

VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

Release Notes

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This document contains information that supplements the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 documentation. **Please visit the VTECS DIRECT Support page on the VTECS website (<http://www.vtecs.org/directfiles.htm>) for the most up-to-date Release Notes, software updates, Help documents, etc.**

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1.0 Introduction

This document contains important information that you should read before installing VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0.

VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

. . . designed to manage occupational analysis information

VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 enables you to:

- customize existing information to meet your requirements
- enter and manage your own information
- review and/or select specific elements in a variety of ways.

Specifically, VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 assists you in:

- organizing and reorganizing technical courses and programs.
- identifying tools, equipment, and materials for instruction.
- revising program curriculum.
- identifying academic requirements for specific occupations.
- articulating skills at the secondary and postsecondary levels.
- developing assessment instruments to assess student performance and knowledge.

2.0 Installing VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

Please visit the VTECS website <http://www.vtecs.org> and select the "DIRECT Support" link for the most current Release Notes, manuals, program updates and other helpful VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 information.

Before installing VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0, read about the system requirements in Section 2.1.

The autorun setup program is executed automatically when you insert the program CD in the drive. It is used to install the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 components. You can also execute the installation by selecting the SETUP.EXE program in the root folder of the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 compact disc.

The installation may automatically reboot, which is OK, and the install should restart from the same point as it rebooted automatically. The system will alert the user when the install is absolutely complete and ready for a reboot.

YOU MUST REBOOT THE SYSTEM BEFORE starting VTECS DIRECT™ for the first time. If you start VTECS DIRECT™ without rebooting after installation, you will receive an error and VTECS DIRECT™ will not run. Please reboot and VTECS DIRECT™ will function normally.

2.1 System Requirements

VTECS DIRECT™ 5 operates on computers running Intel or compatible Pentium IV or greater processors. The processor must be running at a minimum of 1.2 GHZ.

Supported operating systems (OS):

- Windows XP
- Windows 2000
- Windows 2000 Server

NOTE: The VTECS DIRECT 5 database will stop functioning if a Windows Vista upgrade is performed!

VTECS DIRECT 5 client software runs under Windows Vista but Microsoft SQL Server does NOT (the database that stores DIRECT information)! You can install Microsoft SQL Server on server machine (Windows 2000 or XP) and install the client portion of VTECS DIRECT on a Windows Vista machine.

VTECS DIRECT™ 5 is not supported running under Windows 95, 98 or ME. Do NOT attempt to install VTECS DIRECT™ 5 on Windows 95 “at all”. Installing can have serious effects on your system.

VTECS DIRECT™ 5 has the following memory (RAM) requirements:

Windows® 2000	256 MB minimum, 1 GB recommended
Windows® XP	512 MB minimum, 1 GB recommended

VTECS DIRECT™ 5 has the following hard drive requirements, depending on the components and setup option selected:

Database Server	80 MB
Client Software	40 MB

VTECS DIRECT™ 5 requires a monitor with a minimum of SVGA resolution; 800x600 resolution or higher, a Microsoft Mouse or compatible pointing device, and Internet Explorer 5.0 or later.

All versions of Windows must have the latest Service Packs and any Critical Updates installed. Service Packs and Critical Updates are available at <http://www.windowsupdate.com/>.

Microsoft Access 2000 or higher is necessary for support of the MS Access Custom Reports features. Custom reporting without MS Access can be done with the report writer included in VTECS DIRECT™ 5. Please read further in the Release Notes for more information.

2.2 Starting the Installation

The autorun setup program is automatically executed when you insert the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 program CD in the drive. It is used to install the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 components. You can also execute the installation by selecting the SETUP.EXE program in the root folder of the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 compact disc.

The installation may automatically reboot, which is OK, and the install should restart from the same point as it rebooted automatically. The system will alert the user when the install is absolutely complete and ready for a reboot.

YOU MUST REBOOT THE SYSTEM BEFORE starting VTECS DIRECT™ for the first time. If you start VTECS DIRECT™ without rebooting after installation you will receive an error and VTECS DIRECT™ will not run. Please reboot and VTECS DIRECT™ will function normally.

2.3 Installing the Client Only

If you wish to install the client only, start the installation and then select "DIRECT Application" under installation options and unselect the "Database" checkbox.

NOTE: The resulting Client only workstation will have to be configured to point to a computer with a full install of VTECS DIRECT™. In the database/server dialog box that comes up when you first run VTECS DIRECT™ on the Client workstation, the only parameter the needs to be changed is the "Server Name" property, and this should be the name of the computer running the full VTECS DIRECT™ installation. Please note that the "Server Name" property is NOT the name of the server on your network (if you have Novell for example) it is the name of the other computer running full VTECS DIRECT™.

2.4 Updating VTECS DIRECT™ 5 to a newer version

Visit the VTECS DIRECT Support page on the VTECS website (<http://www.vtecs.org/directfiles.htm>) to check for software updates.

