

Getting the Most from SIR Support

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David Baxter SIR

Introduction

The annual license fee covers all upgrades, bug fix revisions and technical support. Since you are paying for this then you should use it. Email queries are usually answered within 24 hours but you may not get a resolution to your problem on the first iteration.

We like to help

If you are asking us for support and we ask you for a more information it is because we really want to help you. If you don't give us the information in the initial email that's fine and we are still happy. This paper is about the things you can do to get a quick answer and get on with the job.

Types of Support

You can ask us for any sort of SIR help; Technical advice, Bug reporting, feature requests or general reassurance. We can also help with things like recovering old or corrupt databases.

SIR advice

It can help us and get you a faster answer to a technical question if you can let us know how much detail you expect in response:

"How do you use ODBC with SIR?"

"I have been using SIR and PQL for a few years now but I would like to know how to read from an ODBC data source using PQL commands and functions. I am using sir2002 on windows."

If you leave out the first bit you will either get asked for that or you may get a very long-winded answer and it will take longer to get back to you.

Bug reports

If you report a bug then we will do our best to help you. We will try to get you a workaround or fix. Sometimes it can be difficult to figure out what exactly the problem is and we may need some help in getting you a quick solution.

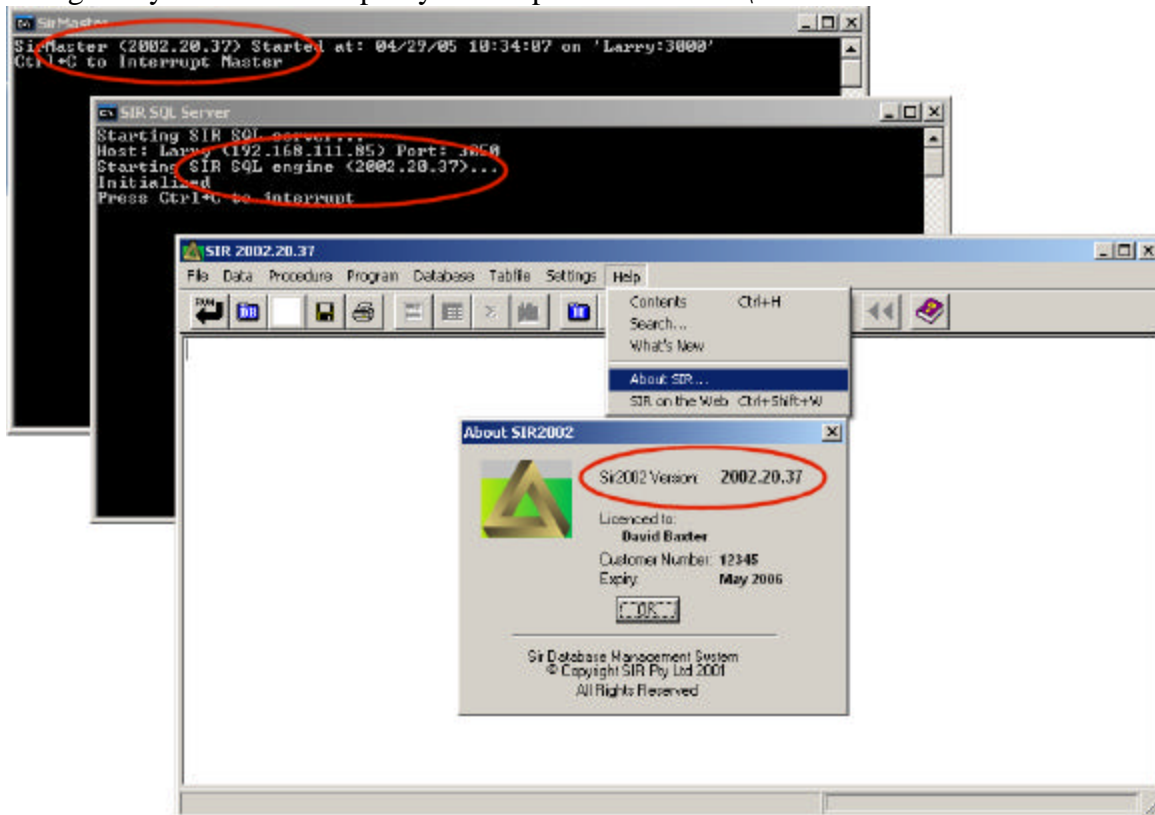
What we need

We each do things a little differently. Sometimes you may find a problem that seems so obvious that you wonder how it could have gone unnoticed.

