CHAPTER 2

Help Desk Technician's Guide to the Database

The database is designed to be used in conjunction with the help desk training in the accompanying textbook, *Deploying Student Technical Support Solutions*. This training assumes you have read that material and understand the concepts it contains.

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

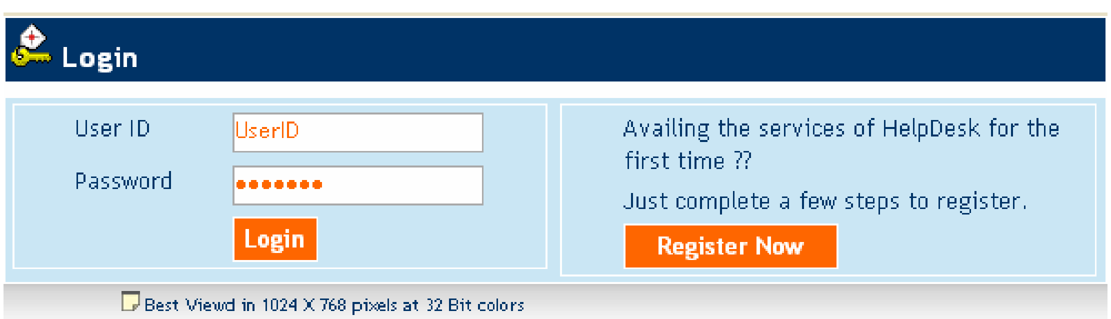
- Log your work hours and specify on which projects and tickets you spent your time.
- Create a new trouble ticket for a reported computer problem.
- Retrieve a trouble ticket.
- Document the resolution steps for a trouble ticket.
- Use the Knowledge Bank to help you solve computer problems.
- Create data reports.

Logging On to the Database

Before you can work in the database, you must log on. To log on, you must have a user account in the database. Your teacher, advisor, or another delegated database administrator will create your user account. Memorize your password, and ensure that you do not share it with anyone. You will be prompted to change the password to one that you choose when you first log on to the database. You are responsible for all actions taken by anyone logged on with your user account.

To log on to the database

1. Open Internet Explorer and type the address of the database in the address bar. The address will be **http://*server_name*/student_database/index.asp**, where *server_name* is the name of the computer on which the database resides.



2. When the logon screen appears, type the User ID and password provided to you by your database administrator, and then click Login. You will then be prompted to change the password to one of your choosing. You will be asked five security questions to validate your identify in case you forget this password. The main Ticket Posting Window appears.

Entering Work Hours

It is very important that you accurately track your work hours within the database. You will enter the times that you work, and the projects or tickets that you work on. This information can be used to determine how long it takes for an average trouble ticket to be closed, the percentage of work hours spent on ticket and non-ticket activities such as inventory and maintenance, and the appropriate number of help desk technicians needed to cover all of your team's responsibilities.

