



Support Tracker

Product White Paper

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1. Overview

This document is a White Paper for **CompoundDev's Support Tracker** product. It is designed to introduce the company, the product and to describe a basic functionality and usage.

1.1. Company overview

CompoundDev is a company that was found in 2001 in Oxford, the United Kingdom. The company was transformed from the existing SQA Alliance, a company that was found in 1998 in Prague, the Czech Republic. The company had been found for two main reasons:

1. To create a new business opportunity for the major product, Support Tracker.
2. To support existing products of SQA Alliance such as SQAOLmod, a product designed for archiving received emails.

The main goals of CompoundDev Company are:

1. To develop and distribute professional software mainly focused on a software development cycle.
2. Distribute and support existing and new products.
3. Keep developing of software free of errors and conclusions, the software that helps to customers and that makes work easier.
4. Co-operate with 3rd parties such as do developing for 3rd parties companies as outsourcing and application design.

CompoundDev is the company that is fully focused on the customer, the company that has been created to support and communicate with the customer.

1.2. Product overview

Support Tracker is a Client-Server solution that is designed to help in a software development cycle. The main focus of the functionality is set on tabular archiving of found / fixed and closed errors with availability to use them as a reference for a future development.

The functionality is extended to control the quality of a development and controlling a quality of done work of particular users of the system. The system is designed to help speed up the development cycle and improve the software quality checking during the cycle.

Because in the system there are various types of users inserted data are separated from each other and securely stored in a database. There is no way how a user A could modify or damage data inserted or managed by a user B. The only way how to modify data is through the system functionality.

The functionality of the system is mainly focused on easy-to-use way of working with the software. Many of features of the system are automatics so there are no additional requirements to user to do some extra work.

The key features of Support Tracker are:

1. Easy to use and user friendly
2. Client-Server solution
3. Secure data storage
4. Support of e-mail notification
5. Scalability
6. Hi-functionality

1.3. Product architecture

Support Tracker is a pure Windows application. It is running under Windows ME, Windows NT4.0/ 2000 and Windows XP. For its run doesn't need some extra system extensions. For its administration it doesn't need some extra knowledge or support. It may run on one machine either as a typical Client-Server server solution with a server and many clients.

The solution is called distributed component solution (DCOM). It means that the server is designed to run on a different machine than the client (but it should run on the same as well). The different machine means not just a machine in the same network; it could be a machine that is a member of another network or workgroup, even a machine that is a member of a public network. The clients are connecting the server when they are requesting a co-operation. The server distributes wanted information through Extensible Mark-up Language (XML). When the clients receive the requested data the result of that is displayed.

For example, when a user wants to add a new error, in the user interface just use *Add Error* functionality. The client calls the server and delivers up error data. The server process input data and generate a specific client output that is delivered back to the client. Client process input data and does appropriate reaction.

Support Tracker could be separated into two main parts:

1. **Server** – it is the base of the system. The server is managing the database in that is stored data. The server is also managing an e-mail communication extension.
2. **Client** – it is the user interface of the system. Through the client are managed all functionality of the server, the server is configured, and information provided by the server is displayed.

Extended server components are:

1. **Database** - there are supported various types of databases. Every database's engine that support OLEDB is supported. Supplied database differ from the version of Support Tracker and license conditions. These databases are recommended:
 - MS Access – especially recommended for a small solutions
 - MS SQL
2. **E-mail extension** - the main supported & recommended mail system is MS Exchange Server.

There are more than one type of e-mail system supported; please contact the company for additional details.

