

Access DevCon Vienna (virtual) | April 23-24, 2020

Access Help Content Deep Dive

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Modern Assistance and Content Experience Team
Microsoft



Session Agenda



- End user team's landscape of work
- Content cleanup update
- Access end user content metrics
- What's next?
- Q & A

End user
content team's
landscape



My team

Applications and services my team oversees



Versions we support

- ✓ Office 2010
- ✓ Office 2013
- ✓ Office 2016
- ✓ Office 2019
- ✓ Office 365 subscriptions

Platforms we support

- ✓ Windows
- ✓ Mac (2016, 2019, Subscription)
- ✓ Web
- ✓ iOS
- ✓ Android

Types of work and content we create



Content Platform Ownership

support.office.com - MAX Team

The screenshot shows the Microsoft support page for Access. The main heading is 'Access help & learning'. Below it is a search bar with the text 'How can we help you?'. A navigation bar contains icons for 'Get started', 'Tables', 'Import & export', 'Queries', 'Forms & reports', 'Expressions', and 'SQL Server migration'. A search for 'table' is shown, with results for 'Introduction to tables - Access', 'Manage linked tables - Access', and 'Use a screen reader to create tables in Access desktop databases'.

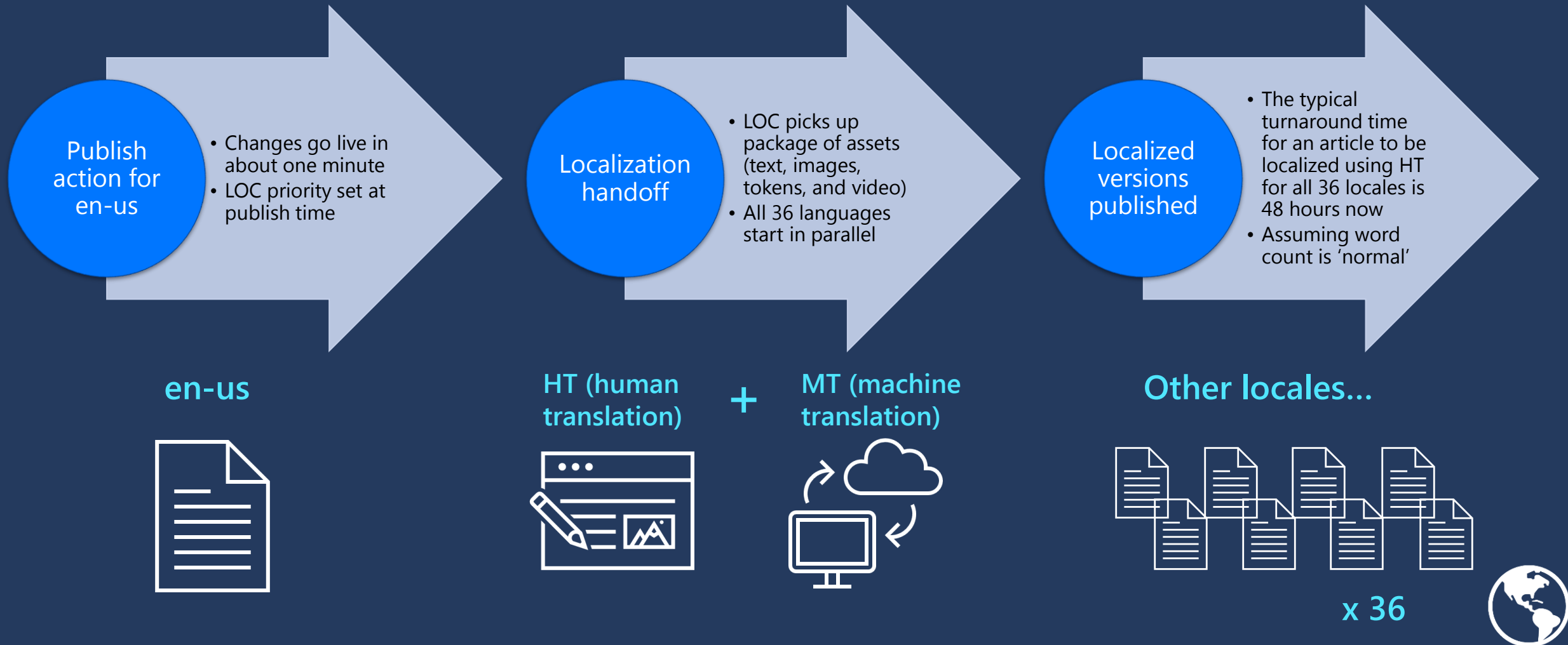
~900 articles for Access

docs.microsoft.com - Dev Docs Team

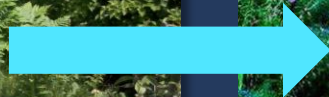
The screenshot shows the Microsoft Office Dev Center page for 'Access VBA reference'. The page includes a navigation menu on the left with 'Office VBA Reference' and 'Access'. The main content area has a search bar, a 'Note' section, and a 'See also' section. The 'Note' section contains a link to 'Office Add-ins model'.