We like to know the full version number of sir and the platform you are working on:

SIR2002.20.37 WindowsXP Pro.

Get the version number from the Help/About Sir... screen (or the startup message on master/sirsqls) as sometimes (because of paths, registered version, shortcuts...) you may not be running the version you think. Windows XP pro service pack2 will run the registered version of an executable before the one in the current default directory. So if you have an installed production version and a different release/revision that you are testing then you will need to specify the full path to sir.exe or .\sir.exe to run the sir.exe in the current directory.



If you are using command line options (e.g. from a shortcut, batch script etc)

We like to know what symptoms you are experiencing and what you expect to happen. Sometimes the system is behaving as it is supposed to

An example program and output can help a lot.

We may need some information about the database: a list stats, schema and verify may be enough but sometimes we will need sample data.

Avoid words like “blows up”* or “crashes”.

“Windows blue screen of death” is ok, the SIR session terminated with an error or the PQL program gave an execution error number ...

What you get back

If you don't give us enough information to reproduce the problem then you are likely to get a series of questions.

You should get a workaround that will allow you to perform the required task.

Depending on the severity of the problem we may produce a bug fix release.

We all get a better product

Timing

"Wow!

That was quick - I really didn't expect a same day response, given the time difference - never mind a response within 30 minutes!"

The table below shows the times that you can expect someone to be checking support email. You can expect a response to around these times (we generally concentrate on USA in the morning and Europe in the evenings) with the more long-winded responses coming out in the 9:30-4:30 EST band. An instant response is not guaranteed but is more likely if timed well.

Last Sunday in March – Last Sunday in October

| Sydney EST | UK (-9) | Western Europe (-8) | East USA (-14) | West Coast USA (-17) |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 06:00 – 08:00 | 21:00 – 23:00* | 22:00 – 00:00* | 16:00 – 18:00* | 13:00 – 15:00* |
| 09:30 – 16:30 | 00:30 – 07:30 | 01:30 – 08:30 | 19:30 – 02:30* | 16:30 – 23:30* |
| 21:00 – 22:30 | 12:00 – 13:30 | 13:00 – 14:30 | 07:00 – 08:30 | 04:00 – 05:30 |

Last Sunday in October – last Sunday in March

| Sydney EST | UK (-11) | Western Europe (-10) | East USA (-16) | West Coast USA (-19) |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 06:00 – 08:00 | 23:00 – 01:00* | 00:00 – 02:00 | 18:00 – 20:00* | 15:00 – 17:00* |
| 09:30 – 16:30 | 02:30 – 09:30 | 03:30 – 10:30 | 21:30 – 04:30* | 18:30 – 01:30* |
| 21:00 – 22:30 | 14:00 – 15:30 | 15:00 – 16:30 | 09:00 – 10:30 | 06:00 – 07:30 |

* Previous day (i.e. Sunday – Thursday)

If you need to have a dialogue on an issue – if you're not sure exactly how to phrase a question or if you think you're about to open a can of worms - then it can be possible with email, ms messenger or Skype during these times.

Support EMAIL: support@sir.com.au

Phone (9:30-16:30 EST) +612 9929 7466

Me: david@sir.com.au

SKYPE: david_sircomau

Messenger: david@sir.com.au

You may like to give some notice for a messenger or skype audio session.

Be aware that if you audio contact me during our morning/evening then I will be at home.

General email tips

- If you have several questions you may want to divide them into several emails. A ten part email may take quite a while to respond to because of a single tricky question.

- Spam Filter

We have started using a spam filter and we have your email addresses on our accept list. If you are using an email address that we haven't seen before then you may find you get a response asking you to confirm that you are a genuine emailer. Your message won't be delivered until you confirm, by way of a pattern recognition test, that you are bona fide.

The following email to **Support**, described below, is pending.

| Date | Subject | Expiration (ET) |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| May 11 2005 | SFR2002 support query | May 16 2005 |

To release it, enter any 2 words shown in this image:



[Why should I do this?](#)