

Dynamically adding buttons to each row: how?

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I'm working on a web application that will use some datagrid and asp.net, an asp.net Forum to be exact where people can leave posts and respond to posts others have left. One page in particular displays rows with an "interesting" column. What's interesting about this column is that it displays some links followed by text (the message someone left), all in the same column. These links represent actions a user can do. One link lets a user reply to a message, the other link lets a user quote a message, link #3 lets a user delete a message, while the fourth link let's a user edit a message. I'd like for these links to be buttons. I'm relatively new to ASP.Net although I'm picking it up fairly well. Datagrids in particular a bit of a fit although I'm slowly learning the in's and out's of them. However, I've hit of a break wall. I think I can do what I want with templates and such. When a button is called, I can catch this event using the ItemCommand event and write the necessary code to deal with what was clicked. Two problems I'm having:

1) All four buttons are not shown for each row everytime. At a minimum, a row will display only two buttons, the reply and quote buttons. Edit will only show up if the user who is logged in created the message for that particular row. If the user didn't create that message in a given row, then that user shouldn't see an edit button for that message. The delete button works in a similar fashion although there are conditions where others can delete a message. The point is, there are a total of four buttons that maybe visible for each row but on some rows only 2 or 3 buttons will be shown.

2) Due to the fact I like the way things look, I prefer to put the buttons and text in the same column. Essiently, the buttons will be at the top of a column with the text of a message shown below the buttons, again in the same column.

I suppose if I have to, I can put the buttons in their own column and have the text in a seperate column, but I'd rather have them both in the same column while figuring out a way have buttons present or not present on a per row basis.

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Is this possible? I've seen quite a few examples of adding controls (such as buttons) to a column, but I've never seen an example where each row could have a different amount of buttons in the same column unless the datagrid has gone to edit mode for a row, for example, which I'd rather not do. Plus, I'm not seeing much where it comes adding controls and adding text after a control although I suppose I could add a label after the buttons in the column and fill it with the text representing the message...

Any thoughts on this would be greatly appreciated. I order an ASP.Net book on controls which was recommended on DatagridGirl.com, but it won't be here for a day or two. I'd really like to get past this ASAP.

Sorry for the long post and thanks!

Chris Smith