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## ACCESS USER GROUP

**NATIONAL SEMINAR Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

**To be held at: Blackmore Ricotech, Chitterne Dairy, Shrewton Road, Chitterne, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0LN**

<https://www.r3cycle.co.uk>

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### AGENDA

- 08.45 – 09.15      **Registration, Tea/Coffee & Biscuits**
- 09.15 – 09.30      **Introduction** – by Rod Gordon, Chairman of the Access User Group
- 09.30 – 10.45      **Live Demo Of A Working Access/SQL Server database** presented by Steve Girling, Blackmore Ricotech  
Steve will demo how a bespoke Access database is used to run an IT Asset and Disposal business – this slot will include a live tour of the system in action.  
Topics covered in the demo will include:-  
- CRM and warehouse functionality  
- Creating temporary tables in SQL Server to move code server side  
- Storing Pass Thu SQL in a local table and changing where clauses on the fly to generate data used on forms and reports  
- Creating a portable solution for the collections team to be able to visit clients' sites and perform auditing on site.  
- Tour and live demonstration of the system including best practices for data sanitisation on all types of data-bearing items.
- 10.45 – 11.00      **Break for Tea/Coffee & Biscuits**
- 11.00 – 11.45      **The Lazy Coder** presented by Donna Landy, Milldata Computing Limited  
I hate doing things over and over. Don't you? In fact, one of the main attractions of being a coder is that I rarely have to do the same thing twice. Apart, that is, from biting my tongue when the client changes the spec!  
If, like me, you've had enough tongue sandwich, this may be the solution: become a lazy coder and avoid writing a single line of code in your prototypes.  
In this session I will demonstrate a code-less prototype solution and explore the pros and cons of this approach in an interactive presentation.
- 11.45 – 12.45      **Automatic Form Resizing In Access** presented by Colin Riddington, Mendip Data Systems  
All developers will be aware that forms designed for a specific screen size/resolution may look dreadful on a different monitor with a higher/lower resolution and/or screen size or shape (4:3, 16:9 or widescreen).  
Some developers deal with this issue by using layout guides to group several controls together with anchoring to adjust the position/size of controls on the screen. The results can be quite successful for simple form layouts. However, that isn't necessarily the case for more complex form designs as developers do not have full control over positioning and size of each control on the form.

Automatic form resizing (AFR) code is designed to fix all such issues. Forms and their controls can be automatically resized and repositioned for any screen size and resolution whilst allowing developers full control over the form layout and appearance. In addition, the session will explain how to add a zoom feature to Access forms.

The AFR code works well with all types of form (including split and navigation forms) and with both overlapping windows and tabbed documents display modes.

This session will be used to explain how the automatic form resizing code works and provides tips for using the code most effectively in your own applications. It will also cover some potential issues you may experience and possible solutions for each of these.

All required code will be provided together with an example application demonstrating its use.

See [Automatic Form Resizing - Mendip Data Systems](#)

12.45 – 13.45

### **Lunch**

13.45 – 14.15

**Confirming The Printing Of Reports When Access Doesn't Play Ball** presented by Alan Cossey, Premier Data Technologies

Alan recently had a client who was printing off certificates (Access reports) in an inherited database but if the printing was cancelled or otherwise failed, the database still recorded the printing as having happened. The client did not want to allow users to delete such records of the printing (would be 'like giving Guy Fawkes a box of matches') so he needed to record whether or not the printing actually took place. Printer objects have no events in Access and handling events in reports can be complicated.

Alan already had existing code which successfully handled printing from Print Preview and was quickly able to adapt it to printing from Report View, but Access does naughty things when printing reports directly, eg. from the ribbon.

Alan will present how he managed to get it all to work.

14.15 – 15.00

**Controlling The Application Interface** presented by Colin Riddington, Mendip Data Systems

This session will show how the Access application interface can be controlled in various ways including:

- a) show / hide navigation pane
- b) show / hide ribbon (& QAT)
- c) show / hide taskbar
- d) dim/blur/remove background
- e) show / hide entire Access application window
- f) maximise form to fill the entire screen (no title bar & no taskbar)
- g) drag a borderless form to a new position
- h) add rounded corners to forms
- i) fade forms in/out
- j) open reports with the application interface hidden (various methods)
- k) scrolling/flashing text
- l) add balloon tooltips (system tray notifications)

Some methods can help make a database more secure.

Although it is highly unlikely that any single application would ever need to use all those features, the session will show how each item can be toggled on / off independently without problems.

All required code will be provided together with an example application demonstrating its use.

See [Control Application Interface - Mendip Data Systems](#)

15.00 – 15.15

### **Break for Tea/Coffee & Cake**

15.15 – 16.00

**Making SQL Backup For You On Demand** presented by Peter Bryant, Corylus Business Systems

When moving away from proprietary backup software (waves to Backup Exec) and installing systems with SQL Server Express, there is a notable lack of managed backup tools that enable sites to manage RPO and RTO. A bit rough around the edges (Ed: that's enough about Peter!) this solution gives you a lot of that control back; and makes it visible from the application to the users. Backups can be scheduled and/or on-demand.

As ever, sample code will be available to attendees afterwards, and you can cut your own solutions to suit your cloth. Peter uses it in house to do high frequency backups to the cloud in order to sleep at night after rebuilding the long lost Microsoft Money to manage the family finances.

No bank accounts were harmed in the building of this solution.

16.00 – 16.15

**Closing** by Rod Gordon

## Bookings

There is no charge for this seminar – many thanks to Steve Girling's company, Blackmore Computers for hosting!

