

Smart Access

Solutions for Microsoft® Access® Developers

Access Interfaces

Handling Price Ranges

Rebecca M. Riordan



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This month Rebecca Riordan looks at implementing a common business rule. In fact, she provides two methods for handling the common case of multiple prices for a given product, depending on the quantity ordered—the customer pays \$1.79 each for buying up to nine items, but only \$1.69 each when buying 10-14 items, and so on.

I've always been impressed with the Northwind sample database. Yes, it's true that it's slightly artificial, and perhaps not *all* of the code is as efficient as it might be. But as a sample database bundled with a commercial product, it's as close to a production application as you're likely to get. I truly wish I had a dollar for every person who's learned the fundamentals of database design by adapting Northwind to their needs.

But there's one common situation that Northwind doesn't address: multiple prices for a product, depending on the quantity purchased. This situation is common in any organization that typically sells multiple units of its products—hardware (who buys a single nail?), paper goods, even lighting fixtures.

I've seen a variety of ingenious, if ineffective, solutions to this problem. The most common is to create multiple price fields, as shown in [Figure 1](#) (on page 4). Until you try to implement it, this might look like a good solution. After all, even so-called experts denormalize tables in this way on occasion. (As a matter of fact, I'll do it myself later in this article. While I don't claim much in the way of expertise, I do have a claim on experience and common sense.)

Continues on page 4

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Volume 12, Number 12

- 1 Access Interfaces:
Handling Price Ranges
Rebecca M. Riordan
- 2 Editorial: Forgive Me,
I Have Sinned
Peter Vogel
- 7 Do More for Less:
Leveraging Your DBMS
Andrew Wrigley
- 11 Decomposing a Badly
Designed Table
Frank Kegley
- 14 Product Review:
SageKey MSI Wizard
Peter Vogel
- 15 Access Answers:
Making the Grade
Doug Steele
- 20 December 2004 Downloads

