

COMBO BOXAPALOOZA



# Advanced Combo Box Techniques

And how to implement each one with just a few lines of code

Presented by Mike Wolfe of [nolongerset.com](http://nolongerset.com)

# Who am I?

- West Point graduate ('02): B.S. in Computer Science
- US Army officer (2002 – 2007)
- MS Access / SQL Server developer since 2007 (14 years)
- Owner of Grandjean & Braverman, Inc. since 2016 (5 years)
- Top 15 all-time contributor to the ms-access tag at Stack Overflow
- Write daily blog on Access and VBA tips at **nolongerset.com**

# What to Expect Today

- Focus on the “Why”, not the “How”
- Permalink to resources (on last slide):
  - Slide Deck PDF
  - Sample Database
  - Link to my WithEvents presentation
  - Further Reading

# Outline

- Increasing the combo box “target area”
- Cascading
- Progressive filtering (search as you type)
- Lazy-loading
- Multi-column progressive filtering

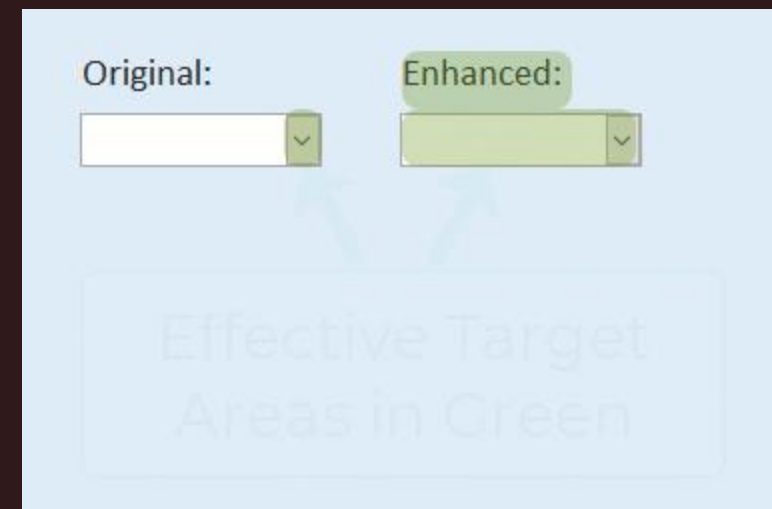
# Primary Features of a Combo Box

- Display a list of options via **dropdown**
- **Autocomplete** to reduce keystrokes
- Selection of **hidden ID fields**
- Optimized for **keyboard AND mouse**
- Promote **DISCOVERY & EFFICIENCY**

# Combo Box Target Area

- Two target area goals:
  - Dropdown
  - Autocomplete
- Techniques:
  - Attached labels
  - Events

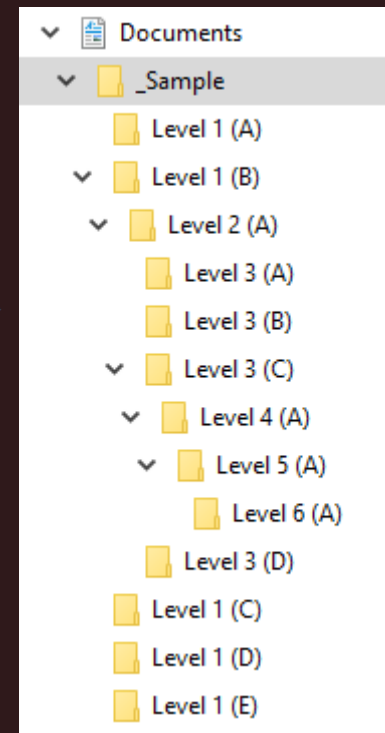
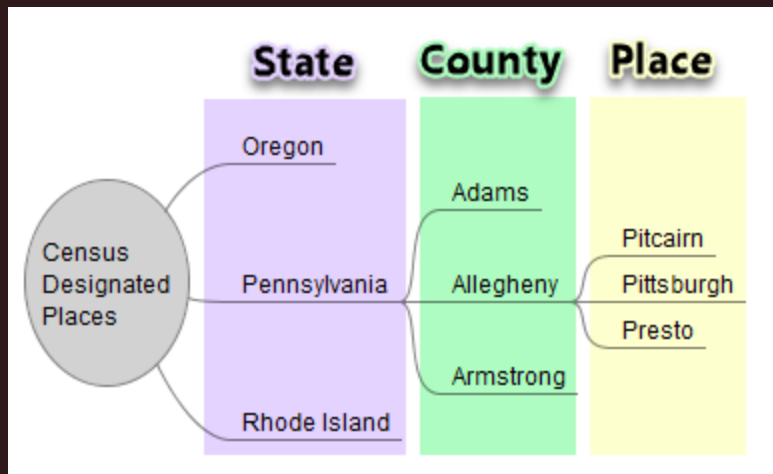
## Demo