See [www.r3cycle.co.uk](http://www.r3cycle.co.uk)

To book a place: simply email [margaret@gordonassociates.co.uk](mailto:margaret@gordonassociates.co.uk) Telephone: 01242 529820

## Note About Covid

We are planning to run this meeting as a face-to-face meeting only (ie not online).

In the unlikely event that a new lockdown is imposed then we will consider switching to fully online, or we may simply postpone.

There is no plan to do a combined face-to-face and online event.

All attendees are required to be double-jabbed (triple is even better!)

We will request face masks on entry, but they are not required while sitting down ("Masks on the move" is the slogan to remember!).

Seating will be "normal" ie not 2m apart.

## Any old kit you want to get rid of?

Blackmore have offered to securely sanitise and dispose of any redundant IT equipment from members FOC. Therefore, any of the following equipment can be dropped off at their secure facility on the day:

Camera, CD/DVD , CRT monitors, Games Console, Hard Disk Drive, Laptop, Memory Card/Stick , Mobile Phone, Network Equipment, PC, Server, Sim Card, Smart Device, Tablet, TFT monitors, UPS.

**NOTE:** It would be appreciated if members could email Steve Girling on [steve.girling@r3cycle.co.uk](mailto:steve.girling@r3cycle.co.uk) prior to the seminar with a brief list of anything they will be bringing to allow for space to be made available.

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## SPEAKER PROFILES

### Steve Girling

Steve is the IT software development manager for Blackmore Computers, who are one of the country's leading data destruction and secure IT disposal companies. Blackmore has been in business for over twenty years and have a Government approved data sanitisation process and are one of only a handful of UK IT Asset Disposal companies to be ADISA accredited, achieving their highest level of certification (Distinction with Honours).

Steve has been developing Access based solutions since Access 97 for a wide variety of businesses, focussing in the last few years on SQL Azure and on-premise SQL Server backends. In what seems a different life, Steve previously worked for a software house developing case management solutions for solicitors.

When he is allowed to escape, Steve spends his spare time watching his first love Leeds United, and reminiscing about how he used to be able to make century breaks at snooker.

## **Donna Landy**

Donna started her computer career at the early age of seven in the Cambridge University Computer Lab, playing Spacewar against her elder brother on a PDP-7. Programs were loaded via a mesmerising paper tape, and the debugger was called DDT - a joke she found far funnier than her brother always beating her.

Fast forward to 1985 when Donna left Cambridge with a 2:1 in Computer Science, having skipped the incomprehensible database lectures. But in a strange twist of fate, it's databases she's been working with for the past 25 years.

Most of her freelance work has involved the use of program generators - including a commercial Clipper generator called "Mustang" - and she has written three herself (for Java, Classic ASP, and Excel).

She has contracted more or less continuously in the UK since her return from South Africa in 1998, specialising in Access and Excel VBA, and SQL Server. Her clients include household names such as Kodak, River Island, and Harvey Nichols; finance houses such as Lloyds, Barclays, and St James's Place, local government (N Somerset, Lambeth) as well as national government (HMRC, Dept of Health, National Audit Office).

Donna lives in Devon near her two daughters, and in her spare time performs stand-up comedy to pretty much anyone who will listen..... and sometimes in work meetings too - with erm, varied results.

## **Colin Riddington, Mendip Data Systems, <http://www.mendipdatasystems.co.uk>**

Colin has been an Access developer for over 20 years starting with Access 97. He spent many years teaching in secondary schools including having responsibility for data analysis. Having initially created Access apps for his own personal use he later expanded this to include staff at a number of UK schools.

Colin originally set up Mendip Data Systems to manage the distribution of commercial Access apps for schools. Over time, this has evolved into a broader focus enabling him to create apps for businesses & developers.

His website includes many Access articles, example apps, sample code and security challenges, together with commercial applications for schools, businesses and developers.

Colin's focus is on stretching the boundaries of what can be achieved using Access.

## **Alan Cossey, Premier Data Technologies**

Alan's background is in Natural Sciences and he worked for 24 years for a multinational agrochemical company, starting as a production chemist, then gradually moving into general management. He had a proper job until his department was merged with one run by Del Boy in 1995. Since Alan had once done a short project using a computer some years prior to this, someone had the bright idea of giving him something to do vaguely related to IT rather than make him redundant straight away. Alan hung in there for six years before getting the old heave-ho, but managed to learn Access in the meantime. In 2004 he started his own company, then wasted six months writing a manual handling risk assessment app for mobile phones. Unfortunately, he chose Windows Mobile as his platform, but came to his senses and returned to Access. Since then he has created Access-based databases for a wide variety of industries and organisations. Since he knows a bit about IT, he has been landed with handling IT stuff for his local group of Church of England churches and is also a "Licensed Lay Minister" in the Diocese of Norwich.

He reckons he has only missed one National Seminar in over 20 years, but that may be because he is getting old and forgetful.

## **Peter Bryant, [pbryant@corylus-business.co.uk](mailto:pbryant@corylus-business.co.uk)**

Peter has run his own consultancy since 2004 and (after a fashion) specialises in not specialising; he's worked in almost every sector ranging from automotive to hi-fi, from reseller to print, and financial services to charity. He has used Microsoft Access since the early beta program two decades ago and his projects are now more about data analysis, function and business problem solving rather than the most amazing code writing. Projects are nearly always lengthy prototyping/agile projects where the client starts out quite unsure of their expected final outcome. As well as Access/SQL development he gets involved in general IT Management for SME's as well as project management for resellers and enterprise.