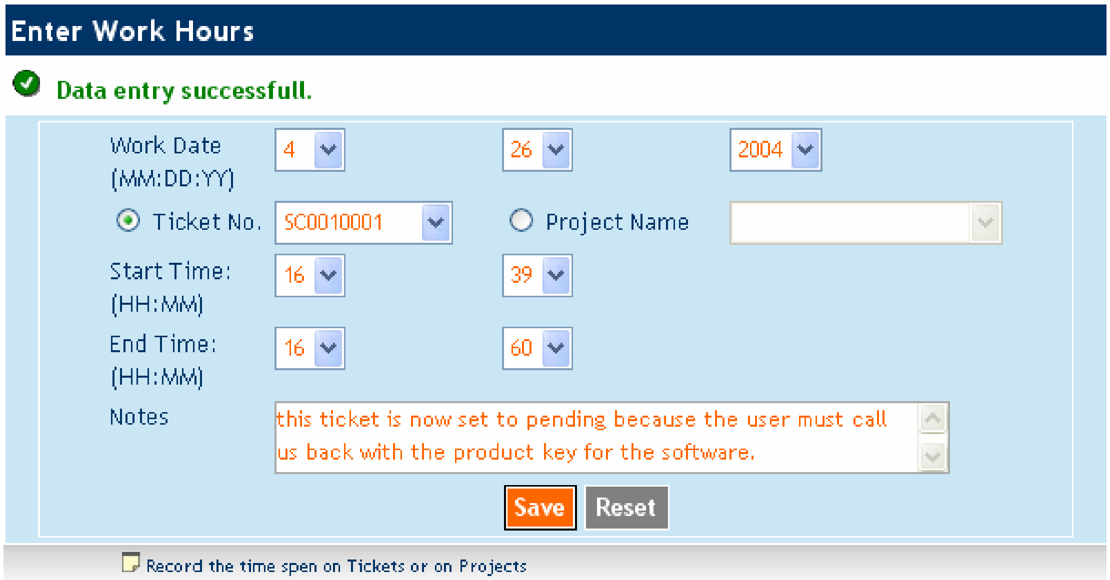
When you become employed, you will find that tracking the hours you spend on each project is very important. Tracking your hours here will give you a head start on this important skill. You should track your hours at the end of your shift each time you work; you should note your beginning and ending times on each ticket or project throughout your shift. To complete the task of logging your work hours, you will need a list of the ticket numbers and projects you worked on that day, and an idea of how much time you spent on each.

To enter work hours

1. Log on to the database.
2. Click the Work Hours icon in the blue bar at the top of your screen.
3. *For each ticket* that you worked on during your shift, perform the following steps:
    a. Select the button next to Ticket No., and then choose the ticket number that you worked on.
    b. Enter the Start Time and End Time for the work you did on the ticket.
    c. Type notes as appropriate.
    d. Click Save.

    Repeat steps a–d until you have entered the time for each ticket you worked on during your shift.
4. For each project you worked on during your shift, perform the following steps:
    a. Select the button next to Project Name, and then choose the ticket number that you worked on.
    b. Enter the Start Time and End Time for the work you did on the ticket.
    c. Type notes as appropriate.
    d. Click Save.

Repeat steps a–d until you have entered time for each project that you worked on during your shift.



Creating an Inventory

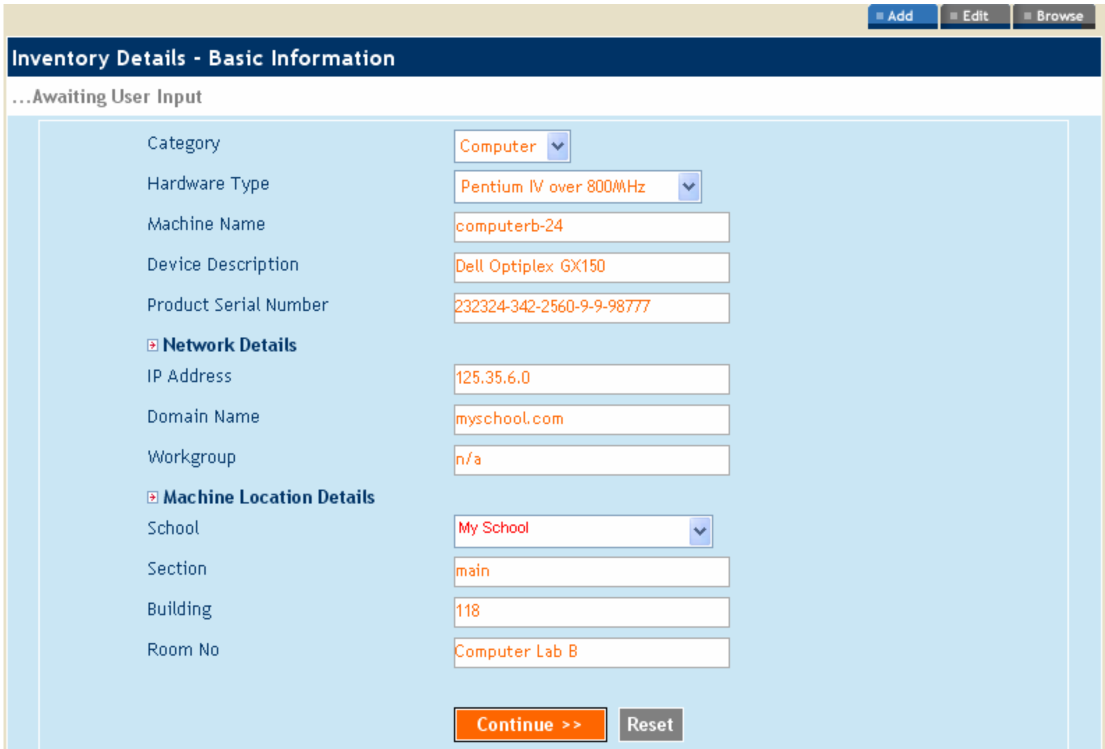
An accurate inventory is an essential tool to any help desk technician. When computers or other hardware are entered into the database inventory, and the database is kept up to date, you are able to immediately see the hardware and software inventory of the hardware in question. The information in the inventory can help you eliminate possible support areas or problems, or identify potential trouble areas, such as deficient RAM, or an old driver. Creating an inventory of the computers and peripherals that your help desk team is responsible for is one of the most important projects you can undertake.

