

Smart Access

Solutions for Microsoft® Access® Developers

Guest Editorial

Access 2006— Have Your Say

Garry Robinson, Contributing Editor

THE purpose of this editorial is to encourage you to put forward your own ideas about what you want to see in the next version of Access. We encourage you to send in your ideas, and we'll publish them (in full) on my Web site. We'll even review some of most interesting ideas in a future issue of *Smart Access*. More importantly, though, we'll collate all of the ideas and send them to the Access development team at Microsoft. After that, who knows? Your great idea might actually make the production version of Access 2006 (or into the pipeline for 2008).

If you think that you have a good idea, or if you simply want to embellish (or castigate) my ideas, visit www.vb123.com/access2006. There you can see the latest contributions from our readers, find an e-mail address to send your contribution, or even participate in some anonymous blogging on this topic at vb123.blogspot.com.

To help fire up your creative juices, here are my ideas for our list.

My first request is to improve the basic forms interface. In my humble opinion, Access in its basic state needs to become a whole lot easier for the naïve user to interact with. For example, the standard form that you create for a table using the Access wizard is a mystery to someone who hasn't used Access before. The default form generated by the form wizard comes with navigation buttons way down at the bottom of the form, a well-hidden record selector, and some complex toolbars and menus that are designed for both developers and users—and don't really work well for either. I've yet to come across a typical user who looks at the menu bars and toolbars to figure out what to do next (and even if users did that, they probably wouldn't pick anything that would actually help them). Generally, the inexperienced user likes big buttons that say Save or Find or Add Record. I believe that the form wizard should include these as the default option. Microsoft needs to take

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