

Concatenation – Using the Plus Sign

By Kent Gorrell

You may often find the need to display text data on reports from fields that may contain nulls (ie it contains no data). If you use a label along with the text box they you will need to use code to make the label invisible if the field is null. However there is a simpler solution.

For example if you want to display the email address of a customer you can use the following line in the data property of a text box.

```
=”Email – “ & [Email_Address]
```

This negates the need for the label and with a small adjustment you can suppress the “Email – “ part if there is no email address. If you use the plus sign instead of the ampersand then, if the field contains a null, the total result will be a null – like this –

```
=”Email – “ + [Email_Address]
```

Using the plus, if either side is a null then the result will be a null.

To go even further, you can use this when displaying an address line in a text box. For example –

```
[Address_2] + vbCRLF + [Address_State] + “ “ + [Address_Postcode]
```

In this example a line feed (expressed as the intrinsic VBA constant `vbCRLF` – short for Carriage Return Line Feed) occurs after the `Address_2`, but only if it is not null, so that a blank line is not left before the State and then, if there is no State, a blank space is not left on the line before the postcode.

Using the `can grow` and `can shrink` properties of the text box can then be used to automatically adjust the height.

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