



Numeric to Character with Keeping Leading Zeros

If you are importing from excel, ACL can often decided that a character field is numeric. If your vendor codes are 00054321 and 00004321, they can be read as numeric fields, and look like 54321 and 4321 in the ACL file. Even if the vendor code can have 3 or 5 or more zeros at the front, you can fix this in one command line. All you need to know is the standard length for the vendor code field and the commands below.

Assume your vendor code field is VENDNUM and it should be 8 digits long.

Red = new function

1. Change VENDNUM to a string with a length that is greater than the standard field length (you are leaving space for zeros), in this case, we chose 12:

STRING(VENDNUM,12)

2. Add the most leading zeros needed in the first character:

INSERT(STRING(VENDNUM,12),"00000000",1)

3. Remove any spaces/keep only numbers:

INCLUDE(INSERT(STRING(VENDNUM,12),"00000000",1),"0123456789")

4. Take only the last digits needed, in this case 8 (should equal the number of digits that a vendor numbers should be):

LAST(INCLUDE(INSERT(STRING(VENDNUM,12),"00000000",1),"0123456789"),8)



Use Variables to Define and Compare Time Periods.

ACL can capture the current period and assign it to variables based on user input.

DIALOG (DIALOG TITLE "User Dialog" WIDTH 719 HEIGHT 144) (BUTTONSET TITLE "&OK;&Cancel" AT 312 84 DEFAULT 1) (TEXT TITLE "Enter the month and year for which you want to analyze." AT 24 16 WIDTH 681 CENTER) (TEXT TITLE "Month" AT 228 52) (TEXT TITLE "Year" AT 360 52) (EDIT TO "v_currentmonth" AT 288 48 WIDTH 48 DEFAULT "MM") (EDIT TO "v_currentyear" AT 408 48 WIDTH 55 DEFAULT "YYYY")

Program ACL to calculate the prior month and prior year based on the current month and current year variables defined in the dialog box.

Calculations for Prior Month and Prior Year if current month is NOT January

Prior Month Calculation: *Change the month to a value to minus one month with no decimals, then back to a string with a length of 3, add zeros, numbers only/no spaces, and only include the last two digits.*

```
Assign v_priormonth = LAST(INCLUDE(INSERT(STRING(((VALUE("%v_currentmonth%",0))-1),3),"00",1),"0123456789"),2) IF "%v_currentmonth%" <> "01"
```

Prior Year Calculation:

```
ASSIGN v_prior_year = "%v_currentyear%" IF "%v_current_month%" <> "01"
```

Calculations for Prior Month and Prior Year if current month is January

Prior Month Calculation:

```
ASSIGN v_prior_month = "12" IF "%v_currentmonth%" = "01"
```

Prior Year Calculation:

```
ASSIGN v_prior_year = STRING(((VALUE("%v_current_year%",0))-1),4) IF "%v_current_month%" = "01"
```

Label fields and files considering this naming convention. Now, you can put those variables anywhere to pull current and prior month information.



USER GROUP
ST LOUIS

Tips for Appending files

- Data/Extract: use the “Append to Existing File” checkbox on the More tab.
- Use File/Print Project Contents to print table layouts
- Compare field length and data type – these must be the same
- Start position and name do not matter
 - The start position can be controlled by selecting the same fields in the same order
 - The field names from the last file appended will be used
- Don’t have to use all fields – only the fields you actually need in the new file.
- When extracting, use extract FIELDS not records.
- Pick the same fields in the same order. This will control the order that the fields come into the new file. It is also helpful for organizing the join.
- Always send data to a new file. Never append to an original file. Append is permission to overwrite.
- Keep a running total of record counts. If you’re even off by one, something didn’t work correctly and you now have a bad file.
- Run the Verify command on the final appended table. If there were no errors before the append, but there are errors now, you have a bad file. Likely causes, picking fields in different orders, different lengths on fields.