Alternatives to BLOB queries in Voyager Prepackaged Access Reports

- **Product:** Voyager
- **Relevant for Installation Type:** Multi-Tenant Direct, Dedicated-Direct, Local, TotalCare

Question

Are there alternatives to using the BLOB functions in Voyager Prepackaged Access Reports?

Answer

The BLOB functions in Voyager allow you to retrieve any field or subfield from a MARC record. They are very powerful and very useful. But, depending on the size of your database, a query using the BLOB functions may run for hours[1], and this may not be ideal.

The following are some alternatives to BLOB queries. If you can use them, you will get faster results from your queries, even if you have a small database.

1. Check the BIB_TEXT table for the field that you want to use. It contains many nicely formatted, often used bib fields. To do this, see the Data Dictionary, and the Additional Information section below.
2. To get fixed field data from bibliographic records, consider using the MARC*_VW tables. There's a different table for each of the MARC bib formats (for example: use MARCBOOK_VW for monographs with types a, h, and t).
3. To get URLs in 856, 505, etc. MARC fields for MFHDs, bibliographic records, and electronic reserve items use the ELINK_INDEX table.
4. If you are trying to find records with a specific MARC field use Global Data Change and Scan Rules to scan the database for a specific field.
5. If the data you want can be searched using a left-anchored index, consider using the BIB_INDEX table. This is the table that Voyager uses for left anchored searches and limits. To use BIB_INDEX you need to know what value of INDEX_CODE to use (e.g., 008D, 100H, 2451, etc.). You can look the codes up in the SEARCHPARM table.

Additional Information

MARC Fields from the BIB_TEXT table (note that for any repeatable field listed, the BIB_TEXT table contains only the first instance of that field):

RECORD_STATUS	Leader bytes 5	CODEN	030 a
BIB_FORMAT	Leader bytes 6-7	NETWORK_NUMBER	035 a
ENCODING_LEVEL	Leader bytes 17	STOCK_NUMBER	037 a
DESCRIP_FORM	Leader bytes 18	GPONUM	074 a
FIELD_008	008	AUTHOR	100 abcdkq 110 abcdgkn

			111 acdegkn (but not 130)
DATE_TYPE_STATUS	008 byte 6		
BEGIN_PUB_DATE	008 bytes 7-10	TITLE	245 abcfghknps
END_PUB_DATE	008 bytes 11-14	TITLE_BRIEF	245 ab
PUB_DATES_COMBINED	008 bytes 7-10 "-" 008 bytes 11-14	UNIFORM_TITLE	130 adfgklmnoprs 240 adfgklmnoprs 243 adfgklmnoprs
PLACE_CODE	008 bytes 15-17		
MAP_PROJECTION	008 bytes 22-23	EDITION	250 all subfields
LANGUAGE	008 bytes 35-37	SERIES	440 anpv 490 av
LCCN	010 abz8	IMPRINT	260 abc 264 abc
ISBN	020 a		
ISSN	022 a	PUB_PLACE	260 a 264 a
OTHER_STD_NUM	024 a	PUBLISHER	260 b 264 b
STDTECH	027 a	PUBLISHER_DATE	260 c 264 c
PUBLISHER_NUMBER	028 all subfields	MAP_MATH_DATA	255 abc

[1]BLOB queries are a specific type of query that accesses special MS Access MARC functions provided by Ex Libris. The Blob is the full raw MARC record in one long string. These queries can be VERY SLOW. When you do a blob query, your PC sends the query to the Voyager database server. The server does *some* of the processing, but also sends entire MARC records back to your PC to be parsed on your PC by the local MS Access VB blob functions. Each nested function will have to run for every record.

For non-BLOB queries, your PC sends the query to the Voyager database server, the server processes the query and sends the results back to your PC. For the most part, all the processing is done on the server and the only data transferred across the network are the query and the results. Any slowness is typically attributable to network-related (LAN versus WAN) issues.

Note

Constructing custom SQL queries by request and troubleshooting unexpected results from customer-created SQL queries falls outside the scope of Support. The above has been posted for informational purposes. Voyager-L and Developer Network are useful resources for finding helpful custom SQL or obtaining assistance from peers in troubleshooting custom queries.

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