

FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2009

In-Place Creation of Lookup Items

Data Aquarium Framework features on-demand creation of lookup items.

SEE IT IN ACTION

On the screen shot below a user has selected *Edit* command in context menu of a grid row that lists products from *Northwind* sample database.

This is a list of products.

New	Actions	Product Name	Supplier Company Name
		Chai	Exotic Liquids
		Chang	Exotic Liquids
		Aniseed Syrup	Exotic Liquids
		Chef Anton's Cajun Seasoning	New Orleans Cajun Delights
		Chef Anton's Gumbo Mix	New Orleans Cajun Delights
	Select	Grandma's Boyse	Grandma Kelly's Homestead
	Edit	Uncle Bob's Orga	Grandma Kelly's Homestead
	Delete	Northwoods Cra	Grandma Kelly's Homestead
		Mishi Kobe Niku	Tokyo Traders
		Ikura	Tokyo Traders

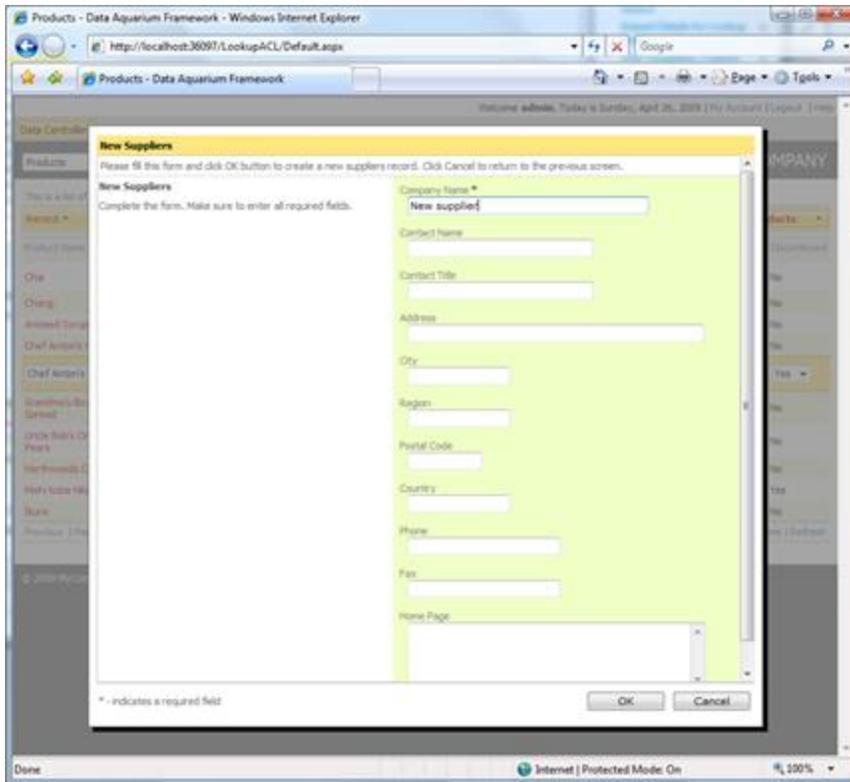
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The row is now displayed in edit mode. You can see that *supplier company name* field has an icon right next to the lookup box.



Chef Anton's Cajun Seasoning	New Orleans Cajun Delights	Condiments	48 - 6 oz jars
Chef Anton's Gumbo Mix	New Orleans Cajun Delights	Condiments	36 boxes
Grandma's Boysenberry Spread	Grandma Kelly's Homestead	Condiments	12 - 8 oz jars

A click on this icon will bring up *New Suppliers* modal dialog that allows entering a supplier in-place. The supplier is automatically selected in the lookup when user clicks *OK* button.



You can try this online at <http://dev.codeontime.com/demo/nwblob>.

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO THIS FEATURE

The feature is extremely useful but shall not be left uncontrolled. Typically only certain categories of users are allowed to create new lookup items.

This is how the creation of new lookup items is turned on in the data controller definition files.

```
<field name="SupplierID" type="Int32" label="Supplier#">
  <items style="Lookup" dataController="Suppliers" newDataView="createForm1"
/>
</field>
```

Attribute *newDataView* of *items* element specifies the view defined in data controller identified by *dataController* attribute. The attribute value is automatically assigned by

[Code OnTime Generator](#). You can define a custom view in *Suppliers* data controller to provide an alternative form to create new suppliers.

