Frequently Asked Questions

Database Tool
"Data is useless without an interface. uture"

- ## Q – What is the Database Tool?
  1) A simple, yet powerful web interface for database admins. Created by senior database developers, way of adding and modifying tables. Add a table to store information about anything. Simple's engine will create a new page to interact with your data. There are tools for importing from spreadsheets, as well as relating tables.

- ## How do I add a table?

  Here are a few ways of adding tables (resource):
  1) Create a table from scratch by clicking the 'New Table' button
  2) Import a table from a tab delimited text file. If you have information in a spreadsheet, simply label the first row with column headers and 'save as' a tab delimited file. The name of the file will become your new table name.

- ## Why are columns created automatically when I create a new table?

  1) There are several columns that are created by default with every new table. They are needed for several reasons and should not be removed.
  2) ID column – primary key that has the table name prepended. (TableID int auto increment)
  3) Table Column – a column with the same name as the table. This is used internally for generated lists and 'clamping' related data
  4) Description – this column is added for your convenience
  5) Notes – the system automatically appends user and time stamp to this column, after every record update
  6) Created, CreatedBy, LastModified, LastModifiedBy – not editable in DB Tool, these columns are used to track time and user information. You may view this in your grid, but by default is not added to the form

- ## How do I add a column?

  1) Once your table appears, click the arrow to the right of the table name. You'll see a list of columns that the system needs. After the last column, you can click in the empty grid area and type the name you want. This is a database tool so there are IMPORTANT rules and guidelines to follow:
  2) No spaces or special characters in the column name!

3) Capitalize each word for posterity in a column name. For instance, last name should be entered LastName. The system will automatically display the two separate words on the web form for users.
4) Use proper data types. This is important for future reporting or calculations. A number cannot be summarized if entered as text!
5) ID fields are handled uniquely (always a NUMBER). Dropdown lists automatically appear if you use an ID field from another table. For instance, a Customer table may have an AddressID column added. The drop down list in the Customer form would display the Address field from the Address table but store the AddressID field in the Customer table.

- ## How can I relate data?

1) You can link tables together in DB Tool by dragging one table onto another by grabbing the table at the upper left hand corner (squiggly icon) of the table header.
2) We have provided a powerful tool called 'Clamp' for relating information. While editing a record inside of a process, select 'Relate' from the Tool menu. This will display a list of processes the user has access to. Select the process and then select the record you want to relate the current record to.
3) For instance, you are adding a record into a 'Sales' table. After you save the record, you click on 'Relate' and then select the 'Customer' process. You then find the specific customer record, select it and save. The system linked this specific sale to this specific customer. Now when you view this customer record, you will see the 'Related' information (if this is allowed in 'App Manager' for this process) on the right side of the record detail.
4) You can add ID fields of foreign tables to your current table. To do this, simply add a new field to your table with the name of the other table's ID field. This will create a drop down list in the form for the current table.
5) For instance, when editing the 'Sales' table, add a new column called 'CustomerID' (assuming you have a table called 'Customer'). Change the field type to 'Number' and save. Regenerate the form and model using 'App Manager'. The process form will now have a drop down list in it. By default, all lists generated will use the ID as the value, and the 'table column' for display.

- ## How can I constrain data?

In order to simplify the flow of information, we don't allow the direct constraint of information at the database layer.

1) You can restrict how each process interacts with each table (add, change, delete, relate, show related…).
2) You can restrict which process a user can access.
3) You can restrict the data in drop down lists.
4) You can add pre and post process functions that perform data validation.

- **Is my data backed up?**

  Every customer has their own database and client directory. We have also provided you with additional tools for managing your data:

  1) Export all data in a tab delimited file
  2) Export SQL create table with insert statements for each record
  3) Export table to another table

- **How do I generate reports from my data?**

  1) One way is to use SQL in your process. In 'App Manager' you can add a select statement to 'Overview Query'.
  2) Another way is to restrict your results directly from the grid using search or compound search. You can then export the results of the search to your local computer in a tab delimited file. This feature gives users the tools they need to analyze your data.
  3) There is a 'Report' add-on that allows you to graph, chart or view data in various ways.

If you need additional support, contact our professional services department

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