

ODBC LINK for TracerPlus User Manual

ODBC LINK FOR TRACERPLUS

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ODBC Link for TracerPlus User Manual

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 What is ODBC Link for TracerPlus?

ODBC Link for TracerPlus is a versatile application that enables TracerPlus users to easily link their data to other databases and applications. Registered ODBC Link for TracerPlus users can seamlessly HotSync TracerPlus data to a wide variety of ODBC compliant applications including Access, Oracle and SQL Server. As is standard with PTS software, you do not have to be a programmer to use ODBC Link for TracerPlus.

The power of ODBC Link for TracerPlus lies in its easy to use configuration interface. In minutes it can be re-configured to sync TracerPlus data to almost any application. The only thing required to configure ODBC Link for TracerPlus is an ODBC data source (DSN), User Name, Password, Table Name and Field Names.

ODBC Link for TracerPlus is pre-configured to connect with the TracerPlus sample Microsoft Access Database. No setup is required, just HotSync TracerPlus and your data will appear in this easy to use Access database. Once in the TracerPlus sample Microsoft Access Database, data is easily linked to other databases and systems via Access controls.

ODBC Link for TracerPlus is shareware, which means you can use ODBC Link for TracerPlus on a trial basis for no fee. The trial download is limited in that it only allows 2 Sessions and 5 records per session to HotSync to the PC. Once you decide to purchase ODBC Link for TracerPlus, simply purchase a license at <http://www.ptshome.com>. PTS will send a registration code within 24 hours of request.

ODBC Link for TracerPlus supports both TracerPlus 2.2 Standard and TracerPlus 2.2 Pro versions.

1.2 Learning ODBC Link for TracerPlus

To discover the full power of ODBC Link for TracerPlus, we strongly recommend that you read this manual completely. If applicable, your IT department should be able to assist you in connecting TracerPlus ODBC to other databases.

1.3 PTS Support

As a registered ODBC Link for TracerPlus user, you receive free email support for 30 days from the date of purchase. During this period, we are available to answer ODBC Link for TracerPlus questions as well as general bar code questions. Our goal is to provide ODBC Link for TracerPlus users the tools to capitalize on the efficiencies of bar code data acquisition. To contact PTS support, email support@ptshome.com. Please allow us 24 hours to respond although it is often much faster.

Extended support contracts, including phone support can also be purchased at <http://www.ptshome.com/support.htm>.

Chapter 2: Installation

This chapter details the steps for installing ODBC Link for TracerPlus.

2.2 System Requirements

- **Windows 95/98/NT/2000/XP**
- **20 MB Free Disk Space**
- **Palm Desktop v3.1 or higher**
- **Palm OS 3.2 or higher**
- **Trial or registered version of TracerPlus 2.0 or higher and matching version of ODBC Link**
- **Optional – Microsoft Access for the TracerPlus sample Access Database**

2.2 Installation

During the ODBC Link for TracerPlus installation a new version of TracerPlus will be installed to your PDA. During this process you should not experience any loss of data or sessions. PTS recommends that a HotSync transfer be performed to backup data just prior to installation.

1. Download ODBC Link for TracerPlus from <http://www.ptshome.com> or an authorized PTS reseller. ODBC Link for TracerPlus can be downloaded from the PTS website at <http://www.ptshome.com/downloads.htm>.

Note: All PTS Free Trials are fully functional once registered.

2. On your PC install ODBC Link for TracerPlus by running the downloaded file.
3. The PDA Installer program will start during the last step of the installation. This allows you to get the most recent version of TracerPlus on your PDA(s).
4. Perform a **HotSync** with your PDA. At this point, you should see the TracerPlus application installed on your PDA.
5. On the PDA, tap the TracerPlus icon → Tap **Try It** → Tap **New** → Test your Scanner to confirm the installation took place correctly.
6. With at least one record entered in TracerPlus, HotSync your PDA

Note: If your PC does not have Microsoft Access installed, you must reconfigure ODBC Link for TracerPlus to use a valid ODBC data source. (Chapter 4)

7. Verify the TracerPlus data was HotSynced thru ODBC by viewing the TracerPlus Access Database located in your installation folder, or the database you have configured ODBC Link for TracerPlus to connect with.

2.3 Registering ODBC Link for TracerPlus

ODBC Link for TracerPlus is an application that requires registration for full functionality. It also requires that the connecting PDA(s) have registered versions of TracerPlus. The trial version of ODBC Link for TracerPlus limits the number of records transferred thru the ODBC to five and the number of sessions to two. Of course, the full version does not contain this limitation

PTS encourages all users who benefit from ODBC Link for TracerPlus to register their copy. To register ODBC Link for TracerPlus, we only require your PCID and an Email address. We generate a unique registration codes based on this PCID, so it is important that you send the PCID exactly as it appears on the computer.

