

Putting a button in a column

A column can display an ellipsis button (...) to the right of the normal cell editor. *Ctrl+Enter* or a mouse click fires the grid's *OnEditButtonClick* event. You can use the ellipsis button to bring up forms containing more detailed views of the data in the column. For example, in a table that displays summaries of invoices, you could set up an ellipsis button in the invoice total column to bring up a form that displays the items in that invoice, or the tax calculation method, and so on. For graphic fields, you could use the ellipsis button to bring up a form that displays an image.

To create an ellipsis button in a column:

- 1 Select the column in the *Columns* list box.
- 2 Set *ButtonStyle* to *cbsEllipsis*.
- 3 Write an *OnEditButtonClick* event handler.

Restoring default values to a column

At runtime you can test a column's *AssignedValues* property to determine whether a column property has been explicitly assigned. Values that are not explicitly defined are dynamically based on the associated field or the grid's defaults.

You can undo property changes made to one or more columns. In the *Columns* editor, select the column or columns to restore, and then select *Restore Defaults* from the context menu. *Restore defaults* discards assigned property settings and restores a column's properties to those derived from its underlying field component.

At runtime, you can reset all default properties for a single column by calling the column's *RestoreDefaults* method. You can also reset default properties for all columns in a grid by calling the column list's *RestoreDefaults* method:

```
DBGrid1.Columns.RestoreDefaults;
```

Displaying ADT and array fields

Sometimes the fields of the grid's dataset do not represent simple values such as text, graphics, numerical values, and so on. Some database servers allow fields that are a composite of simpler data types, such as ADT fields or array fields.

There are two ways a grid can display composite fields:

- It can "flatten out" the field so that each of the simpler types that make up the field appears as a separate field in the dataset. When a composite field is flattened out, its constituents appear as separate fields that reflect their common source only in that each field name is preceded by the name of the common parent field in the underlying database table.

To display composite fields as if they were flattened out, set the dataset's *ObjectView* property to *False*. The dataset stores composite fields as a set of separate fields, and the grid reflects this by assigning each constituent part a separate column.

- It can display composite fields in a single column, reflecting the fact that they are a single field. When displaying composite fields in a single column, the column can be expanded and collapsed by clicking on the arrow in the title bar of the field, or by setting the *Expanded* property of the column:
- When a column is expanded, each child field appears in its own sub-column with a title bar that appears below the title bar of the parent field. That is, the title bar for the grid increases in height, with the first row giving the name of the composite field, and the second row subdividing that for the individual parts. Fields that are not composites appear with title bars that are extra high. This expansion continues for constituents that are in turn composite fields (for example, a detail table nested in a detail table), with the title bar growing in height accordingly.
- When the field is collapsed, only one column appears with an uneditable comma delimited string containing the child fields.

To display a composite field in an expanding and collapsing column, set the dataset's *ObjectView* property to *True*. The dataset stores the composite field as a single field component that contains a set of nested sub-fields. The grid reflects this in a column that can expand or collapse

Figure 20.2 shows a grid with an ADT field and an array field. The dataset's *ObjectView* property is set to *False* so that each child field has a column.

Figure 20.2 TDBGrid control with ObjectView set to False

ADT child fields				Array child fields		
ID_KEY	NAME_ADT.FIRST	NAME_ADT.MIDDLE	NAME_ADT.LAST	TELNOS_ARRAY[0]	TELNOS_ARRAY[1]	TELNOS_ARRAY[2]
1	Stephan		Wright	415-908-9875	902-786-1245	
2	Whitney	N	Long			
3	Chris	T	Scanlan	234-232-1343		

Figure 20.3 and 20.4 show the grid with an ADT field and an array field. Figure 20.3 shows the fields collapsed. In this state they cannot be edited. Figure 20.4 shows the fields expanded. The fields are expanded and collapsed by clicking on the arrow in the fields title bar.

Figure 20.3 TDBGrid control with Expanded set to False

ID_KEY	NAME_ADT	TELNOS_ARRAY
1	(Stephan , Wright)	{415-908-9875, 902-786-1245,}
2	(Whitney, N, Long)	{... 510-454-7234,}
3	(Chris, T, Scanlan)	{234-232-1343,}

Figure 20.4 TDBGrid control with Expanded set to True

ID_KEY	NAME_ADT			TELNOS_ARRAY			
	FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST	TELNOS_ARRAY[0]	TELNOS_ARRAY[1]	TELNOS_ARRAY[2]	TELNO
1	Stephan		Wright	415-908-9875	902-786-1245		
2	Whitney	N	Long				510-454
3	Chris	T	Scanlan	234-232-1343			

The following table lists the properties that affect the way ADT and array fields appear in a *TDBGrid*:

Table 20.4 Properties that affect the way composite fields appear

Property	Object	Purpose
Expandable	TColumn	Indicates whether the column can be expanded to show child fields in separate, editable columns. (read-only)
Expanded	TColumn	Specifies whether the column is expanded.
MaxTitleRows	TDBGrid	Specifies the maximum number of title rows that can appear in the grid
ObjectView	TDataSet	Specifies whether fields are displayed flattened out, or in object mode, where each object field can be expanded and collapsed.
ParentColumn	TColumn	Refers to the TColumn object that owns the child field's column.

Note In addition to ADT and array fields, some datasets include fields that refer to another dataset (dataset fields) or a record in another dataset (reference) fields. Data-aware grids display such fields as "(DataSet)" or "(Reference)", respectively. At runtime an ellipsis button appears to the right. Clicking on the ellipsis brings up a new form with a grid displaying the contents of the field. For dataset fields, this grid displays the dataset that is the field's value. For reference fields, this grid contains a single row that displays the record from another dataset.

Setting grid options

You can use the grid *Options* property at design time to control basic grid behavior and appearance at runtime. When a grid component is first placed on a form at design time, the *Options* property in the Object Inspector is displayed with a + (plus) sign to indicate that the *Options* property can be expanded to display a series of Boolean properties that you can set individually. To view and set these properties, click on the + sign. The list of options in the Object Inspector below the *Options* property. The + sign changes to a – (minus) sign, that collapses the list back when you click it.