1.4. Product architecture scheme

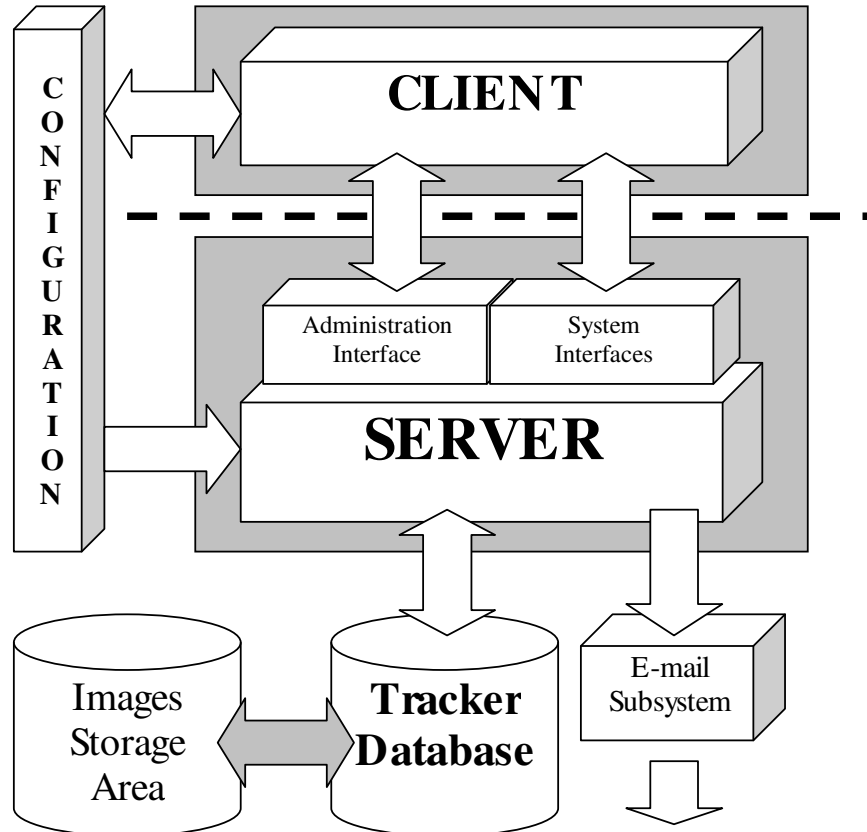


Fig. 1 – Support Tracker architecture

Description:

- **Server** – the base of the product, Windows 2000 service that distributes interfaces (Administration Interface and System Interfaces)
- **Client** – Windows application that consumes the server interfaces
- **Configuration** – Windows registry settings that are used for setting up the Server and the Client.
- **Images Storage Area** – the ‘database’ that is used by server as a storage area
- **Tracker Database** – database that is used for storing product’s data
- **E-mail Subsystem** – subsystem that is consumed by Server and used for sending automatic notifications messages

2. Product usability

The main focus has been set to the software development process. When software is made there are many steps that have to be followed to gain the goal – a quality software product. One of the last steps is testing of the pre-released product. Through testing there are found usually many problems that have to be fixed in a post-development process. The found error is becoming as expensive as the time period needed to localise it:

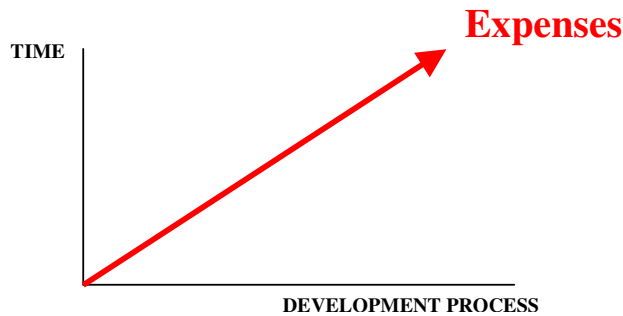


Fig. 2 – Expenses consumed by non-effective testing

Support Tracker cannot change this time scale and it isn't designed to change it. But because friendly easy-to-use functionality it would change the amount of problems that will have to be solved in the post-development process. When the product will be used as is designed many problems should be localised before post-development part of the process just because:

