Padding Strings

When data is presented on the UI in a ComboBox form control, all items in the combobox must be tabular.

For example, the following combobox cboStock whose contents are shown below:

1 Levis 501
2 Wrangler Regular Fit
11 Pepe Skinny
106 Dockers Straight Leg

Suppose an application needs to extract the StockNo (1, 2, 11 or 106) for the selected item.

Should the application extract one character, two characters or three characters from the string **cboStock.Text** ?

stockNo = cboStock.Text.SubString(0,1); extracts 1 character starting at character position 0

stockNo = cboStock.Text.SubString(0,2); extracts 2 characters starting at character position 0

stockNo = cboStock.Text.SubString(0,3); extracts 3 characters starting at character position 0

If the database schema defines the StockNo as numeric(3), then the StockNo should be added to the combobox as a 3 character string as follows:

001 Levis 501
002 Wrangler Regular Fit
011 Pepe Skinny
106 Dockers Straight Leg

The following will always extract an accurate StockNo from the selected combobox item:

stockNo = cboStock.Text.SubString(0,3);

Therefore, when the application is adding the items to the combobox, the following code should be used to **pad** the item :

cboStock.Items.Add(txtStockNo.Text.PadLeft(3,'0');

If the item to be formatted is being returned from a data reader (named dr) the following might be used:

cboStock.Items.Add(dr.GetValue(0).ToString().PadLeft(2, '0') + " " + dr.GetValue(1));