Technical Note

Field Validation Using Regular Expressions

Author(s): R&D Department

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Field Validation Using Regular Expressions

Overview

In REP++, field values were usually validated using an input mask. However, you can now use a regular expression instead of an input mask.

This article describes how to use regular expressions to validate a REP++ field.

Adding an EMAIL field to the contact management application

You will use the contact management application to illustrate how to validate a REP++ field using a simplified regular expression.

1. Open the DEMO system in REP++*studio*.
2. Create a new field named EMAIL (to simplify the process, do not attach the field to a database column).
3. Add the newly created EMAIL field to the CLIENT group.
4. To validate the EMAIL field, you can specify a regular expression either at the field level (i.e. the validation will be applied in all groups that use this field) or at the group level (i.e. the validation will be applied only in the group where it has been specified).
   - To add the validation at the field level, go to the EMAIL field editor and set the Regular Expression text to **^\w+@[a-zA-Z_]+\.[a-zA-Z]{2,3}$**.
   - To add the validation at the group level, go to the CLIENT group editor, select the EMAIL field and set the Regular Expression text to **^\w+@[a-zA-Z_]+\.[a-zA-Z]{2,3}$**.

The regular expression is described as follows.

Method	Description
^\w+	Matches one or more occurrences of word characters (letters and digits) at the beginning of a line.
@	Matches a single instance of itself.
[a-zA-Z_]+	Matches one or more occurrences of any letter or underscore.
\.	Matches a single instance of ".".
[a-zA-Z]{2,3}$	Matches two or three letters at the end.

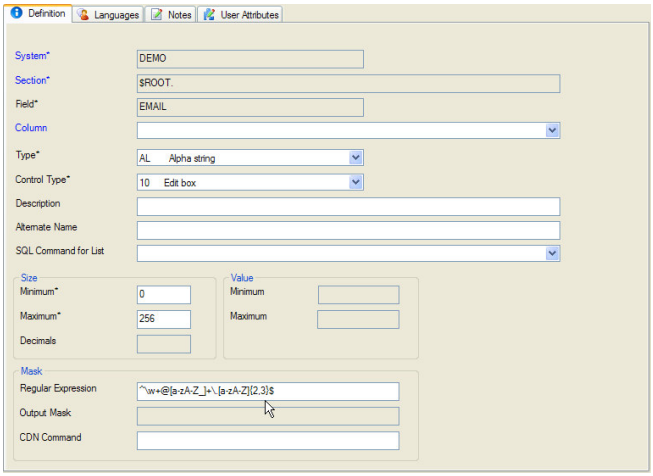

Figure 1. The EMAIL field in the Field editor.

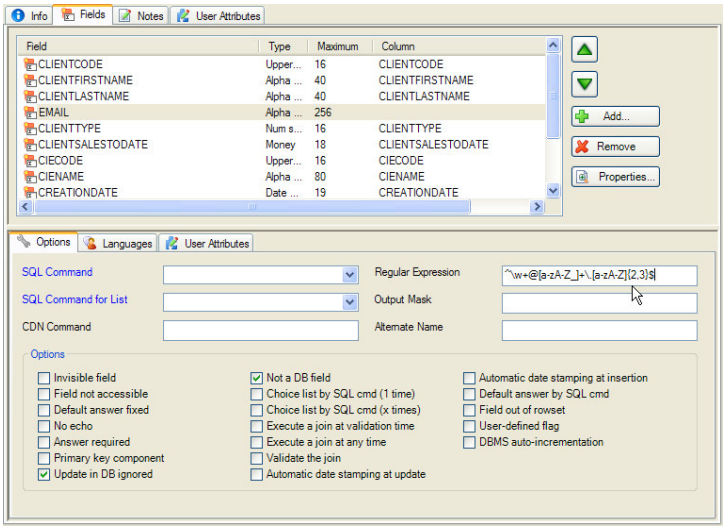

Figure 2. The EMAIL field options in the CLIENT Rowset editor.

5. To quickly test the behaviour of the EMAIL field, use the REP++ wizard to generate a Windows® or Web application and try entering different values for the EMAIL field.

