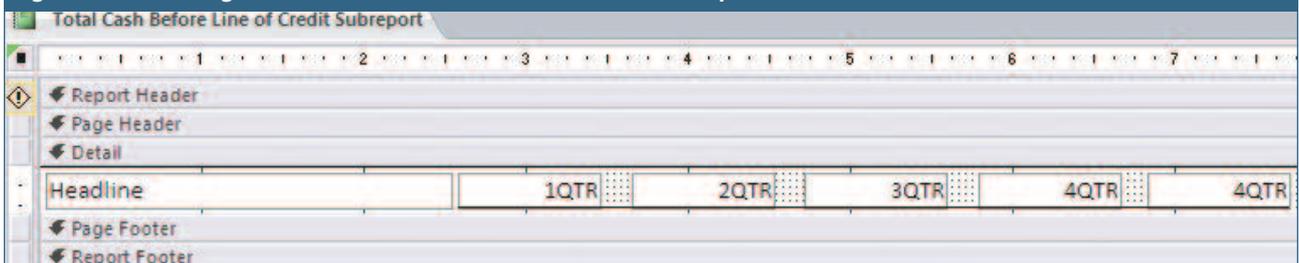
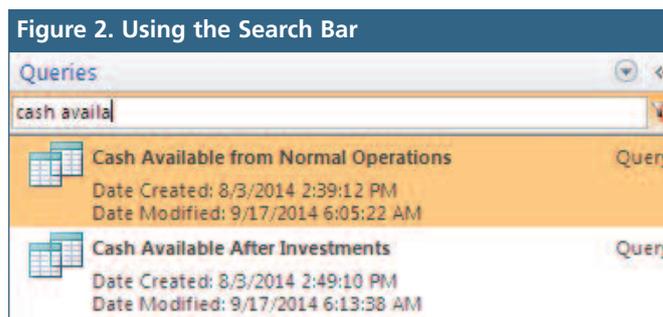Menu]![PEETotal] because we also need to subtract the Total Investments.

To correct the calculation of the Total column for the Total Cash Before Line of Credit row on the final report, I made a change directly to the Total Cash Before Line of Credit subreport. In this case, the value in the Total column will be the same as the value for the fourth quarter. Therefore, I updated the Total text box in the subreport so that its source is the fourth quarter of the query (see Figure 1).

Finally, when I used a previous query to create the Total Cash Before Line of Credit query, I didn't update the heading. To fix the error, I edited the query so that the first field read Headline: "Total Cash Before Line of Credit" instead. If you use slightly different wording on your reports, this is where you would put in your wording.

Use the Search Bar

Any time you have a lot of queries and reports in your database and need to locate a specific one, using the search bar can be very helpful (see Figure 2). Type in part of the name of the object you're looking for to find it quickly. When done, or if you need to find something else, you can clear the Search Bar by clicking the red x to the right of the search value.

Sometimes the search bar isn't visible. If this is the case, go to the File tab and click Options. In the Access Options window, select the Current Database tab. Click the Navigation Options button to open that dialog box. In the Display Options section, check the box for Show Search Bar. Click OK to close the box, then click OK in the Access Options window to accept the change.

Best Practice

When you notice an error in your test process, remember to use the reverse engineering process I described to locate and correct it. Keep testing until all errors are resolved. It's also a good idea to have someone else test your database. Have them try to run reports and make sure they all work. Someone new might do things in a slightly different way or order. Having this outside perspective will help identify issues and errors you might not think to address.

Now we have gone through all the details for creating the Cash Budget Report. Next month we will complete a user acceptability testing procedure of the entire database so far to ensure that all the parts work individually and cohesively. **SF**

Patricia Cox has taught Excel and Access to management accounting students and other college majors and has consulted with local area businesses to create database reporting systems since 1998. She also is a member of IMA's Madison Chapter. To send Patricia a question to address in the Access column, e-mail her at kathrynmann@tds.net.

Figure 2. Using the Search Bar

Queries

cash availa

Cash Available from Normal Operations   Query
Date Created: 8/3/2014 2:39:12 PM
Date Modified: 9/17/2014 6:05:22 AM

Cash Available After Investments   Query
Date Created: 8/3/2014 2:49:10 PM
Date Modified: 9/17/2014 6:13:38 AM