~2,000 articles for Access

Localization process



Content cleanup focus work



New feature work

Content
Optimization

UX/UI reviews on
new features

New feature help
content

Remodel key
content

Consolidation and
de-dupe

Context sensitive
help cleanup

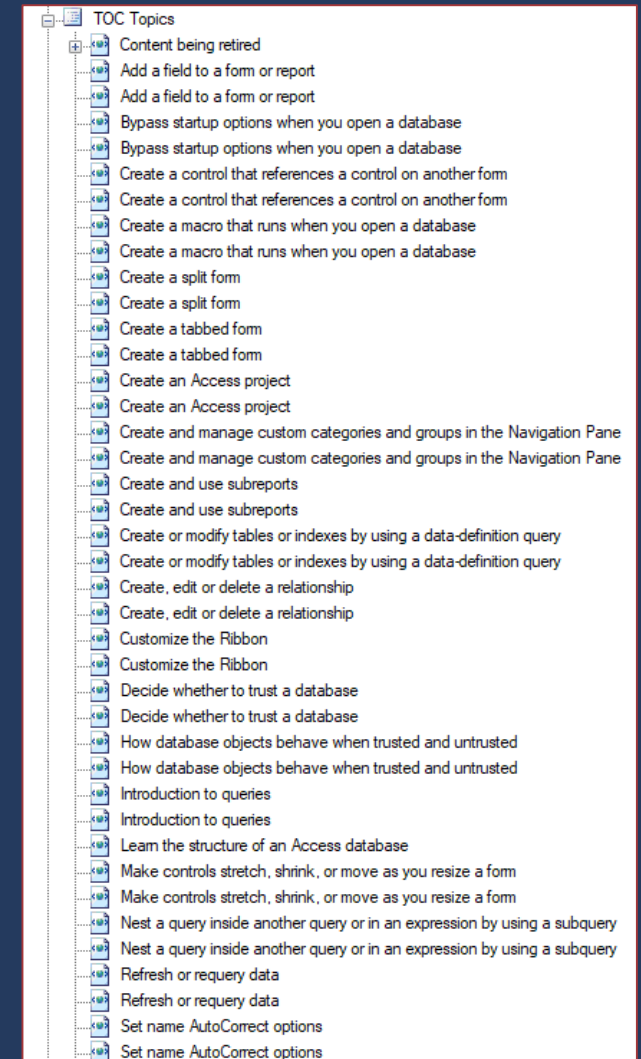
Duplicate content cleanup

The problem

- Duplicate articles across versions all competing for search

Impact

- Organic search (Google/Bing) landing on oldest version → 2007
- Too many results being returned. What version do I have?
- User confusion if they aren't looking at the right content
- Content satisfaction overall goes down



TOC Topics

Content being retired
Add a field to a form or report
Add a field to a form or report
Bypass startup options when you open a database
Bypass startup options when you open a database
Create a control that references a control on another form
Create a control that references a control on another form
Create a macro that runs when you open a database
Create a macro that runs when you open a database
Create a split form
Create a split form
Create a tabbed form
Create a tabbed form
Create an Access project
Create an Access project
Create and manage custom categories and groups in the Navigation Pane
Create and manage custom categories and groups in the Navigation Pane
Create and use subreports
Create and use subreports
Create or modify tables or indexes by using a data-definition query
Create or modify tables or indexes by using a data-definition query
Create, edit or delete a relationship
Create, edit or delete a relationship
Customize the Ribbon
Customize the Ribbon
Decide whether to trust a database
Decide whether to trust a database
How database objects behave when trusted and untrusted
How database objects behave when trusted and untrusted
Introduction to queries
Introduction to queries
Learn the structure of an Access database
Make controls stretch, shrink, or move as you resize a form
Make controls stretch, shrink, or move as you resize a form
Nest a query inside another query or in an expression by using a subquery
Nest a query inside another query or in an expression by using a subquery
Refresh or requery data
Refresh or requery data
Set name AutoCorrect options
Set name AutoCorrect options

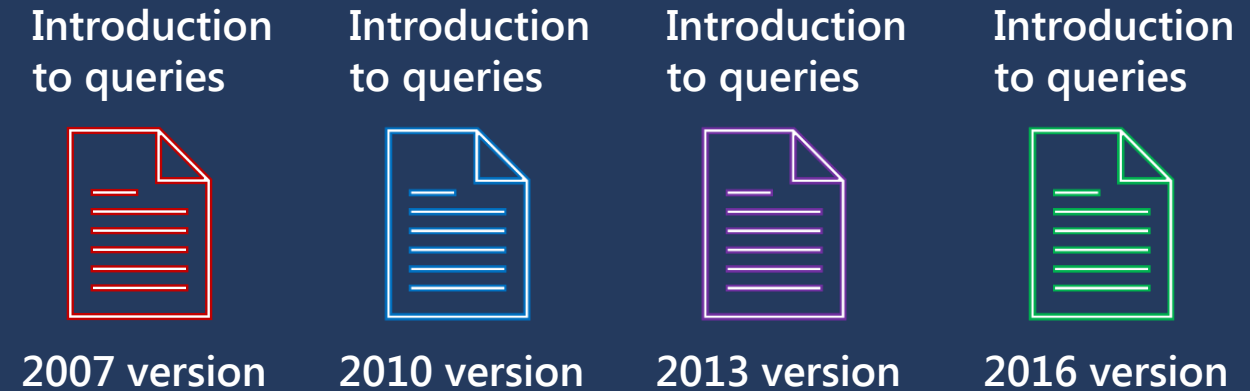
Duplicate content cleanup

The solution

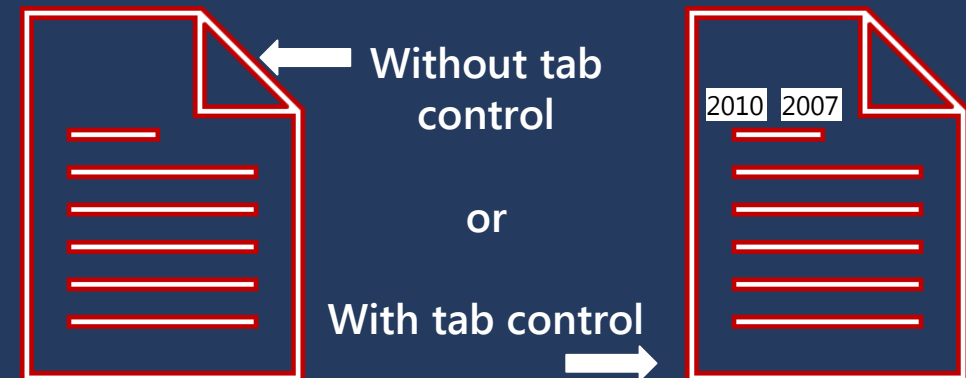
- Consolidate duplicate articles into one (or fewer) asset -> "evergreen"
- Make content text as version agnostic as possible
- Call out small UI differences as needed
- Use tab control to separate big version differences

Results

- ✓ Less search noise
- ✓ Organic search (Google/Bing) landing on one version of the truth
- ✓ In the help pane, tabbed articles display just that version's content
- ✓ Content satisfaction overall generally goes up
- ✓ Clearer content signals now with our data



Consolidate into 1 topic



Duplicate content cleanup

'Evergreen' content examples in Access

Restrict data input by using validation rules

Access for Office 365, Access 2019, Access 2016, Access 2013, Access 2010, Access 2007

You can vet or validate data in Access desktop databases as you enter it by using validation rules. You can use the expression builder to help you format the rule correctly. Validation rules can be set in either table design or table datasheet view. There are three types of validation rules in Access:

1. Field Validation Rule You can use a field validation rule to specify a criterion that all valid field values must meet. You should not have to specify the current field as a part of the rule unless you are using the field in a function. Restrictions on types of characters to be entered in a field may be easier to do with an [Input Mask](#). For example, a date field might have a validation rule that disallows values in the past.