If you don't want in-place lookup item creation to be enabled then simply delete the attribute.

CONTROLLING IN-PLACE LOOKUPS WITH ROLES

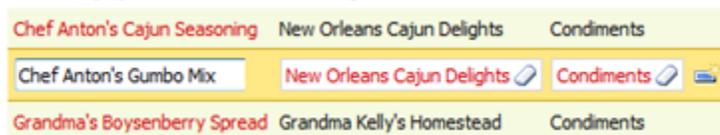
A better solution is to allow only certain user roles to create new lookup items.

Open data controller `~/Controllers/Suppliers.xml` and modify *New Suppliers* action as follows:

```
<actionGroup scope="ActionBar" headerText="New">
  <action commandName="New" commandArgument="createForm1"
    headerText="New Suppliers"
    description="Create a new Suppliers record."
    roles="Administrators"/>
</actionGroup>
```

Attribute roles will enable this action to be executed by users with *Administrators* role only. The framework will make sure that there is an action with *New* command in *Suppliers* data controller with an argument matched to the view specified by *newDataView* attribute of *items* element. If such action is not available then in-place creation of lookup items is automatically disabled.

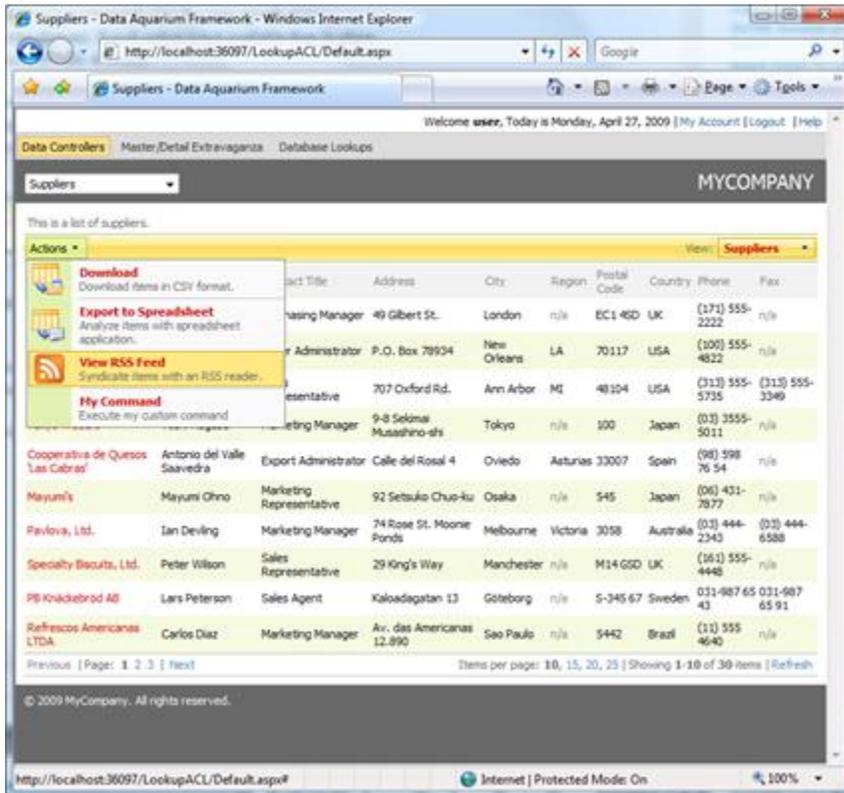
Our sample application has been generated with ASP.NET Membership enabled. Here is how the row will look if we sign in a user with the standard name *user*. This user belongs to the role *Users* and is not authorized to create new suppliers.



You can see that the icon that allows creating new suppliers is gone. The user still can create new categories.

The centralized business logic and definitions of [Data Aquarium Framework](#) ensure that any other references to the *Suppliers* lookup in the application are affected as well.

This is how the supplier screen will look when displayed to the same user. Notice that *New* option is not available on the action bar anymore.



CONCLUSION

ASP.NET declarative security if fully integrated into [Data Aquarium Framework](#) and allows easy control over AJAX web applications of any complexity.

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<http://www.codeontime.com>