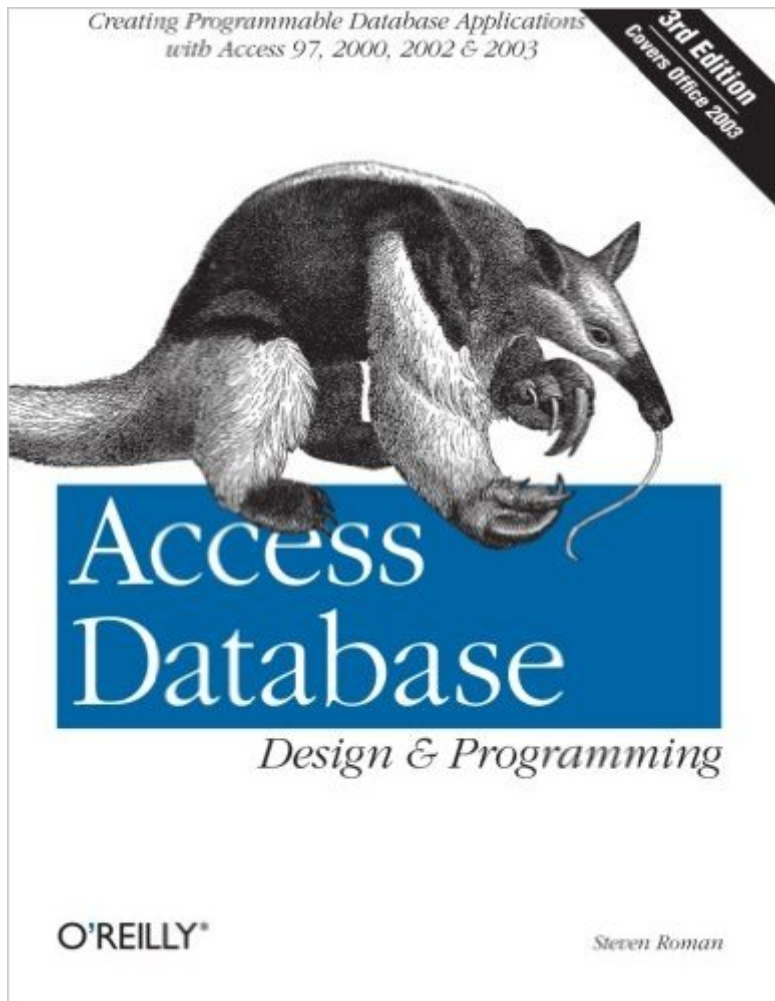


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Access Database Design & Programming (3rd Edition)



Synopsis

Access Database Design & Programming takes you behind the details of the Access interface, focusing on the general knowledge necessary for Access power users or developers to create effective database applications. When using software products with graphical interfaces, we frequently focus so much on the interface that we forget about the general concepts that allow us to understand and use the software effectively. In particular, this book focuses on three areas: Database design. The book provides an enjoyable, informative overview of database design that carefully shows you how to normalize tables to eliminate redundancy without losing data. Queries. The book examines multi-table queries (i.e., various types of joins) and shows how to implement them indirectly by using the Access interface or directly by using Access SQL. Programming. The book examines the VBA integrated development environment (IDE). It then goes on to provide an excellent introduction to Data Access Objects (DAO), ActiveX Data Objects (ADO), and ADO Extensions for Data Definition and Security (ADOX). These sections serve as a handy introduction and primer for basic database operations, such as modifying a table under program control, dynamically adding and deleting a record, and repositioning a record pointer. The concluding chapter focuses on common programming problems, such as computing running sums and comparing two sets. Unlike other Access books that take the long, detailed approach to every topic of concern to Access programmers, Access Database Design & Programming instead focuses on the core concepts, enabling programmers to develop solid, effective database applications. This book also serves as a 'second course' in Access that provides a relatively experienced Access user who is new to programming with the frequently overlooked techniques necessary to develop successfully in the Microsoft Access environment. Anyone interested in learning Access in depth, rather than just scraping the surface, will enjoy and benefit immensely from reading this book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In Access Database Design & Programming, the author uses very mathematical and academic language. The database design part of the book is focused on the mathematical theory of relational databases. The programming part of the book is a reference work to programming with VBA. All parts of the relational database in Access will be mathematically defined and proven. It will have a name you most probably will find confusing, and far from what you are used to from the Access interface. Apparently the author follows the naming standards established in the academic world to prove the algebra. After all, he is a professor of Mathematics !In the programming part of the book you will be introduced to the DDL, DML and DCL components included in Access. Also, these components will probably be completely unknown to you, if you have no previous programming experience. Further, the book makes use of DAO as opposed to ADO. The book is perfect for someone, who has completed courses in Computer Science, Programming and Algebra, or with the equivalent knowledge and a mathematical/academic way of thinking. They will be able to read through the book in a fast pace, and immediately make use of Access at a high level. If your background is different, I would recommend another approach to database design and programming. For database design, I recommend "Inside Relational Databases" by Whitehorn and Marklyn (ISBN 354076092X). To learn programming I recommend "Learn to Program with VB 6" by John Smiley (ISBN1902745000). This book is going to split its readers in two groups: The mathematically and academic minded who will love the book for its concise language.

I first read Steven Roman's book on Access a few years ago when it was written for Access 97. I recently bought a copy of the current version as a reference. What I liked about Steven's books was that he took seriously his coverage of normalization, which is rare amongst books on Access. If you're new to database programming, you need to learn the basics of normalization. In my experiences, I've come across a lot of databases designed by beginners that exhibit a "spreadsheet" type of understanding towards Access tables. The beauty of the relational model is that once you have your database set up, ongoing maintenance is minimal. If you learn how to

program Access, but don't learn the basics of normalization and the relational model, you may as well just keep your data in Excel spreadsheets. My complaint with this book is his coverage of ADO. The author clearly prefers DAO for MS Access, and he states as much, and his coverage suffers. He covers the material, but he makes using ADO appear to be very difficult. In an entire chapter on ADO, he fails to show the user the most basic thing: how to generate a recordset for a table in your Access database. Instead, he shows you how to use ADO to query other databases, such as SQL Server and even Excel, but not the Access Database that you're currently using. In DAO one of the fundamental details that you need to know about is the CurrentDB object. Steven gets a gold star, because he not only covers the CurrentDB object, but he spends 6 pages on it. In ADO, an object that is used for a somewhat similar purpose is the CurrentProject object. You won't find coverage on it anywhere in this book - just check the index.

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