No tab control

Export data to dBASE

Access for Office 365, Access 2019, Access 2016, Access 2013, Access 2010, Access 2007

dBASE was one of the original database management systems and the dBASE file format (.dbf) has been around for a long time. Microsoft Access supports exporting to the following dBASE file formats: dBASE III, dBASE IV, dBASE 5, and dBASE 7.

Newer versions

Office 2013

Office 2007 - 2010

Note dBASE support has the following requirements:

- **Office 365 subscription** If you are an Office 365 subscriber, make sure you have the latest version of Office. If you are an IT professional managing the Office 365 update process, check out the channel releases page to learn which updates are provided in each channel
- **Office 2016** Install the following updates in order: [May 2, 2017, update for Office 2016 \(KB3115501\)](#) and [May 2, 2017, update for Access 2016 \(KB3178700\)](#).
- **Office 2016 Click-to-Run editions** Updates are automatically applied.

Using a tab control

Duplicate content cleanup

We are at 0.00% duplicate titled articles!

March 2018
Status

% title dupes
6.1 %

March 2020
Status

% title dupes
0.0%

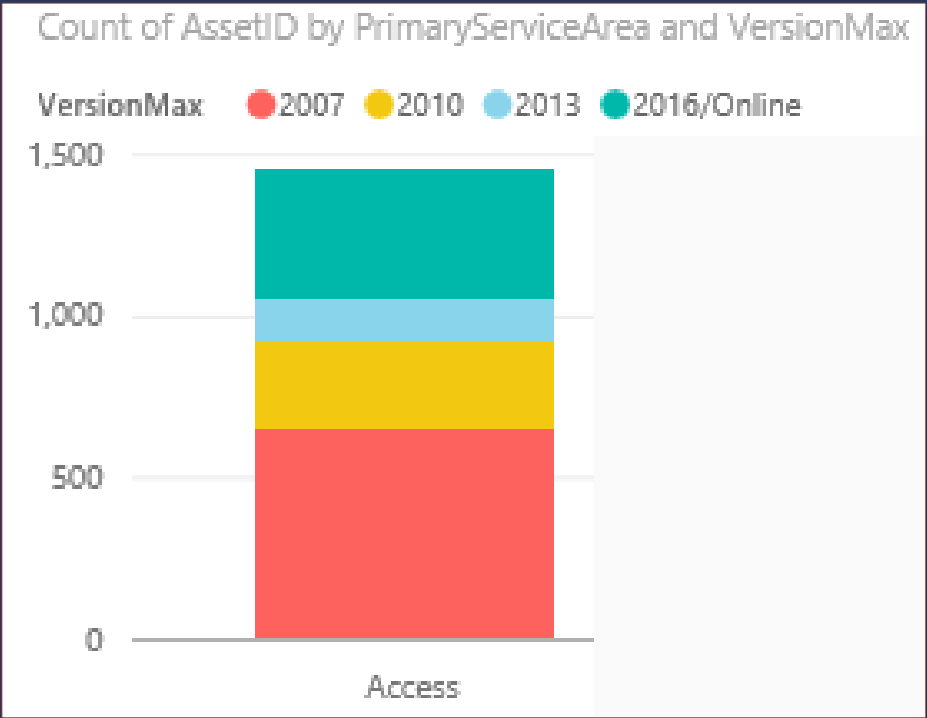


As of last year: GONE

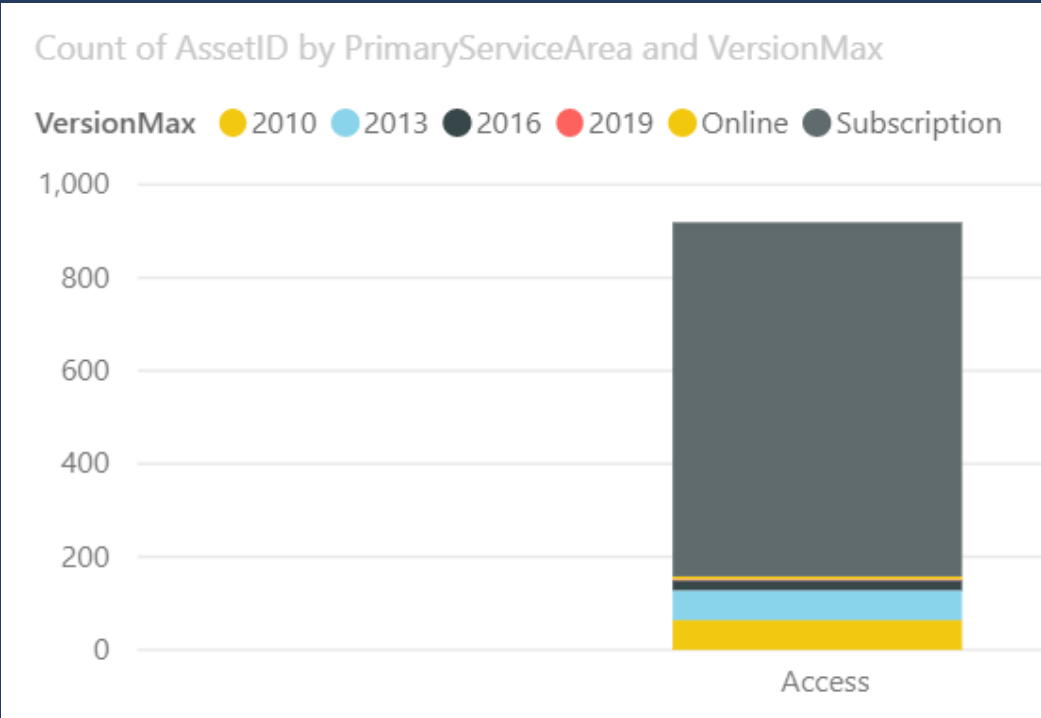
TOC Topics

- Content being retired
- Add a field to a form or report
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- Bypass startup options when you open a database
- Bypass startup options when you open a database
- Create a control that references a control on another form
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- Make controls stretch, shrink, or move as you resize a form
- Make controls stretch, shrink, or move as you resize a form
- Nest a query inside another query or in an expression by using a subquery
- Nest a query inside another query or in an expression by using a subquery
- Refresh or requery data
- Refresh or requery data
- Set name AutoCorrect options
- Set name AutoCorrect options