IMPORTANT

No ticket can be opened for a piece of hardware that is not in the inventory! All fields in the inventory are mandatory. If a field does not apply, or you do not have the information, type the letter X. This will tell others that the field either does not apply, or needs to be completed at another time.

To enter a computer or other hardware device into the Inventory

1. Log on to the database, and click the Inventory button in the second row of blue bars near the top of your screen. The Basic Information inventory screen appears.



2. Complete the entire screen, and then click Continue.

3. Complete the Hardware and Software Details screens. (For a hardware type of Computer, the screen details are CPU, RAM, Hard Disk Drives, Logical Drives, Software, and Peripherals.)

4. Click Finish.

To update the Inventory

1. Log on to the database, and click the Inventory button in the blue bar at the top of your screen.

2. Click Edit and select the name of the hardware whose inventory you want to edit.

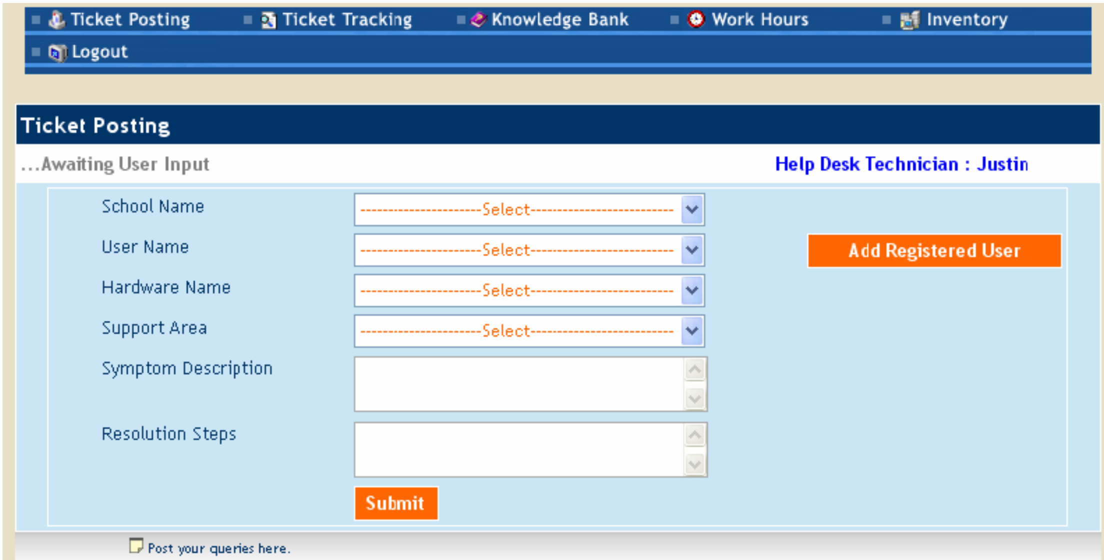
3. Select the type of information that you want to edit. To update a driver, click Peripheral.