Note: If you experience registration problem view the HotSync Log to determine the cause of the problem. Click on the HotSync icon, and select **View Log**.

How to Register:

1. On your PC, click on Start→Programs→PTS→ODBC Link, and select the “Registration Info” icon.
2. If you have not done so already click on the link to purchase ODBC Link. If you are an existing user, follow the links for upgrading your license. If you have already purchased ODBC Link through PTS or an authorized reseller please proceed to step 4.
3. Once your purchase is completed and payment is received, you will receive an Order confirmation from PTS. .
4. Complete, review and submit the Registration Info form from your PC.
5. Once this step is completed, your registration code is e-mailed to the address provided. This process usually takes one hour but we ask that you allow one business day in the event of heavy traffic or any other delay.
6. Once you receive your registration code, follow the instructions below to enter the code into your PDA.

2.4 Entering your Registration code

1. Enter your Registration Code next to **RegCode** in the TracerP_ODBC.ini settings file. You can access the .ini file using the shortcut icon in your installation.
2. If the Registration Code is valid, you will no longer receive the **“WARNING: TracerPlus ODBC on this PDA is unregistered. A maximum of 5 records and 2 sessions will be transferred. Please visit <http://www.ptshome.com> to register TracerPlus ODBC on this PC Username: "Username" Reg. code: ""”** in the Palm HotSync Log.

2.5 Un-installing ODBC Link for TracerPlus

Chapter 2: Installation

In the unlikely event that you would like to remove ODBC Link for TracerPlus from your PDA, follow these simple instructions.

First, run the PDA Installer using the shortcut icon in your installation. Follow the instructions to remove the TracerPlus conduit from all your PDA's. Then, using **Add/Remove Programs**, located in Control Panel, remove ODBC Link for TracerPlus.

Chapter 3: TracerPlus Link to Access via ODBC Link

ODBC Link for TracerPlus is pre-configured to connect all TracerPlus PDA data to the TracerPlus Access Database shown below. TracerPlus session tables can easily be linked to other Access databases giving the user maximum control over TracerPlus data. If the computer being used does not have Access installed TracerPlus Access Database will not work and you should proceed directly to Chapter 4.

3.1 Viewing TracerPlus Data in Access

To view TracerPlus data in Access you must first HotSync your PDA. After the HotSync is complete open the TracerPlus Access Database, found in C:\Program Files\PTS\TracerPlus_2.2\Data or go to Start→Programs→PTS→TracerPlus 2.2→Browse Data Files. The TracerPlus Access Database contains Access tables for each TracerPlus Session. If you are not using all 32 TracerPlus Sessions you can remove individual tables by re-configuring TracerPlus ODBC as described in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Configuring ODBC Link

4.1 The TracerP_ODBC.ini Settings File

ODBC Link for TracerPlus contains a simple to configure .ini file, TracerP2_ODBC.ini, that enables users to link TracerPlus data to databases and PC-based management systems. Below is a screen shot of the default TracerP_ODBC.ini file for ODBC Link for TracerPlus, pre-configured to link to the TracerPlus Access Database. At anytime these settings can easily be changed to meet your exact needs. Below we explain each setting in the TracerP2_ODBC.ini file.

PCID

The **PCID** is a unique computer ID that is used to issue the **RegCode** that fully enables ODBC Link for TracerPlus.

RegCode

The **RegCode** is code supplied by PTS after you purchase TracerPlus ODBC that fully enables ODBC Link for TracerPlus. Enter the RegCode after the equals sign, any text after the semicolon will be ignored.

Enabled

The **Enabled** setting allows the User to turn on and off ODBC configurations at the session level. When set to **True** data will sync to the configured DSN, when set to **False** data will not sync to the configured DSN. This option only affects the ODBC link; it does not disable normal .txt file transfers. Regardless of the Enabled setting, the text-based synchronization will still take place, and your data will be stored in the text files as it would normally without ODBC Link.

DSN

Enter the Data Source Name (**DSN**) in this field. The value for **DSN** must match an existing ODBC DSN configured on your system.

You can create/modify **DSN** configurations by using the Control Panel applet called "ODBC Data Sources" or "Data Sources (ODBC)". You may find this under Control Panel - Administrative Tools, depending on your operating system version.