- All users of Support Tracker would be able to record found errors and track them after that. There is not difference between developer, tester or manager – all those users are enabled to record whatever they find or are not satisfied with
- Support Tracker post-analyst should show the most critical part of development so more resources should be allocated on
- The Support Tracker knowledge base that is built by recording & fixing errors should be used by support and testers to recognise problem before is assigned to developer

The product as is shouldn't be used as a development tool only. Because it is an intelligent tracker tool you can use it whenever you think that is usable. You can use it as a global problem-tracking tool in your company as integrated part of your company system – do you need to report failure of your PC or just change your chair? If yes, you can record it as a problem and assign to a responsible person. When your enquiry is fixed, everything is stored in Support Tracker knowledge base and database, so you can find that you have mostly problem with hard drives or that some software doesn't run properly on your systems. And Support Tracker should advise the solution; so you will not waste your business time next when the same problem occurs.

There should be listed many scenarios of usability of Support Tracker but is it needed to list all of them? Just try to remember how often you have to ask somebody else to do something and you are never sure if he done it. By using Support Tracer you can set up the standard way of solution of how to let somebody know that something have to be done and control the state of doing that.

3. System requirements

This chapter describes system requirements for **Support Tracker**. The configuration must full-fill system requirements for selected database engine and operating system installed.

These requirements are not part of the **Support Tracker** system requirements. Listed configurations are designed for a small solution implementation; that means MS Access database engine.

Memory requirements are depends on an operating system installed. Listed configuration shows MS Windows 200 installation type.

3.1. Server

Machine configuration: Pentium III min. or AMD equivalent chipset
RAM 128 MB, 256 MB for MS SQL Server
HDD 5 MB + database storage + image storage
Video 1024x768 resolution recommended, 16bit colour
Connection to MS Exchange Server
Network connection when client-server solution applied

Operating system: MS Windows NT 4.x
MS Windows 2000
MS Windows XP

3.2. Client

Machine configuration: Pentium II min. or AMD equivalent chipset
RAM 64 MB
HDD 5 MB
Video 1024x768 resolution recommended, 16bit colour
Network connection when client-server solution applied

Operating system: MS Windows ME
MS Windows NT 4.x
MS Windows 2000
MS Windows XP

3.3. Database

Machine configuration: Please refer to vendor requirements
Operating system: Please refer to vendor requirements
Supported databases: MS Access, MS SQL Server
Please contact the company for additional details when another database integration required.

3.4. E-mail subsystem

Machine configuration: Please refer to vendor requirements
Operating system: Please refer to vendor requirements
E-mail server: MS Exchange Server
E-mail client: MS Outlook
Please contact the company for addition details when another mail system integration required.

4. User pre- requirements

For users there are no special requirements to use **Support Tracker**. The knowledge of using of operating system is recommended. When E-mail subsystem integration is used an additional requirements to users is to know how to operate with used E-mail client such as MS Outlook and fully understand the mechanism of notification that is used by Support Tracker.

It is fully recommended to read *“Client guide”* and *“How to effectively work with Support Tracker”* manuals before using the system. For system administrators is essential to read *“Installation guide”* before installation and *“Administration guide”* afterwards.

For all users of the product is fully essential to understand the process in which Support Tracker would be involved the same as to understand their role in the business process. Without understanding the particular role in the business usage of the product is not guaranteed efficiency of the product. Please pay your attention to it.

The system is using message boxes for notifying the user about a malfunction. The description of the error always says what is wrong and it usually contains a straightforward notice to solve the problem. When you get confused with the description please contact the technical support of the company through our web site or through the E-mail.

5. Contact

In the case of any interest or with an enquiry please contact the company through or web site or through the E-mail:

Company web site: <http://www.compoundev.com/>
Support E-mail: <mailto:support@compoundev.com>

When you contact the company because of the support please do not forget to include these information:

- Your customer registered name and ID
- Your system configuration
- The error description
- Both log files (server & client)
- Short description of your problem from your point of view

The company's support department will solve your problem as soon as possible and it will advise you the solution that will always fit your requirements.

With other enquiries please [contact the company](#).