Working with Tickets

A ticket is the tracking mechanism that records the reporting and resolution of computer problems. How often you will create tickets will depend on the services offered by your school help desk. If one of your services is real-time assistance when users call, instant message, or bring their computers to you, you will create a ticket for every customer-reported issue. If customers primarily use the Web interface of this database to report their problems, they will create the tickets themselves, and you will retrieve them in the order in which they were received.

To create a ticket

1. Log on to the database. The main Ticket Posting window appears.



2. Select your School Name.

3. Select the User Name. Select the name of the user who reported the problem. (If the user's name does not appear in the drop-down list, click Add Registered User and enter the required information. Be sure to use your school's proper naming convention. E-mail the user's login ID and password to them so that they will be able to view their tickets.)

4. Select the name of the user's computer or other hardware. (If the name does not exist in the drop-down list, click the Inventory button in the blue bar at the top of your screen, and enter all the Inventory details into the computer.)

5. Select a Support Area. Common problems associated with that Support Area will appear.

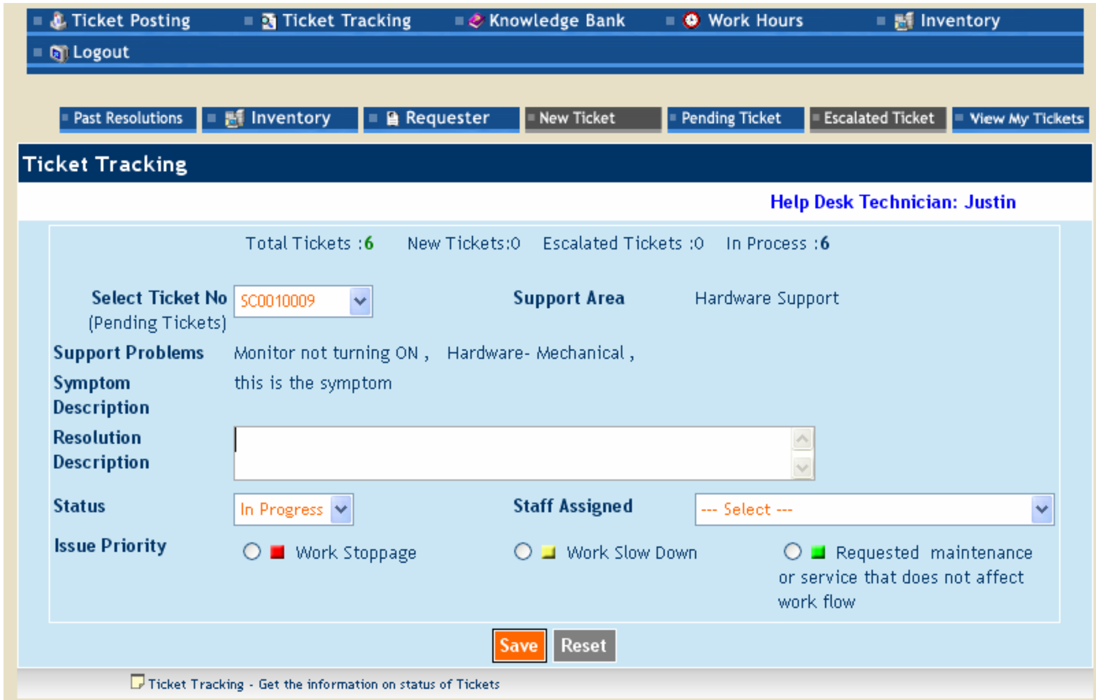
IMPORTANT

Data will not be transferred to the database if a selection is not made.