Duplicate content results



November 2016 Status



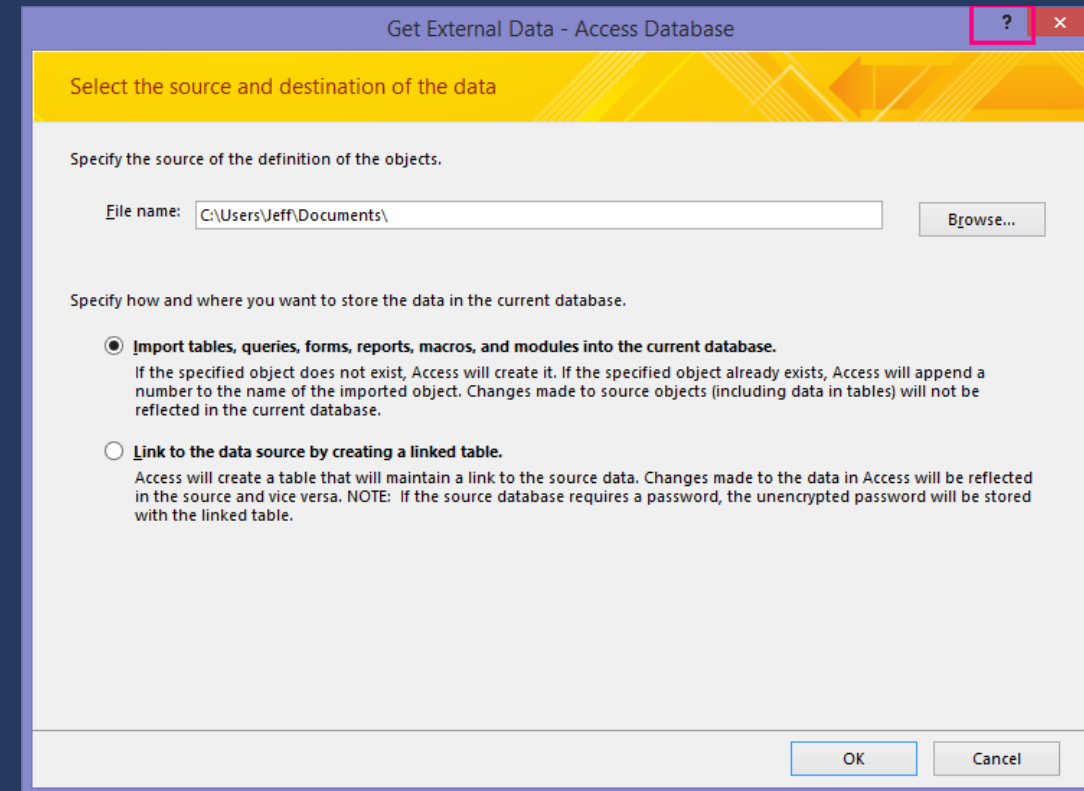
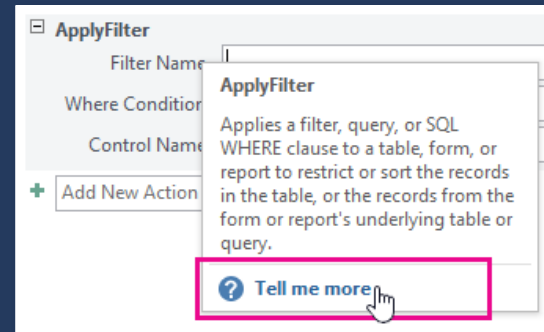
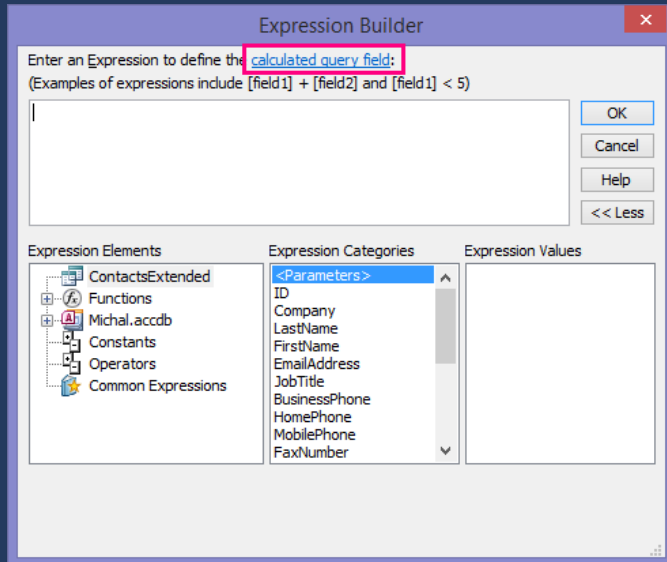
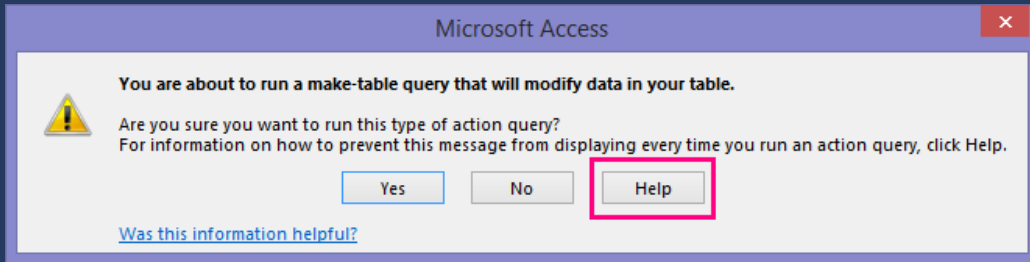
April 2020 Status

AppliesToVersions	# viewed assets
2007 - Subscription	615
2013 - Subscription	53
2010 - Subscription	26
2016 - Subscription	49
2019 - Subscription	6
2013	64
2010 - 2016	14
2010	17
Subscription	10
2007 - 2010	44
2019	1
2016	5
2013 - 2019	1
Total	912

