SeQueL 8 - Queries - Wild Search

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I have discovered a secret that has been there all of the time!

A while ago, I started adding PARAMETERS to my queries that I use a lot and want to specify a Year or a String to search for the query criteria.

I have, customarily used the function:
Instr ([«start»,] «stringexpr1», «stringexpr2»[, «compare»])
to see if my search string is in the data field

You can Right-Click on an empty space of the Query Design Form and select Parameters... to open the Query Parameters subform. There you can enter the name for the parameter and select the Data Type. Here are your Data Type choices:

```
Binary       ; Binary
Bit          ; Yes/No
Byte         ; Byte
Currency     ; Currency
DateTime     ; Date/Time
Guid         ; Replication ID
IEEEDouble   ; Double
IEEESingle   ; Single
Long         ; Long Integer
LongBinary   ; OLE Object
Short        ; Integer
Text         ; Memo
Text ( 255 ) ; Text
Value        ; Value
```

Here is a query using that approach:

```
PARAMETERS YEAR_EXPENSE IEEEDouble;
SELECT Year, Left(CatDescr,6) AS CatDesc, Pymt
FROM ExpenseSummary
WITH Year=YEAR_EXPENSE AND InStr(CatDescr,'MED-RX')>0;
```

I have used the LIKE keyword in simple ways:
CatDescr LIKE 'MED-RX*'

But that is about the extent of my use until recently.

Now, let us really get wild!

For some reason I tried putting the asterisk in front of the search string, and it worked! Next I tried placing asterisks in the middle. That also worked!

In fact a search string e.g.: '*dog*food*' could find these data fields:
'Alpo dogfood meals' as well as 'Purina dog bone food treats'.

I started with this query, which uses a separate search parameter for each data field. The query provides the first and last asterisk.

```
PARAMETERS CAT_DESCR Text ( 255 ), PAIDTO_DESCR Text ( 255 );
SELECT Year, Sort0, PaidDate, Pymt, PymtDescr, CatNum, CatDescr, PaidToDescr
FROM ExpenseSummary
WHERE ( UCASE(CatDescr) LIKE UCASE('*'&CAT_DESCR&'*'))  AND ( UCASE(PaidToDescr) LIKE
UCASE('*'&PAIDTO_DESCR&'*'))
ORDER BY Year DESC , Sort0 DESC;
```

I took it another step by sharing one search parameter with several data fields. With this, a search string, '*dog*food*pets*mart*' could find a record with data field values: 'dog treat' 'pet-food' 'PetsMart'.

```
PARAMETERS ALL_DESCR Text ( 255 );
SELECT Year, Sort0, PaidDate, Pymt, PymtDescr, CatNum, CatDescr, PaidToDescr
FROM ExpenseSummary
WHERE (UCASE(PymtDescr & " " & CatDescr & " " & PaidToDescr) LIKE UCASE("*" & ALL_DESCR & "*"))
ORDER BY Year DESC , Sort0 DESC;
```

I inserted a blank character separating each data field so a search string segment could not spill over: '*dog*treatpet*mart* could not select this record with data field values: 'dog treat' 'pet-food' 'PetsMart'.

Since the SQL query provides the first and last asterisks, you could type in to the Enter Parameter Value ALL_DESCR prompt: 'dog*food*petsmart' and find the same record.

Making use of the UCASE() function in these queries is a simple precaution.

Have fun with this 'discovery'!