R&R Report Writer® *Technical Bulletin*

Dot Leader Tabs

Product:	ARPEGGIO™	**NIC:**	N.A.
	R&R Report Writer®	**Interface:**	N.A.
Version:	All	**Oper Sys:**	Microsoft® Windows®
Host:	N.A.		Microsoft Windows 95
			Microsoft Windows NT®

Summary

Dot leader tabs are useful when you are creating directories and indexes. Dot leader tabs are also used in a table of contents. A variable number of dots is automatically inserted between each topic and the corresponding page number.

Repeating Characters

Since the dot leader tab involves repeating a character a variable number of times, it is a good candidate for both the REPLICATE function and the string concatenation operators, + and -. (*Concatenate* simply means append one string to another.)

To print this report, we would create a table consisting of three character fields, TITLE, ISSUE, and PAGE. Here is a sample report.

Index to T&T Articles in 1994

Article Title
Issue/Page

Common transforms. C-7
Data dictionary. C-1
Dot Leader Tabs. C-6
Financial Functions. C-8
How one R&R user produced mailing labels using IF/THEN logic. C-2

Then we would create two calculated fields, one to contain the title and dot leader and the other to contain the issue and page number. The expressions that define these fields are as follows.

```
Title_Dots  = TITLE - REPLICATE('.', 80)

Issue_Page  = ISSUE + '-' + PAGE
```

The Issue_Page field simply concatenates the ISSUE with a dash and the PAGE. The Title_Dots field is defined as the actual article title followed by a string of 80 periods. There are two points of interest in the Expression. First. why use the minus (-) string concatenation operator instead of the more common plus (+) operator? Second, why replicate the period 80 times?

Since the titles vary in length, the shorter titles will have trailing spaces that must somehow be removed. You can either use the TRIM function with the plus Operator, or use just the minus operator. We selected the minus operator to avoid using the TRIM function.

The number of dots has to be sufficient to handle the shortest possible title. We selected 80 because it is the page width in columns. This gives us the flexibility to change the field width on the screen without running out of dots.