37% less content

Context sensitive help cleanup

Examples of CSH entry points



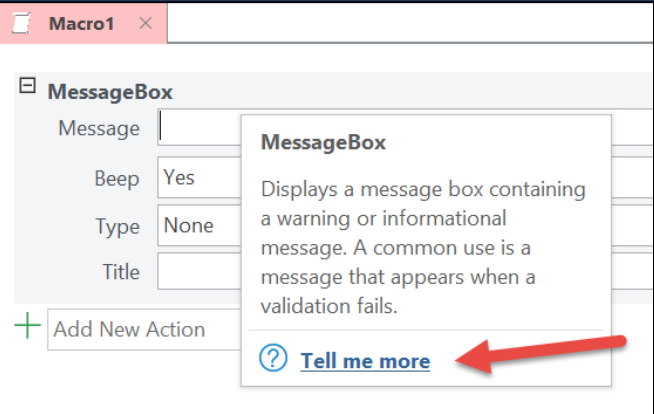
Context sensitive help cleanup

Expected result = User clicks help, and we display the one, best relevant article they need

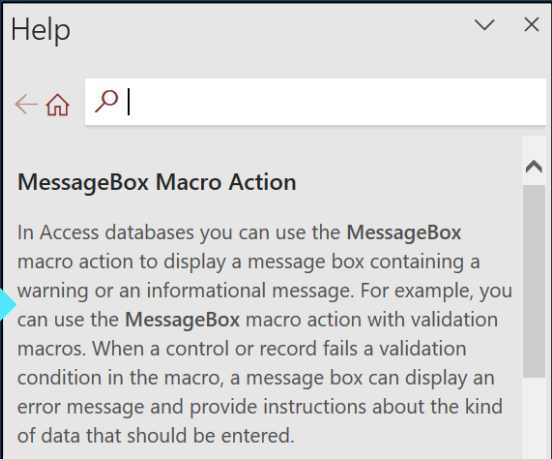
Error = User clicks a Help button / learn more link and there is no article tagged with that CSH ID and Access version in use

Error Result = User sees our default in-app help landing page (or in web browser)

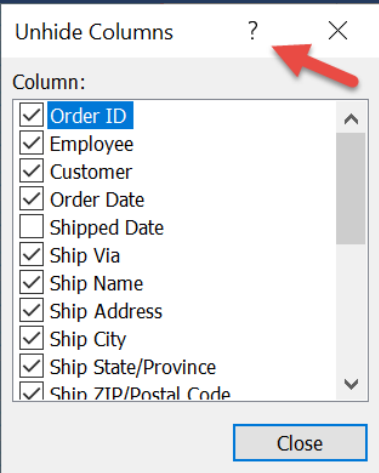
Example of CSH that works



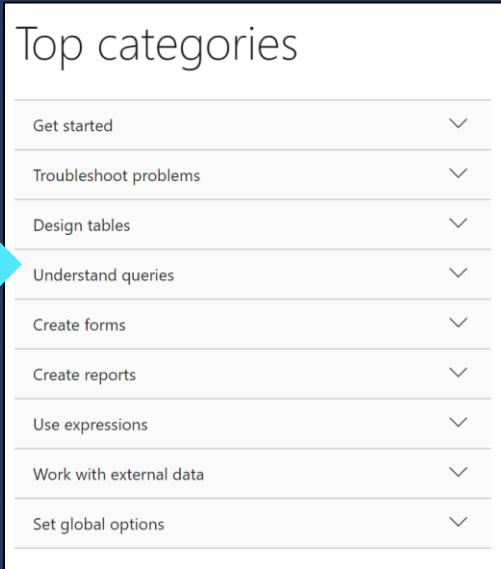
HelpID=4007



Example of CSH that is broken



HelpID=39023



Context sensitive help error rates



OriginatingService	Average Rating	Distinct CSH IDs	% CSH Errors
Access for Office 365	45	602	2.21%
Access 2016	51	606	2.53%
Access 2013	56	492	2.28%
Access 2019	51	449	2.57%
Access 2010	46	489	3.51%

Current state

Context sensitive help disambiguation

Reduce/eliminate multiple articles returned with a CSH call

Access for Office 365 Help

Search

Encrypt a database by using a database password

This article explains how to encrypt an Access database by using a database password, and how to decrypt a database and remove its password.

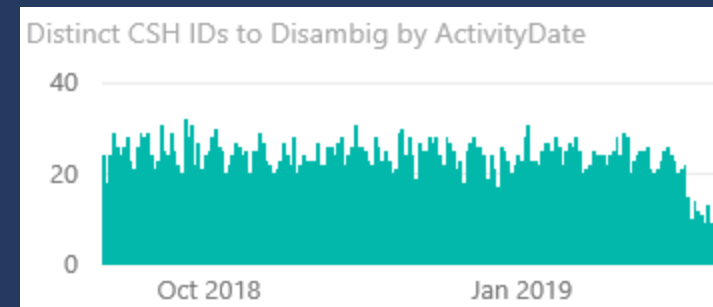
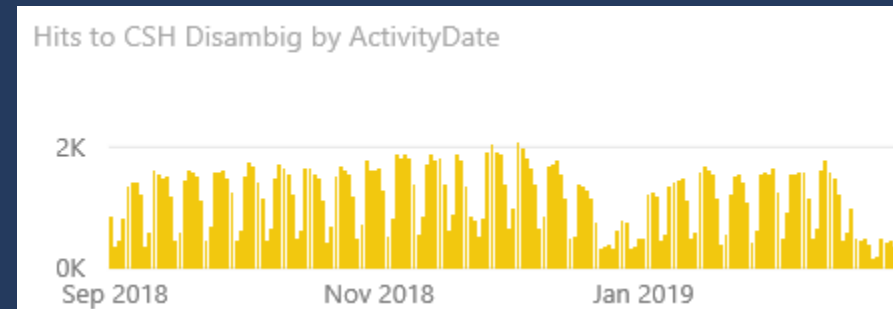
Compact and repair a database

Use the Compact and Repair Database command in Access to help prevent and correct the following problems: files growing larger with use and files becoming corrupted.

