**Editor's Note:** In the January 2007 issue of JDEtips, Andy Klee gave us an article called “Advanced Pricing Rules of the Road”. This article turned out to be so popular that we have invited some of our top writers to continue the theme. Cordell Kirk starts us off with his “RotR” for Supplemental Data. Supplemental data can be a valuable method for managing data that isn’t accommodated in your standard JD Edwards World® database tables. This article guides you through their care and feeding.

Every time I sit down to write an article, I feel unqualified. I struggle with the idea that the reader might see me as the authority or expert on the subject matter, instead of simply seeing me as a long-term user of the software who is willing to share knowledge and lessons learned. I would never claim to be an “expert” on how to set up, use, and work with the supplemental databases available in World Software; however, I do feel comfortable sharing my knowledge of the software and sharing the story of how Fike Corporation uses Supplemental Data to meet everyday business needs.

As I started putting this article together, it became clear that there are some basic “rules of the road” when embarking on the quest to determine whether your company should use one of the available supplemental databases. Some general questions that you should consider before making your final decision might include:

- Is the data I want to capture included in any of the standard master tables (Item Master, Customer Master, etc.)? If the answer is “yes”, then you don’t need to use Supplemental Data. JD Edwards developed supplemental databases for those customers that need to relate and store information that is not included in the standard master tables. If the answer is “no”, then you should consider using Supplemental Data.

- What do I want to do with the data that I will be storing in Supplemental Data tables? If you want a repository to store data, review the data online, or report upon the data, then using one of the supplemental databases will meet your needs. If you want more, then going the Supplemental Data route may not be the appropriate solution to meet your business needs.

- Am I willing to manage a separate level of security for Supplemental Data tables? Honestly, it’s not a big deal, but it is another level of security. If you are willing to add Supplemental Data security into the mix, then you are good to go. Personally, I don’t think I would allow the added security aspect to deter you from checking out the functionality and sometimes hidden benefits of using this piece of the software.

**RR#1:** There are only a handful of supplemental databases. Associate your supplemental data to the database that makes the most sense. Typically, the master tables within World Software meet most customer needs. However, there are times when a master table doesn’t meet a specific need. JD Edwards developed the supplemental databases for this very reason. Based on all of the information I can find, there are only six supplemental databases available to the user. Now, don’t let that scare you. The flexibility within those six databases is significant. You might need to get a little creative, but you can probably make one of these six work for you.

(1) P01090 – Address Book
This is also referred to as the Central Information File (CIF). This file contains different types of data for prospects, employees, customers, and suppliers. JD Edwards sees the use of this file as a way to differentiate between the data you might maintain for an existing customer, versus the data you might maintain for a prospect. If one day the prospect becomes a customer, the supplemental data associated with
the prospect can be transferred to the new customer record by changing the search type of the address book number. Fike Corporation uses the Address Book supplemental database to capture invoicing and tax instructions.

(2) P00690 – Business Unit
If you need to store information about a business unit that is not included in a standard master table, this is the supplemental database to use. For example, if you are a construction company and you define each job as its own business unit, you could use the business unit supplemental database to track supplemental information that relates to the progress of each job.

(3) P08090 – Human Resources
This is also referred to as Profile Data. Profile Data provides broad categories of information that can be defined to accommodate unique business requirements. For example, Fike Corporation uses the Human Resources supplemental database to capture performance review information.

(4) P12090 – Fixed Assets
The Fixed Assets supplemental database can be used to further define the assets in your system. Multiple types of supplemental data can be defined. If you have fixed assets that require that unique data be captured, stored, and reported upon, this is the supplemental database you should use.

(5) P41090 – Item
All users know that you can store a ton of item-specific information in the Item Master table. However, there are times that the Item Master table doesn’t allow you to store all of the information you need. JD Edwards sees this supplemental database as a repository for things like tracking engineering change specifications or tracking the costs associated with an item-specific advertising campaign. I think most users could get very creative using this supplemental database. The bottom line: if you need to capture item-specific information that is not supported by one of the standard master tables, you should definitely consider using this supplemental database.

(6) P48090 – Work Order
The work order supplemental database could be used to capture work order and engineering change order related information that is not supported by one of the standard master tables.

Spend some time familiarizing yourself with the database you plan to use.

RR#2: Before beginning the setup for your supplemental data, determine the format for your data.

Supplemental Data can be entered into a supplemental database in four different formats. Think through the process of data entry, storage, and retrieval and use the format that will work best to meet your business need. You will define the format for your data type by entering a single digit code in the ‘Mode’ field. This code determines the display mode for your supplemental data.

Narrative (N) – This format displays the form for entering narrative text. This is free form text entry only.

Code (C) – This format displays the form for entering code-specific information. The system edits these codes against the User Defined Codes table (F0005). Since there is an edit process against a UDC table, you will be required to use an existing UDC table or set up a new UDC table to validate your code values.

Program (P) – This format offers a program exit. A ‘P’ in the ‘Mode’ field instructs the system to exit to the program you specify in the ‘Pgm ID’ field.

Message (M) – This format displays the form for entering code-specific information. If you choose Message format, the system can edit your code values against the Generic Rates and Messages table (F00191). This code is not used by the HR or Financials systems.

RR#3: All of the supplemental databases are similar, but uniquely different. Spend some time familiarizing yourself with the database you plan to use.

For example, let’s assume we wanted to begin capturing advance education information for all of our employees. The logical supplemental database to use would be the Human Resources database (P08090). By performing a search on P08090, we can find a menu to begin our setup. For the purpose of this article, I chose to use Menu G0747. Selecting Option 2 - Define Types of Data displays the screen shown in Figure 1 in base JDE World software.
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