Updating VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 by running an update file from the VTECS website will not overwrite or affect data stored in the database.

2.5 Updating a multiple client install of VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

If you have VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 running on several workstations all connecting to a single database, you must update the database and **ALL** of the clients before running the software. Run the update on the database first then update the workstations. Running a different version of the client against a different version of the version database can have serious effects on your data. Please make sure all users have the same version of VTECS DIRECT™ installed at all times.

2.6 Upgrading a VTECS DIRECT™ 4+ Installation

If you are still using VTECS DIRECT™ 4+ and need to migrate data to the new VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 installation, you will have to perform an Import of your older data after you run the new VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 software for the first time. (Please note that you must select the [All] option when importing to properly import VTECS DIRECT™ 4+ data.)

If the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database needs to be recreated and the Import rerun, users can run the setup installer and select a "Reinstall Database" only installation to recreate the database file. **Caution!: Rerunning the setup installer will create a clean VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database and delete all existing data from VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0. Use caution!**

2.7 Help! I get a message that a newer version of Windows Installer is needed

Help! I get a message that a newer version of Windows Installer is needed. Updates were downloaded and installed but I still get the same message about the Windows Installer when I try to install VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0.

Solution: The installer should automatically update, but you can run it manually, by going to the directory: \\Msde\Msi\ on the CDROM. There are four files in the directory.

- For Windows 2000/XP, run the following files: INSTMSIW.EXE, INSTMSIW20.EXE; only one will run. Reboot and retry the install from the beginning.

2.8 Help! The database portion of the install goes almost to the end and then fails

Help! The database portion of the install goes almost to the end and then fails. No matter what you seem to do the progress bar makes it almost to the end and then rolls back.

Solution: This could be one of many things, and is usually found in Windows XP. The most common two issues are that the user attempting to perform the install does not have Administrator rights on the computer and "File and Printer Sharing" is not installed.

To install "File and Printer Sharing" go the Control Panel and Network Connections. Double click on "Local Area Connection" and click the Properties button. Look for "File and Printer Sharing for Microsoft Networks" in the list of installed components. If it is not listed, then click the Install button and select the item "Service" from the list and select the Add button. Next, select for "File and Printer Sharing for Microsoft Networks" in the list and click the OK button. Reboot after accepting all the prompts and then retry the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 installation.

If your install still rolls back then you will need to review the setup log file for the exact error message generated during the rollback. Open the file MSDE_SP2.LOG with NotePad and scroll down about half way through the file. You should see many entries that start with the term "WriteRegistryValues". Scroll down to the bottom of this section, after approximately 10 to 20 lines; you will see the term "Rollback". Look at the lines directly above it and you will see a message about "InstallSQLSomething Failed". This is the exact reason why the database portion of VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 will not install. A quick Internet search using a search engine like www.Google.com will show information to fix the issue.

2.9 Help! I upgraded to Windows XP and now VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 does not work

Help! I upgraded to Windows XP and now VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 does not work. Also, reinstalling VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 fails during the install.

Solution: There is a problem in the upgrade for Windows XP that incorrectly sets the performance counters in Windows. The Windows performance counters have to be reset to factory default then retry the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database install.

Run the following command at the Start -> Run prompt:
lodctr /r:PerfStringBackup.ini

2.11 Help! Everything is installed, but I cannot connect to the database on Windows 2000.

Help! Everything is installed, but I cannot connect to the database on a Windows 2000 PC. I have checked and the database is running (little icon next to the time in the right hand corner).

Solution: On Windows 2000 if you run only the Critical updates, you will not have installed the updates to the MDAC (Microsoft Data Access Components). The install does not include this in the install anymore due to issues with Windows XP security settings Go to the Windows Download site and install the most recent version.

- <http://msdn.microsoft.com/data/mdac/default.aspx>

As of the writing of these release notes the current version was MDAC 2.8 SP1.

3.0 Uninstalling VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

The following informational items are specific to issues when attempting to uninstall VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0.

3.1 How to Uninstall VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

- To uninstall the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 software, use the Add Remove Programs from the Control Panel. Uninstall VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 only.

NOTE: Never uninstall MSDE (Microsoft SQL Server Desktop Engine) on Windows XP. For additional information, see the support page for VTECS DIRECT 5 on the VTECS website, www.vtecs.org.

NOTE: Do not uninstall the listing for “Microsoft Data Access Components” (If it is shown). Removing this software can have adverse effects on your system, especially if you are using Windows 98 or ME.

After uninstalling VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0, delete the directories:

C:\Program Files\VTECS\VTECS DIRECT
C:\Program Files\Microsoft SQL Server

3.2 WARNING: Do not attempt to uninstall “Microsoft Data Access Components” on Windows 98 or Windows Millennium.

Do not uninstall the listing for “Microsoft Data Access Components” (If it is shown). Removing this software can have adverse effects on your system, especially if you are using Windows 98 or ME.