6. Type a Symptom Description. For example, "The processor is running slowly."

7. If you can easily solve the problem, type the steps that you would take to try to resolve the problem in the Resolution Steps field.

8. Click Submit. This will take you to the Ticket Tracking window.



The Ticket Tracking Window contains a row of buttons that launch tools that can help you resolve the ticket.

Button	**Result**
Click **Past Resolutions**	See the resolution steps for similar tickets that have been closed.
Click **Inventory**	See the hardware and software inventory of the computer or other hardware for the ticket, if it has been entered into the Inventory.
Click **Requestor**	See the contact information for the user who entered the request.

9. Type the resolution steps in the Resolution Steps field.

10. Enter a Ticket Status. The following Statuses are available:

In Progress	Use this status when you will continue to work on the ticket after closing your present database window.
Escalated	Use this status when you cannot resolve the problem, and you are escalating it to someone else. You must assign the ticket to a specific person in the Assign To drop-down list when you decide to escalate a ticket.
Closed	Use this status when the problem is resolved to the customer's satisfaction.
On Hold	Use this when you have not escalated or closed the ticket, but

	will no longer be working on it.

11. Select an Issue Priority. The following priorities are available:

Work Stoppage	The user cannot continue work until the problem is resolved.
Work Slowdown	The user will perform necessary work more slowly until the problem is resolved.
Requested Maintenance or Service	A problem that should be resolved, but does not affect any users' work.

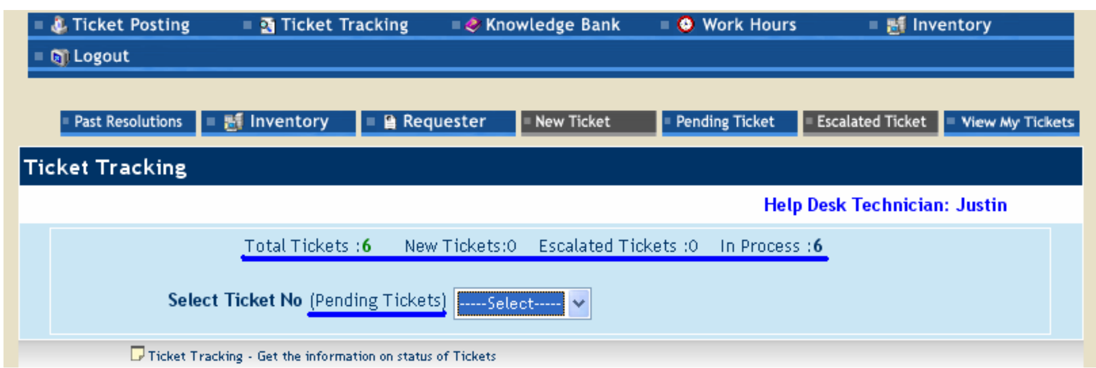
12. Click Save and note the time you finished with the ticket so that you can enter it in your work hours at the end of your shift.

13. Send an e-mail message to the requestor to inform him or her of the status of the ticket.

To retrieve a ticket

You must retrieve an active ticket to work on it. You might do this if you could not finish a ticket in a previous shift, if a ticket was assigned to you by someone else, or if there are tickets that are pending but not yet assigned.

1. Log on to the database, and then click Ticket Tracking. You are automatically taken to Pending Tickets. You can retrieve any open ticket from this screen.



2. Note the number of tickets available to you in each category. If you want to open a ticket that is not pending, click one of the following categories of tickets, and then select the ticket number.

Category	**Tickets Available**
Escalated Tickets	Tickets that you have escalated. You cannot work on these, but you can open them to see their status.
View My Tickets	All tickets that you have entered into the system that do not have a status of Closed.

Creating Reports

There are several built-in reports that can be created by users with an account type of Faculty Administrator. Your team Data Analyst must have this account type to view and create reports.

For each built-in report, the user selects a time period, and a school, if applicable. The built-in reports include the following:

- Tickets by Status

  This report displays the details of tickets based on the status of the tickets.