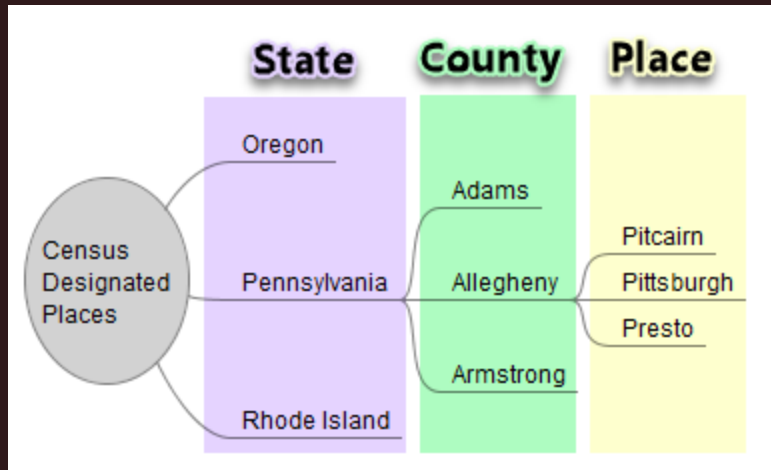
# Cascading Combo Boxes

- Fixed vs. Dynamic Data Hierarchies



# Cascading Combo Boxes

- Fixed vs. Dynamic Data Hierarchies
- Works best with **fixed** hierarchies



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Cascading Combos". It has three dropdown menus: "State", "County", and "Place". The "State" dropdown is set to "Rhode Island". The "County" dropdown is set to "Bristol". The "Place" dropdown is open, showing a list of places: Bristol, Kent, Newport, Providence, and Washington. The "Bristol" option in the "Place" dropdown is highlighted.



# Progressive Filtering

- Search as you type

# Progressive Filtering

- Search as you type
- Update RowSource

# Progressive Filtering

- Search as you type
- Update RowSource
- Supports fuzzy matching
  - Soundex
  - Levenshtein distance

# Progressive Filtering

- Search as you type
- Update RowSource
- Supports fuzzy matching
- WHERE MyField Like '\*\*'

Choose State:

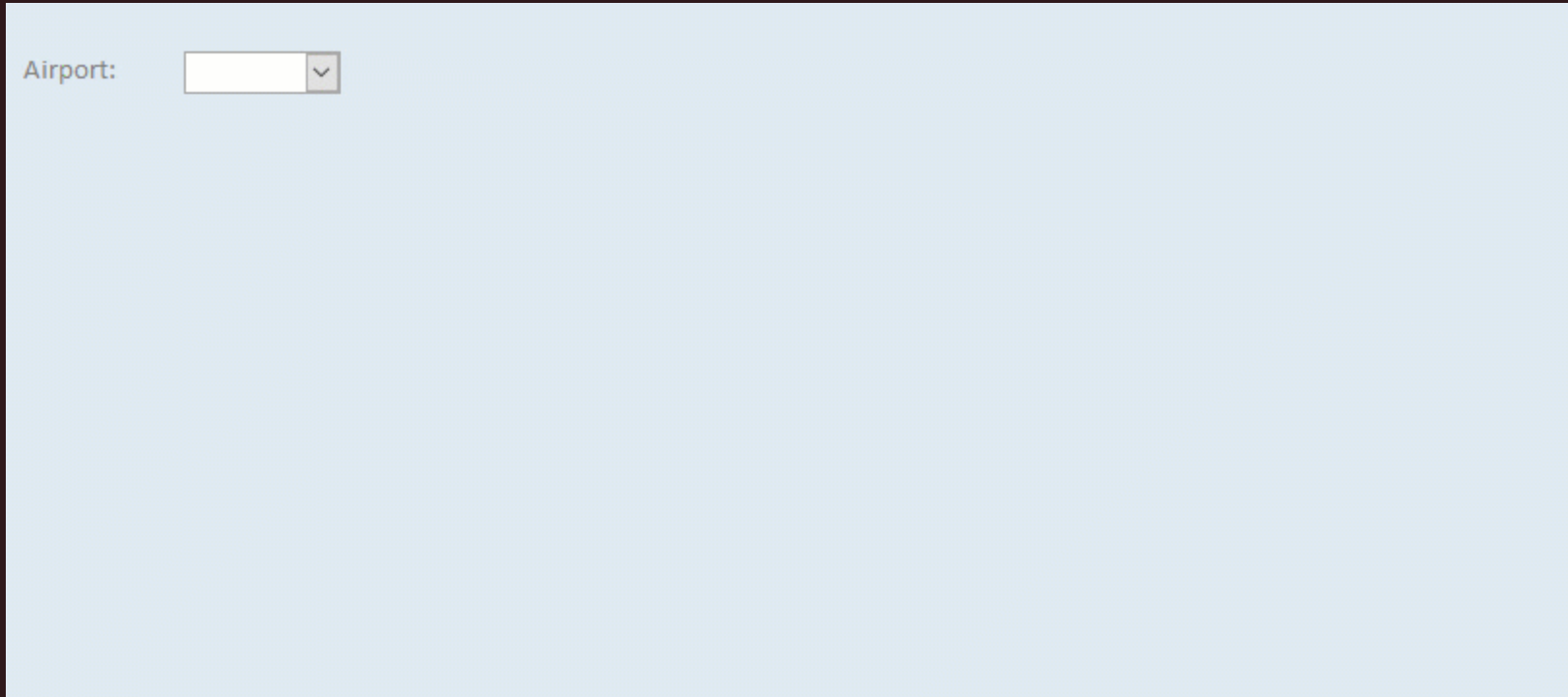
# Lazy Loading Combo Boxes

- Welcome to Walmart



# Multi-column Progressive Filtering

- Search multiple columns as you type



A screenshot of a search interface. At the top left, the label "Airport:" is followed by a dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is currently empty, showing only a small downward-pointing arrow on the right side. The rest of the interface is a large, empty light blue area.



# Multi-column Progressive Filtering

- Search multiple columns as you type
- Special where conditions: Like '\*\*\*'

# Demonstrations

- Refer to `ComboBoxapalooza.accdb`
- Sample database (see link on next slide)

# Questions?

Links and Resources:

[nolongerset.com/combo/](https://nolongerset.com/combo/)