Microsoft has a documented problem with the “roll-back” functionality in the Windows Installer for Windows 98 and Windows Millennium. Uninstalling “Microsoft Data Access Components” can leave Windows in an unknown state with several conflicting versions of system

On Windows 98, as a workaround, you can use Component Checker to reconfigure the MDAC components on a computer as an alternative to uninstalling, if it is absolutely necessary. There is no workaround on Windows Millennium Edition (Me) for uninstalling.

NOTE: If you attempt to uninstall “Microsoft Data Access Components” on a Windows 98 or ME and it fails, there is little to do to fix it, except attempt to reinstall Windows over the top of your existing installation.

4.0 Technical Notes

The following informational items are specific to problems or How-to information concerning VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0.

4.1 Installing on SQL Server 2000 Personal, Standard or Enterprise

When installing the database to a version of Microsoft SQL Server 2000 Personal, Standard or Enterprise, the setup installer automatically detects a previous version of SQL server and prompts the user for the password to continue.

It is not necessary to install the client software on a database-only server.

The SQL installer for VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 assumes a "default" instance of SQL server, if a previous version of SQL server exists but was installed using a different instance from the default, the database scripts will have to be run manually. Please contact VTECS to obtain manual database creation scripts. It is not recommended to install the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database on an instance of SQL server other than the default since all future patches will be configured for the default instance.

4.2 Why do I keep seeing the Server name dialog box at program startup?

The Server Name dialog box appears at program startup when the software cannot connect to the database server. Usually this means that the database server is not running. Users can use the SQL Server Manager icon in the taskbar to start and stop the SQL server.

If the database server regularly does not start at system boot up, users can use the SQL Server Manager icon in the taskbar to set the Auto-Start option on the database.

If the database is not installed on the same machine as the client that is unable to connect to the database, then the server name property is incorrect. Please verify that the server name is the name of the computer running the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database.

4.3 What is the Server Name?

The Server Name dialog box appears at program startup when the software cannot connect to the database server. The dialog box asks for the server name, database, user and password used to connect to the database. The following parameters can be used if necessary:

Server Name:	(local) <- <i>remember to include the parenthesis</i>
Database:	DIRECT
User:	vtecs
Password:	C0nn3ct (<i>capital "C", zero and a three</i>)

If the computer is unable to connect to the local database server using the term "(local)" then the user can try the TCP/IP loopback interface address:

Server Name:	127.0.0.1
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The loopback address always refers to the local computer if there is a network connection present. Using the loopback address to refer to the local database is NOT recommend on a laptop computer since the loopback interface is not initialized if a network cable is not plugged into the computer.

If the database is not installed on the same machine as the client, then the server name property is the network name of the computer running the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database.

4.4 Installing on Windows 2000 and Windows XP requires Administrator rights

The installation of VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 requires the modification of the Windows registry and configuration of services for the database server. These modifications to Windows require Administrative access to the system. Users on Windows 2000 or Windows XP must be logged in as an Administrator.

If users attempt to install the system without administrative rights, the installation of the SQL server will progress about half way and then back off, giving an installation error. This error is not informative as to the reason of the failed installation.

4.5 Can I run Multiple copies of VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0?

No. The current version of VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 will only allow a single database installation. Future maintenance releases of the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 software will have functionality to operate on multiple databases on the same PC.

4.6 My computer is running more slowly after installing VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0

VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 uses the Microsoft technology: SQL Server 2000. The version used is: Microsoft SQL Desktop Engine. Use of this technology can cause slow-downs on slower computers or computers will the minimum RAM requirement.

Users can use the SQL Server Manager icon in the taskbar to start and stop the SQL server when they are not using the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 system. NOTE: If users receive a dialog box asking for the server name, database, user and password, then they have not restarted SQL server after turning it off.

4.7 What is the user limit of the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database?

Here is the official word from Microsoft on the MSDE user limits.

----- Copied from Microsoft's Website:

MSDE 2000 has no enforced user limit, however, shared use by five or fewer users is recommended. MSDE 2000 has a managed concurrency workload governor that limits up to five concurrent batch workloads for optimal performance. As more batch workloads are submitted beyond the five-workload limit, the concurrency governor continues to slow down the system.

What this means in real terms, is that you can have as many people as you want connect to the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 database, however only 5 of them can be working at exactly the same time. The older version actually had a hard limit, so the 6th user could not login at all. In this version the 6th user can login and can use the system, but if all 6 people were to hit the search button at exactly the same time, the 6th person would have a small delay added to their search before it ran.

In general VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 systems should not encounter this problem except when there are a large number of users, then there might be an "at the same time issue". Network Administrators need only upgrade if the users determine that the system is too slow while large numbers of user are on the system at one time.

