

# Databases

# 5

## Database Forms

When you input data in table datasheet view, you have to scroll from left to right to see all the fields. You could easily make a mistake by typing in the wrong row or column. Also, when you enter data in the datasheet view, there are no guides to indicate to the user the format of data expected. The form object in a database displays the data of one record in a user-friendly way, with labels and even pictures and this makes it easier to input data.

### Lesson Outcomes

By the end of the lesson, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between good and bad user interface designs, from the visual perspective
- Design a simple user interface to input, edit or view the data of one record at a time.

### Curriculum Links

This task supports the assessment of:

#### **LO 4: Programming and Software Development**

- Design a simple user interface (output and basic input only) for a real activity of an informative nature.
- Design and implement a simple user interface for an application using a package (e.g. database, web form).
- Identify the basics of Boolean conditions and operators and apply this to simple Boolean expressions
- Use help files effectively for computer application packages.
- Identify where known help files fall short of the ideal and how they could be improved.

### Lesson Notes

You can make use of the form object in a database to create a user friendly interface. A form in a database program focuses on one record at a time. It can display all related fields on one screen so that you don't have to scroll from left to right. You can put in guides, hints and make use of colour and pictures to make the form user friendly.

A form can easily be created using a wizard. The form wizard asks you questions and creates a form based on your answers. Follow the steps on the worksheet to do this. When you open a form in form view the database program retrieves the data from the table, and displays it on the screen using the layout you chose in the Form Wizard. The same navigation buttons are available in form view as in table datasheet view. And just like for tables, you have a form design view, where you can modify and customise the design of the form. You can toggle between the two views all the time by clicking on the icon in the top left corner.

When you inspect the different sections of the form in design view, you will see a Form header, Detail and Form footer. You can increase or decrease the height and width of form sections individually, change the colour of the background, resize individual field labels, move the items on the form, or change the font size, style and colour in the same way as in Word. Follow the steps on the worksheet to do this.

To add more controls we use the toolbox. If the toolbox is not visible, click the toolbox icon on the formatting toolbar or click toolbox on the view menu.



# Databases

## 5

### Lesson Notes continued...

 You can click the label icon on the toolbox to display descriptive text like a title or instructions for the user,

or the Text Box tool to display and enter data; A text box allows the user to enter information or data.

 To add a static picture to the form design, click the Image icon

 You can also use a Combo Box control to give the user a limited list of options to choose from. Follow the steps on the worksheet to do this.

Robustness of a database is very important. Robustness of a database is its ability and resilience not to crash. To avoid crashes as a result of inputting invalid data for example, you can place restrictions on the user input to ensure only valid input by entering a ValidationRule in a control's properties.

### Task

Your task is to use the help files to determine at least five other validation rules that your database program uses.