ODBC Link for TracerPlus creates a sample **DSN** called "PTS_TracerPlus", which is pre-configured to connect to the included Microsoft Access database. You can modify this **DSN** for your own needs, or create a new one.

User Name

A **User Name** is required by some databases in order for the ODBC to connect. The ODBC configured database's **User Name** can be entered in this space. TracerPlus Access Database and many others do not require a **User Name** so leaving it blank is acceptable.

Password

A **Password** is required by many databases for the ODBC to connect. The ODBC configured database's **Password** can be entered in this space. TracerPlus Access Database and many others do not require a **Password** so leaving it blank is acceptable.

Table Name

The **Table Name** is the name of the table within the database you intend to sync data with.

Field Mapping

The **Field Mapping** sections of the .ini are where the maps are made between TracerPlus fields and your database's fields. The **PC** database field names are entered in the right hand column. The Left hand values should not be changed from "**Fieldxx=**" (i.e Field1). If you leave a field name blank (on the right-hand side of the equals sign), that field will not be synchronized.

<p>Note: If you experience any ODBC problems view the HotSync Log to determine the cause of the problem. Click on the HotSync icon, and select View Log.</p>
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4.2 Working with Signature Images and ODBC

If you are using the "Pro" edition of TracerPlus on your PDA, you may be storing signature images as part of your data. This section explains how signature images work with ODBC Link.

By default, signature images are transferred to the PC during a HotSync operation and stored as .bmp files in a folder called "**Signatures**" located underneath your HotSync folder. When using ODBC Link, the .bmp files are stored in the same place, and the name of the specific signature bitmap file is stored in the text field in your ODBC table as specified in your TracerP_ODBC.ini file.

Chapter 4: Configuring ODBC Link

It is possible to store the signature bitmap image directly in your database instead of referring to it by its filename. This has the advantage of not requiring you to keep the .bmp files around in any folder since they're stored directly in the database table.

To do this, you will need to configure your ODBC table to have a "Memo" or "BLOB" type field instead of a "Text" or "VarChar" field to receive the bitmap data. ODBC Link detects the data type of the field in your ODBC table and uses that to determine whether to store the .bmp filename or the .bmp data itself.

For example, in Microsoft Access, it's possible to change the type of a field to receive the signature bitmap image data instead of the filename. To do this, open the Microsoft Access database, select your target table, and choose "Design." Locate the field that will receive your bitmap image, and change its **Data Type** to be **Memo**. The next time you HotSync a signature image, that image data itself will be stored in that field, in .bmp format.

Many reporting systems and client programs can use this bitmap image directly from the database, and you no longer need to maintain the Signature folder with .bmp files since they're stored in the database directly.

Advanced Topic: Storing Signature Bitmaps as OLE Objects

In addition to storing the raw .bmp file data in the database, ODBC Link for TracerPlus can store your signature images as **OLE Objects**. This is useful for some reporting systems, including Microsoft Access, that are easier to use with embedded OLE bitmap objects rather than raw image data.

To enable this feature, configure your target table with field of type "OLE Object". Then you need to add one line to the TracerP_ODBC.ini file under the appropriate Session table as follows

```
SaveBitmapsAsOLEObjects = True
```

This line must be located inside the section for the table you are configuring. Once this line is there, as long as your target field type is "OLE Object" or "BLOB", the data will be stored as a PBRUSH class "Picture" bitmap type OLE Object.

The bitmap OLE Objects are fully embedded (not linked), and you should not need the .bmp files on disk once the data is loaded into your table.

<p>Note: This feature, <code>SaveBitmapsAsOLEObjects</code>, may not be supported in future versions of MS Windows. It is not necessarily compatible with all systems. Please use at your own risk.</p>
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Chapter 5: Managing Data with ODBC Link

5.1 Sending TracerPlus Data to the PC via ODBC Link for TracerPlus

ODBC Link for TracerPlus routes TracerPlus PDA data per the ODBC configuration as well as to the standard TracerPlus .txt files, as described in **Chapter 5** of the TracerPlus manual. How the data is handled after it reaches the ODBC configured database file and the TracerPlus default file is controlled by TracerPlus HotSync settings on the PDA. Chapter 3, Section 3.3 of the TracerPlus manual describes HotSync settings.

Note: If you turn off Append to existing, in the TracerPlus Session Settings on the PDA, ODBC Link for TracerPlus will delete all pre-existing data in the target ODBC table.

5.2 Sending Databases and Lists to the PDA

Please refer to TracerPlus Manual Section 5 for more information on this topic.