The real issue is that at low numbers, the delay can easily be negated by putting the database on a fast server.

Example: On a normal machine it takes 6 ms (milliseconds) to return a search of the tasklists. On a fast server it takes 1 ms. So, if you add 10 users and everyone hits the button at exactly the same time. The 10th hit gets a 5 ms delay added to his search, so, for him the search is Normal (the same speed as other machine), while for everyone else it is blindingly fast. *(Times listed are examples only.)*

5.0 Custom Reports

The following informational items are specific to creating and working with Custom Reports in VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0.

5.1 Working with Custom Reports

There are two ways to work with Custom Reports in VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 either using Microsoft® Access or the integrated report writer.

By default, VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 is set to display Microsoft® Access Custom Reports, in order to display the integrated report writer you must change a system setting. Go to the Question Catalog Maintenance screen in VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 under the Tools menu. Select the System Settings tab and expand the "Configurable Parameters" list. There are two parameters for the Custom Reports:

- Enable ActiveReports Custom Reports
- Enable Microsoft Access Custom Reports

You can change the Yes/No setting for each of these as desired. Note: When you change either of these setting the program will refresh the Custom Reports list, this may take a few minutes when enabling MS Access.

5.2 Creating new ActiveReports Custom Reports

Right click a Custom Report and click "Edit". Now that you are in the report editor, use the Save As function from the main menu to save the current report as a new report. You may edit the newly saved report as necessary.

5.3 Creating new Microsoft Access Custom Reports

Custom Report creation is done directly from MS Access. To get to the Custom Reports, Launch MS Access and open the Access database file found at:

C:\Program Files\VTECS\VTECS DIRECT\CustomReports\VTECSDatabase.adp

Once the database is open, go to the Reports section. The two Custom Reports included with the system are listed. Users can copy from the existing reports or create new reports.

If you are new to MS Access, the easiest way to create a report is by using the Report Wizard included by Microsoft. To create a report using a wizard, select the "Create Report Using Wizard" selection in the reports window.

NOTE: If you need your report to prompt the user for information, you can create forms similar to the ones used by the two reports provided that ask the user for input.

6.0 Known Issues

These notes relate to Known issues that surround the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 software. These issues provide workarounds where possible.

6.1 Using Office XP with Custom Reports shows nothing in the print preview window

The Custom Reports feature in VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 was engineered to work with MS Office 2000. Currently, a change in the way Microsoft calls reports has created a problem when viewing Custom Reports. This change has caused the print preview window to appear blank when running Custom Reports from within the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 software.

Custom Reports can be run without problems directly from MS Access. To run the Custom Reports directly from MS Access, Launch MS Access and open the Access database file found at:

C:\Program Files\VTECS\VTECS DIRECT\CustomReports\VTECSDatabase.adp

Once the database is open, go to the Reports section and double click on the desired report.

6.2 When I run the Custom Reports I get "Error: Can Not Get Report"

If you receive the message "Error: Can Not Get Report" when running the Custom Reports, this means that there is no Default Printer specified or that there is no printer installed on the computer.

6.3 After Installation as Administrator, logging into Windows as another user requires reentry of the database server and database password.

The password for the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 system is stored in the system registry with the Windows user id. When another user logs on to Windows, the user must enter the correct database access information the first time they run VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0. This will occur for each different Windows user on a given system.

Server Name:	(local) <- <i>remember to include the parenthesis</i>
Database:	VTECS_DATA
User:	vtecs
Password:	C0nn3ct (<i>capital "C", zero and a three</i>)

6.4 I Cannot Connect to the Database; I Do Not Think it is Running/Installed.

What version of Windows are you running? Press Alt-Ctrl-Delete and see if you can find the entry "SQLERSVR" (or a very close spelling) in the list. If so, that means the database is running. If it is not in the list, it needs to be started. Run the following program and hit the green arrow to start the database.

C:\Program Files\Microsoft SQL Server\80\Tools\Binn\sqlmangr.exe

You can also check the "Add Remove Programs" from the Windows Control Panel, to see if "Microsoft SQL Server Desktop Engine" is installed. If it is not, then rerun the install from the VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 program CD.

6.5 When I run VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 I get the splash screen and nothing else.

It appears that one of the upgrades supplied by Microsoft for protecting against one of the many Worm viruses, creates an issue with VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 running and attaching to the database.

Please follow the instructions below to resolve this issue:

1. Download and install the latest MDAC upgrade from Microsoft, found at:
<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=6c050fe3-c795-4b7d-b037-185d0506396c&DisplayLang=en>

Then restart your computer.

2. Download and install the latest VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 patch from the VTECS website:
<http://www.vtecs.org/directfiles.htm>

Patch both the client and the database. VTECS DIRECT™ 5.0 should now work correctly.