Info Backstage Help

Info Backstage Help

1 - 3 of 3



>413K hits in
a 6 month
time period

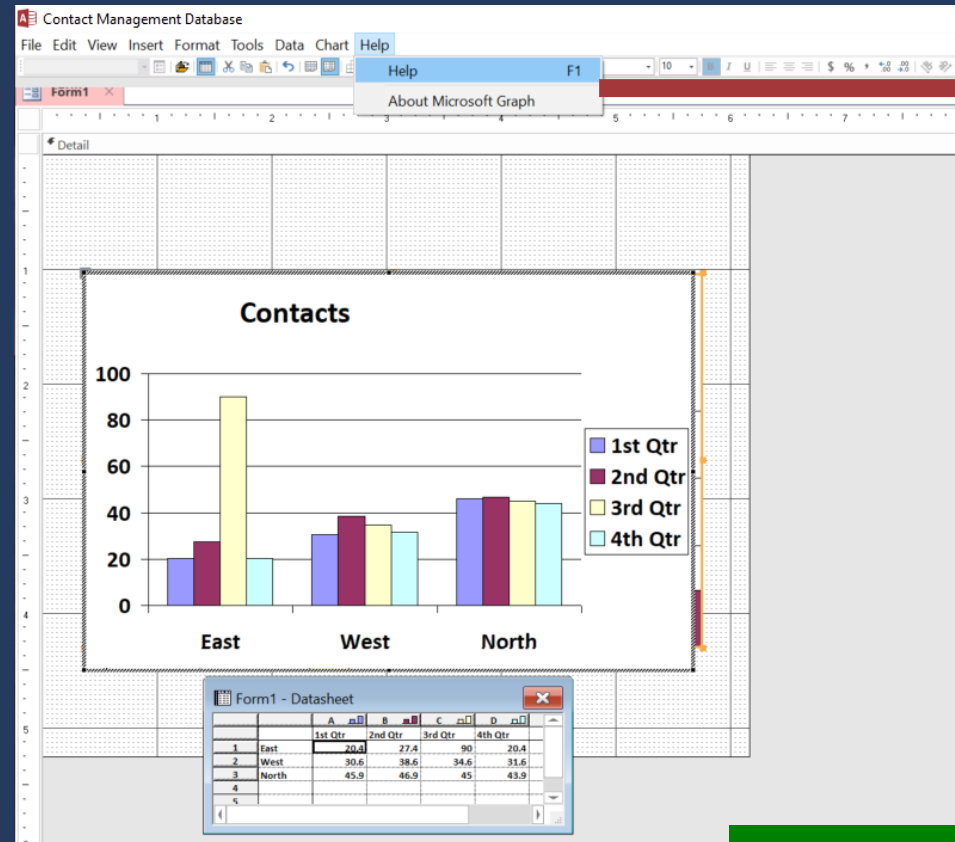
As of last year: All fixed

Fixing MS Graph Charting Help

Older charting design experience in its own window

Help experience broken for over 12 years!

- 2007
- 2010
- 2013
- 2016
- 2019
- Subscription



MS Graph Help Topics

Access for Office 365, Access 2019, Access 2016, Access 2013, Access 2010, Access 2007, More...

This topic contains a list of MS Graph 2007 help topics, a legacy chart functionality that is available in Access and Excel.

Formatting

- Add a shadow or 3-D effect to a drawing object
- Add a shadow to a drawing object
- Add a WordArt drawing object
- Add or change the 3-D effect of a drawing object
- Align text in chart or axis titles
- Change colors, patterns, lines, fills, and borders in charts
- Change the font and size of text in a chart
- Change the font on a datasheet
- Change the shape of a chart
- Change the text in a WordArt drawing object
- Change the number format of datasheet cells or chart items

As of last year: All fixed

Context sensitive help -> DOCS

General	Lookup
Field Size	Long Integer
New Values	Increment
Format	
Caption	
Indexed	Yes (No Duplicates)
Text Align	General

F1



Docs / Office VBA Reference / Access / Concepts / Miscellaneous / FieldSize property

Filter by title

execute method (ADO connection)

FieldSize property

FilterColumn, FilterCriterion, FilterValue, SortColumn, and SortDirection properties

Handle errors in Visual J++

Ignore Nulls property

Index or primary key cannot contain a Null value (Error 3058)

FieldSize property

06/08/2017 • 2 minutes to read • +1

Applies to: Access 2013 | Access 2016

You can use the **FieldSize** property to set the maximum size for data stored in a field.

Setting

Properties CSH to DOCS that still need fixing

Forms/Reports/Controls

Datasheet Caption
Hyperlink target
Use theme
Pressed color
Pressed fore color
On before navigate
On progress change
Column widths
Picture size mode
Show page header and footer

Display as hyperlink
Cursor on hover
Hover color
Hover fore color
Scroll left
On document complete
Reading order
Line slant
Filter on empty master

Tables/Fields

Read only when connected
New values
Append only
Expression
Result type

Queries

Alias
Source

Access end user content metrics



Data points for content metrics

Article ratings...

Was this information helpful?

Yes

No

Article comments...

explain how to link tables using primary keys.
i and every-one else are clever enough to discern what we might do with
love the summary lesson.
the sound and content was very good but the video quality was real bad.
very clear and easy to understand.
very helpful, i liked it
how do i view my photos and other ect.

Help searches...

Help

table

Results for "table"

[Introduction to tables - Access](#)

An Access table contains all the data in a database. Learn more about creating and modifying tables in Microsoft Access. In a well-designed Access database, there are

[Manage linked tables - Access](#)

The Linked Table Manager is a central location for viewing and managing all data sources and linked tables in an Access database. From time-to-time, you may need to

[Use a screen reader to create tables in Access desktop databases](#)

A Customers table that lists your company's customers and their addresses. A Products table that lists the products that you sell, including prices and pictures for

Tell Me searches...

