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HOT TIP #4

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Report Studio: Setting a Date Prompt to have a Different Default Date

(Cognos 8.3 / 8.4)

Users are often required to choose a start and end date for a report. It is also common for a data warehouse to hold data that is current up to close of business yesterday.

For reports that are run often, we can improve the user experience by changing the default date on the date prompt(s) to something other than today's date. The most common requirements are to default a prompt to yesterday's date or the first day of the current month.

This can be achieved using a combination of standard Cognos functionality and a little JavaScript.

Step by Step

1) In Report Studio, **create a new Query**. Insert a Data Item in that query with a calculation for the required default date. Here are some examples:

Yesterday: `_add_days(current_date,-1)`

First of Month: `_first_of_month(current_date)`

2) On the Prompt Page, **create the Date Prompt(s)** the user will be selecting from **and a Value Prompt** to hold the new default date value.

3) Set the **Value Prompt to reference the query created in Step 1** and set the Use and Display Values to be the Data Item with the new default date.

4) **Give each prompt a unique name** (look under the prompt *Properties* at the very bottom. *Miscellaneous. Name:*). This is very important since without an assigned name it is not possible to reference a prompt using JavaScript. For example:

Date Prompt: StartDate

Value Prompt: YesterdayDate

5) **Set the Data Format property on the Value Prompt** to match the date prompt. Use format Date and apply a Pattern : YYYY-MM-dd

6) Add JavaScript to match up the prompts. **Create an HTML item on the Prompt Page and insert the JavaScript below** (Be careful to match the prompt names in bold to the prompt names set in Step 4).

```
<script language="JavaScript" type="Text/JavaScript">

function setCalendarDate() {
    var fW = (typeof getFormWarpRequest == "function" ? getFormWarpRequest() :
document.forms["formWarpRequest"]);
    pickerControlStartDate.setValue(fW._oLstChoicesYesterdayDate[2].text);
}

setTimeout("setCalendarDate()",1);

</script>
```

7) **Hide the Value Prompt** so the user won't see it **and make it an optional** prompt. Set the *Visible* property to NO and the *Required* property to NO.

Run the report and your calendar should have a new default value!