

# Smart Access

Solutions for Microsoft® Access® Developers

## Using Invisible Forms to Track Users

Tobi K. Hoffman



Migrating a project into the Citrix platform provided a workable environment for Tobi Hoffman's company's people nationwide to access a single database, yet presented some unexpected challenges. Since Citrix forces all users into a single application, keeping track of users' individual security clearances was almost impossible—until the application got a form that no one saw.

**T**HE Citrix system provides some special programming challenges. Citrix allows people to connect to a remote computer and work with the applications on that computer as if it were an extension of their own desktop. The users are actually running the application on the Citrix server, and (here's the problem) the users are opening multiple instances of the application—each user gets his own copy of the same EXE, all running on the remote server. Therefore you break what many of us have learned as a basic rule of Access development: Don't have many people using the same front-end database. The novice Access developer often learns this lesson by putting a front-end database (with its forms, queries, and reports) on a network server to be shared by all users, and then wondering why everything runs so slowly. In a crisis, especially if the database also holds all the tables, forms, queries, reports, and code, they find that their databases are frequently corrupted.

The lesson is that you should split the database into two parts:

- A compiled (.mde) front end that holds the queries, forms, reports, and whatever code you need to support your application
- A back end with the tables containing the actual data

Each user gets the front end installed on his or her computer, while the back-end database is installed on a network server. The tables in the back end

*Continues on page 4*

### February 2003

Volume 11, Number 2

- 1 Using Invisible Forms to Track Users  
*Tobi K. Hoffman*
- 3 Editorial: Coming Next: Access 11  
*Peter Vogel*
- 8 Navigating Through Recursion, Part 2  
*Christopher Weber*
- 12 Tip: An Object-Oriented Speed Tip  
*Peter Vogel*
- 13 Working T-SQL: Using Triggers  
*Russell Sinclair*
- 18 Access Answers: Combining Tables  
*Peter Vogel*
- 20 February 2003 Downloads



**DOWNLOAD**

Accompanying files available online at  
[www.smartaccessnewsletter.com](http://www.smartaccessnewsletter.com)

In code, an underscore (\_) as the last character of a line indicates that the line has been wrapped for layout purposes. In Access 95 and up you can use the code as it appears, but in Access 2.0 you must recombine the wrapped lines.