Tell me what you want to do

File

Home

Create

External Data

Database Tools

Help

View

Paste

Cut

Copy

Format Painter

Filter

Ascending

Descending

Remove Sort

Selection

Advanced

Toggle Filter

Refresh

New

Save

Delete

Totals

Spelling

More

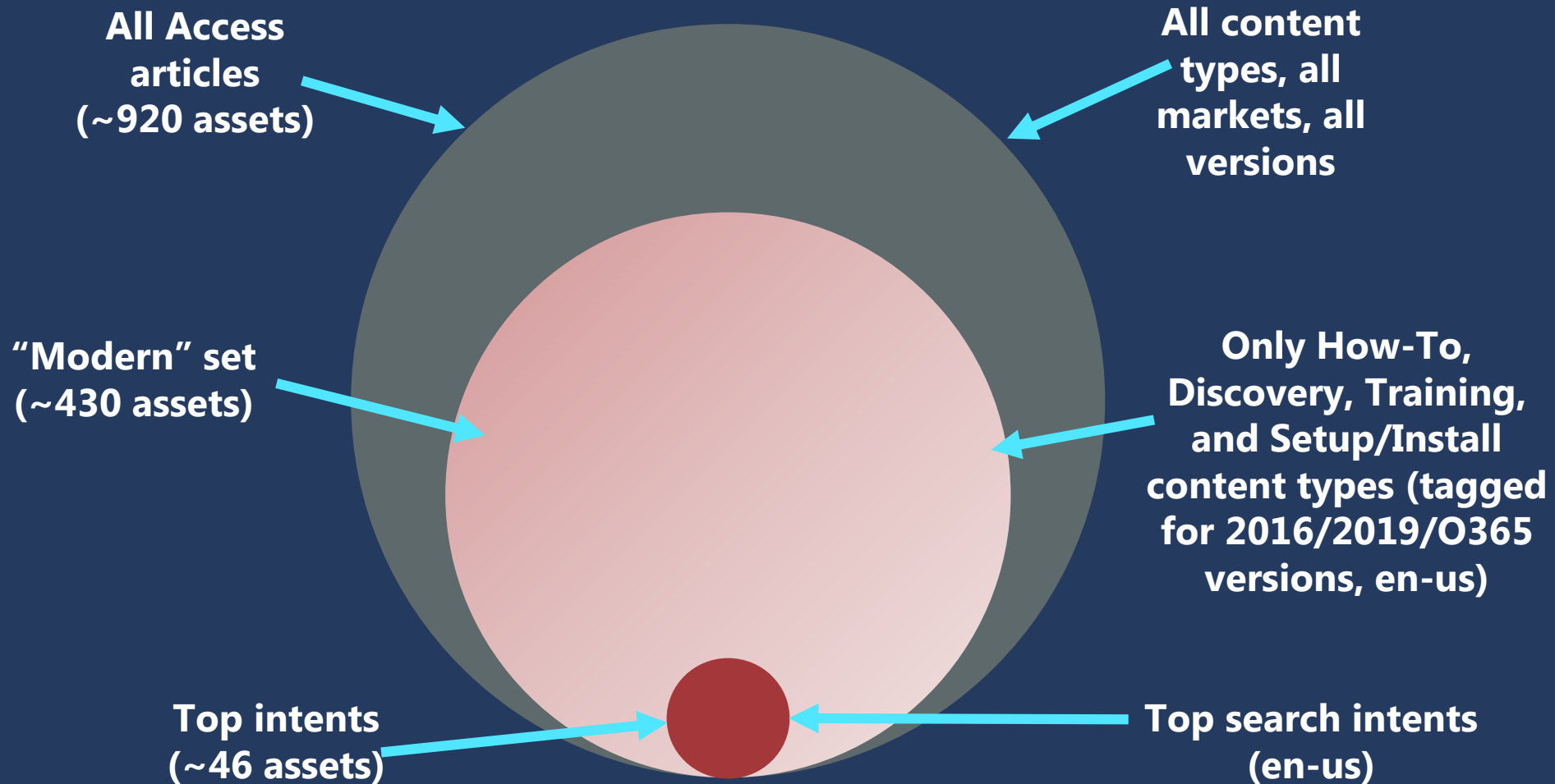
Find

Article link clicks...

To learn more about Access desktop templates, see

[Use a template to create an Access desktop database.](#)

Access article and training inventory



Metrics – Top en-us search intent content

FiscalYear	FY16				FY17				FY18			
PortfolioProd	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Access	59	58	56	54	53	55	55					
Expressions	33	36	31	30	29	38	47					
ExternalData	46	45	45	45	44	46	54					
Forms	51	49	55	49	49	53	46					
InputMask	49	70	61	61	61	67	65					
NavigationPane	68	57	59	61	62	58	51					
PrimaryKey	62	46	48	40	54	50	54					
QueryCriteria	54	58	57	61	57	60	57					
Relationships	65	72	62	64	70	66	68					
Reports	45	50	49	47	46	46	45					
Tables	74	73	61	62	65	65	61					
ValidationRules	67	50	49	47	57	56	52					
WhatsNew	75	72	71	67	63	65	63					
Total	59	58	56	54	53	55	55					

Before we started...

FiscalYear	FY19					FY20			
PortfolioProd	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Access	62	66	68	59	66	70	77	73	73
Expressions	58	70	71	51	64	66	76	71	69
ExternalData	61	63	68	52	65	63	74	74	73
Forms	62	62	60	53	63	66	73	72	70
InputMask	65	69	67	60	60	69	69	70	66
NavigationPane	43	57	64	55	72	80	84	83	83
PrimaryKey	58	59	68	57	69	70	77	72	71
QueryCriteria	64	63	66	58	61	69	71	67	67
Relationships	66	72	74	67	75	79	84	78	80
Reports	50	65	69	59	70	70	83	78	79
Tables	68	75	77	66	79	80	87	82	78
ValidationRules	65	68	63	51	52	67	69	69	71
WhatsNew	64	68	69	69	70	71	74	67	67
Total	62	66	68	59	66	70	77	73	73

...after cleanup!