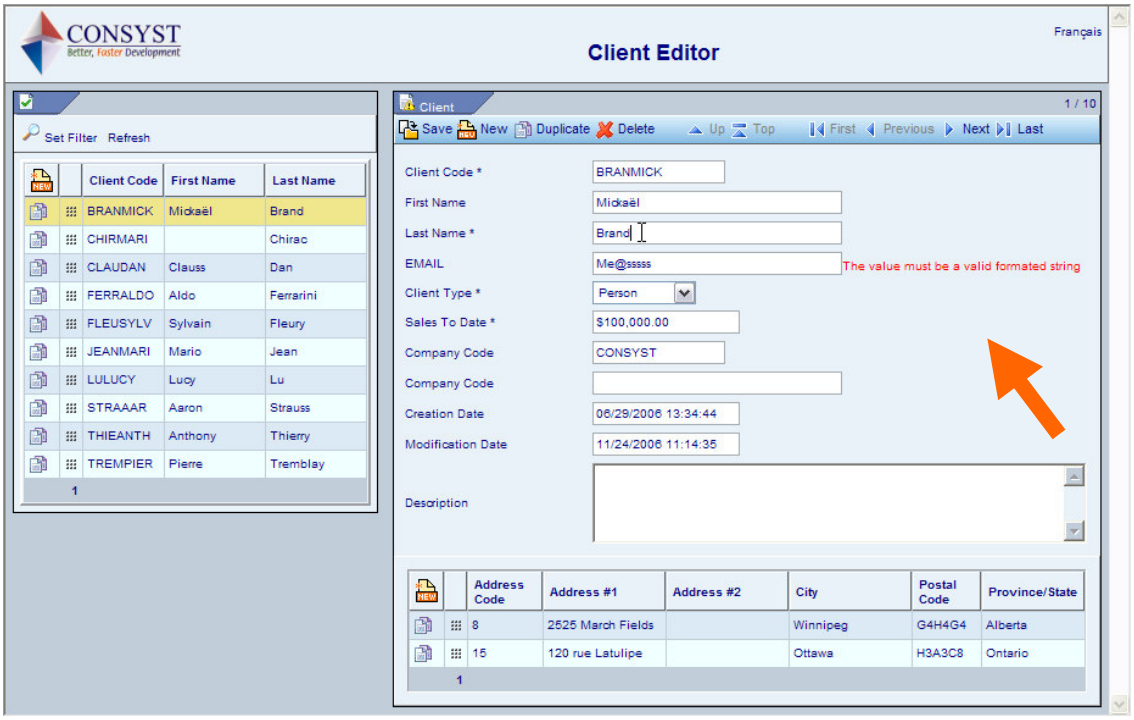

Figure 3. Regular expression validation at work – invalid email. A warning appears to the right of the invalid field.

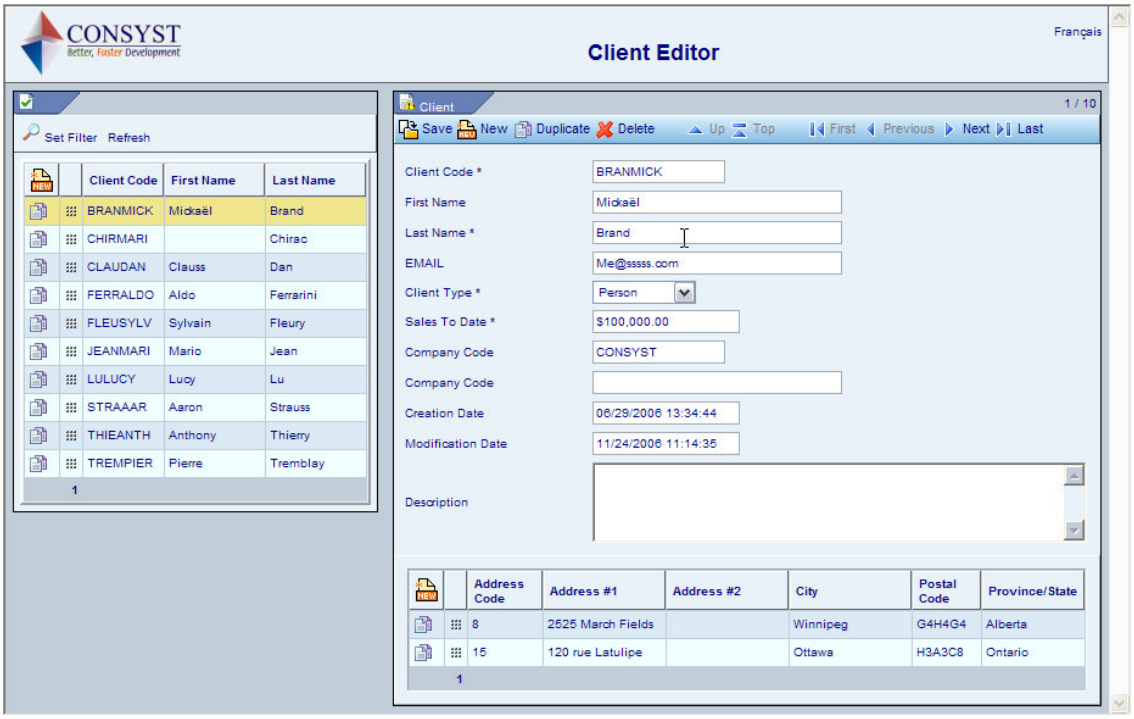

Figure 4. Regular expression validation at work – valid email.

References

The simplified regular expression for email address validation was taken from the online regular expression library http://regexlib.com/. There are plenty of resources and tutorials on the Web devoted to regular expressions.

http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/2k3te2cs(VS.80).aspx

http://regexlib.com/

http://www.regular-expressions.info/

http://www.codeproject.com/dotnet/RegexTutorial.asp