

Age Today for ACT! by Sage

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Installation and Usage

Age Today stores the AGE value based on the Birth Date in an ACT! record.

By default, **Age Today** reads the value of the Birth Date field, determines the age-in-years as of “today”, and stores the results into the Age field. (If your database doesn’t already have one, you’ll need to add the Age field – see the ACT! documentation for information on adding fields.)

But **Age Today** can use non-default values for the “from” date, the “until” date, the “units” of the age (eg, age-in-days, age-in-months), and the field where the age should be stored

You can choose any field from the Contact record (supplied as part of each ACT! database, or user-defined) to hold the results and to provide the values to use. You can also choose Days or Months as the age “unit”.

Installation

1. Shut down all running programs
2. Run **Install_AgeToday.exe**
3. Follow the instructions on the screen. Restart your computer if prompted to do so.

This will create (if necessary) the \TNHG subfolder within the folder that Windows “knows” as the “Program Files” folder – usually C:\Program Files. It will create the \TNHG\AgeToday subfolder, and install **AgeTodayTrigger.exe**, and other supporting files, into that folder. The installation process will also copy into the \ACT\Act for Win 7\Plugins subfolder and into the \ACT\Act for Windows\Plugins subfolder (within that same “Program Files” folder) the supporting files necessary to operate within ACT!2005 and ACT!2006.

Usage

The command to execute **Age Today** consists of the entire path-and-filename of the Age Today program, optionally followed by a “command” or “argument string”. Please note that if there are any “blanks” in the path-and-filename, then **it must be enclosed in “quotes”** – Windows treats the blank as a “terminator”, and the quotes are necessary to tell Windows that the string continues past the blank. If you want to use all the defaults, you don’t need to provide a “command/argument string”.

NB: Some versions of ACT! by Sage require that you use the View menu, Refresh option to refresh the data display before you will see the results of your Age Today execution in the ACT! layout.

The Program Name

If the path-and-filename contains any blanks (such as C:\Program Files\TNHG...), then that entire path-and-filename must be enclosed in quotes, such as:

```
"C:\Program Files\TNHG\AgeToday\AgeTodayTrigger.exe"
```

The Command String

The “command string” consists of entries that start with a “question mark”, followed by a single letter, and “equal sign” and then more information. For example:

```
?V=T
```

```
?A=Spouse Age
```

```
?D=Spouse Birthday
```

```
?U=D
```

Each “Question mark-Letter-Equals” string is used to tell Age Today a specific detail of its operation:

?V= indicates whether or not you want to view the Age Today window while it is performing its operation.

- ?V=T indicates that you DO want to see the window, and that you will need to click the [OK] button on that window when the copying is complete.
- ?V=F indicates that you do NOT want to see the window. This is the default value, and if you don't want to see the window, you can leave out this entire ?V= "argument"

?S= indicates the "scope" of the operation to be performed. The default scope is the **current record**.

- ?S=L indicates that the scope should be the entire **current lookup**.
Warning: using this scope will update EVERY record in the current lookup, and cannot be undone.

?A= indicates the name of the field hold the calculated Age. The name provided must EXACTLY MATCH the field's "display name", as seen in the Tools > Define Fields wizard. The default value is "Age"; you don't need to include the ?A= information if you want to store the results in the field named "Age".

?D= indicates the name of the field to provide the value from which the age is calculated. The name provided must EXACTLY MATCH the field's "display name", as seen in the Tools > Define Fields wizard. The default value is "Birth Date"; if you want to calculate the current age based on the value in the "Birth Date" field, you don't need to provide the ?D= information

?N= indicates the name of the field to provide the "as of" date for the age. The name provided must EXACTLY MATCH the field's "display name", as seen in the Tools > Define Fields wizard. The default value is blank, which tells **Age Today** to calculate the age from the ?D= date to today. However, if you need to know an age based on two field values instead of today's date, then you can specify that the "as of" date can be found in the field with this name.

?U= indicates the units to use for the age. The default is Y, for years but you can also specify ?U=D if you want the age in days, or ?U=M if you want the age in months.

So, for example, if you want to add fields to your database named "Spouse Birthday" and "Spouse Age", and you want the spouse's age, in years, as of today, your command line would be

```
?D=Spouse Birthday ?A=Spouse Age
```

If you have fields in your database named "Support Start Date", "Support End Date" and "Support Days", and you want to know how many days support was in effect, you command/argument string might be

```
?A=Support Days ?D=Support Start Date ?N=Support End Date ?U=D
```

Remember, if you want to use all the defaults, then just use the program name WITHOUT a command/argument string! No command/argument is the same as
?A=Age ?D=Birth Date ?U=Y

The Batch File

The version of ACT! in commercial release at the time of this writing does not allow a trigger to include a “command string” or “argument list”, like the one that tells Age Today how to operate. Therefore, if you are not using all default options, then the trigger definition must be placed in a “DOS .bat file”, and that file used as the trigger definition on the ACT! field. When the .bat file “runs”, a DOS window will appear on the screen, showing the commands included in the .bat file and waiting for the commands to finish. This can be somewhat disconcerting to users, so you might want to include a command to hide this window. (A utility is provided in the \TNHG folder, in case you need one. Its name is ConsoleTool.exe, and it uses the /hide “switch” to tell DOS to hide the window. An example of its use is included below.)

As an example, you might use Notepad (or any other text editor) to create a file that contains the following lines:

```
"C:\program files\TNHG\ConsoleTool.exe" /hide  
"C:\program files\TNHG\AgeToday\AgeTodayTrigger.exe" ?D=Spouse Birthday ?A=Spouse Age ?V=T
```

(There are really only two lines in this example but the page isn't wide enough to show the entire second line on a line by itself. The underscores _ are not really part of the line – they are there only to indicate that the REAL line continues on the next “text line”.)

The above example uses the ConsoleTool to hide the DOS window (/hide), then runs the Age Today program (AgeTodayTrigger.exe), shows the window while it operates (?V=T), and uses “Spouse Birthday” and the “Spouse Age” fields instead of the default “Birth Date” and “Age” fields.

If you save this file as

SpouseAge.bat

In the s:\act\common folder, then your trigger would be

s:\act\common\SpouseAge.bat

Remember, you can avoid all this .bat file complexity by just using the default options and set your trigger to

```
"C:\program files\TNHG\AgeToday\AgeTodayTrigger.exe"
```