Tickets By Status

Status : "In Process" Period :Jan 3, 2004 to May 3, 2004

School: St. John's Cathedral

Sr.No.	Ticket No.	Support Area	Symptom Description	Resolution
1	SC0010010	Hardware	The OS is not recognizing the Mouse	
2	SC0010010	Hardware	The OS is not recognizing the Mouse	
3	SC0010006	Networking	Light at the back nd of machine does not blink	Check connector
4	SC0010009	Software		

School: Bombay Scottish

Sr.No.	Ticket No.	Support Area	Symptom Description	Resolution
1	SC0020002	Software	SDF	sdf
2	SC0020004	Hardware	Low memory problem	Pl check RAM

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- Tickets by School

  This report displays the details of tickets for each school. Tickets are displayed in the order of ticket number. Details are shown in the following graphic.

Tickets By School

School:"St. John's Cathedral" Period: Jan 3, 2004 to May 3, 2004

School: "St. John's Cathedral"

Sr.No.	Ticket No.	Technician Assigned	Status
1	SC0010001	Michael Hudson (Technical Person)	Closed
2	SC0010002	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	Closed
3	SC0010003	Mikel Daniel (Teacher)	Closed
4	SC0010004	Mikel Daniel (Teacher)	Closed
5	SC0010005	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	Closed
6	SC0010006	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	In Progress
7	SC0010007	Bill Bush (Faculty Administrator)	Escalated
8	SC0010008	Arnold Clinton (Help Desk Technician)	Escalated
9	SC0010009	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	In Progress
10	SC0010010	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	In Progress
11	SC0010010	Justin Vincent (Help Desk Technician)	In Progress

- Average Time per Ticket

  This report displays the tickets for the selected technician, and resolution time for each ticket.

- Technician Status

  This report displays the number of tickets entered by the technician, the status of the tickets, and the average time per ticket for the selected time period.

Technician Status

Technician: Justin Vincent (Login ID :justin) Period :Jan 3, 2004 to May 3, 2004

School: St. John's Cathedral

Tickets Opened	Tickets In Progress	Tickets Closed	Tickets Escalated	Average Time
9	5	3	1	13 mins

Total Ticket Hours :	0.88 hrs	Total Project Hours :	NIL

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- Tickets by Support Area

  This report displays the details of each ticket within the selected support area.

To create a report

1. Log on to the database.
2. Click Reports in the blue bar at the top of your screen.
3. Select the type of report you wish to display.
4. Enter the applicable Technician, time period, School, Support Area, or other requested information, and then click Display Report.

Using the Knowledge Bank

The Knowledge Bank is a complete repository of the past resolutions of problems by the people who share your database. You may use it to search for ideas on how to resolve problems. The Knowledge Bank may be searched by either problem symptom or support problem. The results of your search will display the resolution(s) entered by technicians who have solved problems that meet the criteria of your search. Because the information displayed by the Knowledge Bank is only as good as the resolution steps entered by technicians, your team should standardize the way resolutions are recorded. For example, you may want to have technicians enter a title that describes the resolution at the top of the resolution field, a description of the problem fixed, and the numbered steps of the resolution.

The following is an example of a resolution.

Computer will not recognize CD Drive

If a computer will not recognize a CD drive, go to Device Manager and ensure the device is enabled and has a current driver.

1. Click Start, right-click My Computer, and then select Manage.
2. Click Device Manager, expand the node for the CD drive, and double-click the CD device.
3. On the General page, ensure the device is enabled. On the Driver page, make sure the driver is up to date.
4. Reboot the computer and, if the CD does not work, escalate the ticket.

To Search the Knowledge Bank

1. Log on to the database and click Knowledge Bank in the blue bar at the top of your screen.
2. Select a support area, and select a search method (Symptom Description or Support Problem).
3. Select the applicable check boxes, and click Submit. All Past Resolutions matching your criteria are displayed.