Metrics – Most viewed articles

Title	Average Rating
Examples of query criteria	56.63 %
Control data entry formats with input masks	61.34 %
Access video training	55.09 %
Create a new database	62.05 %
Create a database in Access	71.09 %
Data types for Access desktop databases	53.82 %
Examples of using dates as criteria in Access queries	53.81 %
Guidelines for naming fields, controls, and objects	58.44 %
Why does Access want me to enter a parameter value?	34.14 %
Introduction to data types and field properties	61.49 %
Database basics	70.38 %
Create a table and add fields	60.91 %
Restrict data input by using validation rules	55.57 %
Create a simple select query	50.35 %
Database design basics	74.17 %
Learn to build an expression	59.24 %
Featured Access Templates	58.38 %
Use the Expression Builder	46.65 %
Create a form in Access	57.37 %
Guide to table relationships	61.26 %

Top 20 most viewed

TopicTitle	AvgRtg (100+ rtgs)
Examples of query criteria	59
Create a new database	66
Create a table and add fields	57
Introduction to data types and field properties	65
Database basics	76
Examples of using dates as criteria in Access q...	49
Create a form in Access	57
Create a simple select query	52
Control data entry formats with input masks	63
Add or change a table's primary key in Access	61
Create, edit or delete a relationship	59
Restrict data input by using validation rules	63
Guide to table relationships	61
Create and run an update query	57
Database design basics	77
Use a union query to combine multiple querie...	48
Download and install Office 365 Access Runtime	62
Featured Access Templates	57
Format a date and time field	36
Use parameters to ask for input when running ...	58

Most external search views

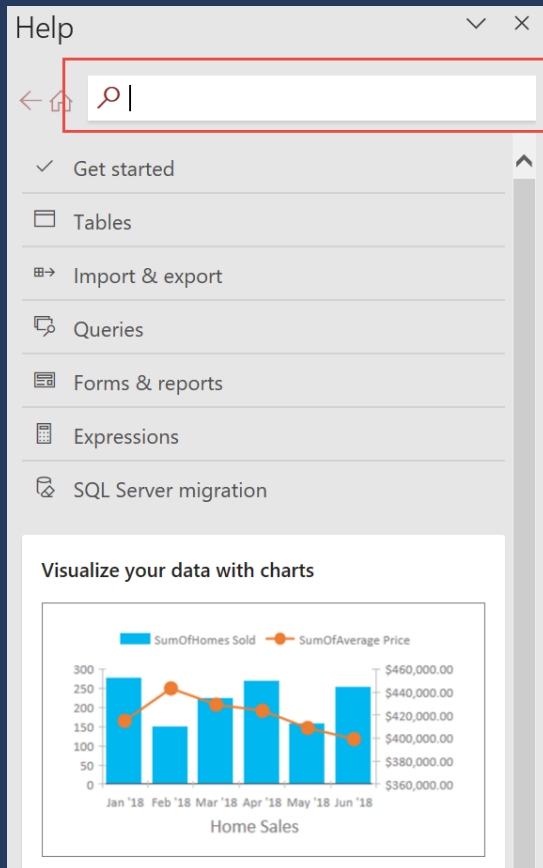
Metrics – Language/locale

Content Language	Average Rating
English	61.13 %
Spanish	57.02 %
Japanese	40.34 %
German	46.82 %
Russian	55.09 %
French	50.79 %
Italian	53.07 %
Portuguese (Brazilian)	54.60 %
Polish	38.87 %
Chinese (Simplified)	57.82 %
Dutch	52.02 %
Indonesian	56.56 %
Arabic	67.31 %
Vietnamese	54.29 %
Ukrainian	59.26 %
Thai	74.70 %
Chinese (Traditional)	44.47 %
Korean	50.19 %

Content Language	Average Rating
Korean	50.19 %
Portuguese	55.11 %
Hungarian	52.33 %
Turkish	38.51 %
Romanian	64.18 %
Czech	42.73 %
Swedish	50.43 %
Hebrew	51.84 %
Greek	60.32 %
Croatian	46.71 %
Serbian (Latin)	63.33 %
Bulgarian	70.50 %
Danish	53.97 %
Slovak	60.89 %
Finnish	37.29 %
Norwegian (Bokmål)	57.02 %
Latvian	54.55 %
Slovenian	35.94 %
Lithuanian	49.15 %
Estonian	66.67 %

Breakdown by market

Metrics – In-app help search queries



1. Query
2. Criteria
3. Input Mask
4. Relationship
5. Update Query
6. Switchboard
7. Primary Key
8. Format
9. Form
10. Date

** Data is for October, 2015*

1. Navigation Pane
2. Query
3. Criteria
4. Primary key
5. Input Mask
6. Date
7. Format
8. IIF
9. SQL
10. No Query

** Data is for October, 2016*

1. Navigation Pane
2. Input Mask
3. Primary Key
4. Query
5. Criteria
6. Date
7. Format
8. DateDiff
9. IIF
10. SQL

** Data is for December, 2017*

1. Navigation Pane
2. Primary key
3. Input mask
4. Date picker
5. Criteria
6. IIF
7. Update query
8. Date
9. Format
10. Query

** Data is for March, 2020*

Top Access internal
search queries
(all versions en-us)

What's next?



Reference set duplication

Problem

We have duplicate macro action, reference, and function content sets that exist across SOC and DOCS landscapes (~ 270 topics).

- SQL Syntax content set (34)
- Macro action reference set (90)
- Functions reference set (149)

Impact

- These compete for SEO and they don't always match exactly
- SOC ones are more up to date but context sensitive help in Access goes to the DOCS ones

Our plan to solve

Created a plan to merge the content from SOC ones into DOCS and then retire/redirect the SOC article web traffic to DOCS

Timing of work to be completed - TBD
FY20 Q4 (May-June) perhaps?

INSERT INTO Statement

Access for Office 365, Access 2019, Access 2016, Access 2013, Access 2010, Access 2007

Adds a record or multiple records to a table. This is referred to as an append query.

Syntax

Multiple-record append query:

```
INSERT INTO target [(field1[, field2[, ...]])] [IN externaldatabase]  
SELECT [source.]field1[, field2[, ...]]  
FROM tableexpression
```

Single-record append query:


```
INSERT INTO target [(field1[, field2[, ...]])]  
VALUES (value1[, value2[, ...]])
```

The INSERT INTO statement has

SOC

DOCS

INSERT INTO statement (Microsoft Access SQL)

10/18/2018 • 4 minutes to read • 

Applies to: Access 2013, Office 2013

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Syntax

Multiple-record append query

```
INSERT INTO target [(field1[, field2[, ...]])] [IN externaldatabase] SELECT [source.]field1[, field2[, ...]] FROM tableexpression
```

Single-record append query

```
INSERT INTO target [(field1[, field2[, ...]])] VALUES (value1[, value2[, ...]])
```

The INSERT INTO statement has these parts:

Questions?



Danke

谢谢

Grazie

شكرا

Je vous remercie

Ευχαριστούμε

Vă mulțumesc, domnule.

धन्यवाद



감사합니다

Obrigada

תודה

Спасибо

ありがとう

Gracias

Дякую

Tack

Thank you!
I hope all of you stay safe and healthy.