PC HelpDesk Control

Welcome to PC HelpDesk. For ease of use, the HelpDesk appears similar to an ordinary Windows Help system, with a table of contents, an index, and full text search capability. The main screen has two main sections, the Project pane, on the left contains the table of contents, index, and search tabs. On right, the current topic is displayed in the Current Topic pane. At the bottom are several buttons used for navigation, as well as printing and copying topics.

Project Pane

The Left pane contains three tabs used to locate topics in the HelpDesk. The following three tabs are used to find the topics you are looking for.

Table of Contents	Displays the table of contents, containing all topics.
Index	Allows you to search for index entries, and find topics through the index.
Full Text Search	Allows you to search for topics containing any word, or set of words.

Current Topic Pane

The current topic pane displays your currently selected topic. At the bottom of this pane, the following seven buttons allow you to navigate through the topics, copy, print, save, and find other related topics.

Synchronize	Locates and selects the currently displayed topic in the Table of Contents in the Project pane.
Previous Next	Moves to the next or previous topic in the current Project tab. For example, if Index is the current tab, Next and Previous will move through the list of topics for the selected index entry.
Preview Topic	Displays the topic in a separate window. From here you may copy, print, or save the topic to a file.
See Also	Displays a list of topics related to the current topic
About HelpDesk	Displays version information about PC HelpDesk, and the currently open HelpDesk.
Help	Displays the Help for PC HelpDesk.

Contents Tab

In the table of contents, all HelpDesk topics are organized by product and area. Select topics by clicking on the + sign beside the book (or double-clicking on the book) to open books, then selecting a topic, and either double-clicking on the topic, or press the Display Topic button at the bottom of the Contents tab. Each HelpDesk topic has a product (such as RoboHELP) and an area (such as Feature List) indicating what the topic describes.

For example, if the table of contents may have:

Product: **RoboHELP**

Area: **Feature List**

Topic: **PC HelpDesk Support**

When the Contents tab is selected, the Next and Previous buttons in the Current Topic pane will move through the table of contents, displaying the topics as they are selected.

Keyword Index Tab

The Index tab allows you to search through the Index for relevant topics. The Index is a list of keywords, each of which relate to a set of topics. For example, a Money keyword might relate to topics on accounting, international exchange rates, and local restaurants. Use the following fields to find topics through the index:

Products   At the top of the Index tab you can select from a list of products to limit the topics found. Only topics contained in the selected book will be found. If you do not want to restrict the topics found, select the default: <All Products>.

Enter a keyword   Enter the first few characters of a keyword to find a list of keywords starting with those characters.

Find Keywords   Press this button (or press Enter on the keyboard) to get a list of keywords starting with the characters you entered. The keywords found will be listed below this button.

Keywords List   Select any keyword from this list, and press the Find Topics button (or press Enter on the keyboard) to find the topics related to this keyword.

Find Topics   Press this button to get a list of topics related to the currently selected keyword. The topics will be listed below this button.

Topics   Select a topic from this list, and press Display Topic (or double-click on the topic) to display the topic in the Current Topic pane.

The Next and Previous

buttons on the Current Topics pane will move through this list, displaying the topics.

Display Topic   Press this button to display the currently selected topic.

 Full Text Search Tab

The Full Text Search tab allows you to search through all of the HelpDesk topics to find topics containing certain words. The Full Text Search will search for phrases and whole words as well as parts of words (searching for "Demonstr" would find both "Demonstrate" and "Demonstration").

Products   At the top of the Full Text Search tab you can select from a list of products to limit the topics found. Only topics contained in the selected book will be found. If you do not want to restrict the topics found, select the default: <All Products>.

Search For   Enter the word or words to search for. If you enter several words, topics will be found that contain all of those words. And and Or may be used to restrict or open the search, and quoted phrases can also be searched for (for example: 'dog AND "German Shepherd"'). Press the Enter key, or the Full Text Search button to find the topics.

Full Text Search   Press this button to search for the topics containing all of the words specified.

Topics   Select a topic from this list, and press Display Topic (or double-click on the topic) to display the topic in the Current Topic pane.

The Next and Previous

 buttons on the Current Topics pane will move through this list, displaying the topics found by the search.

Display Topic   Press this button to display the currently selected topic.

Preview Topic

The Preview Topic dialog gives you a preview of how the current topic will look when it is printed or saved. From here you can copy, save, or print the current topic. By selecting the entire topic, and pressing Ctrl-C, you can copy the topic onto the clipboard.

Save As…

Click on Save As to save the current topic as a rich text (RTF) or plain text (TXT) file.

Print…

Click on Print to print the current topic.

HelpDesk Connection String

PC HelpDesk uses ODBC to read and write to the HelpDesk database. The connection string is used by ODBC to find the HelpDesk database. Basically, a connection string contains enough information for ODBC to know how to locate and edit the selected database. You should not edit this string unless you know the correct syntax for the ODBC driver.

ODBC Data Sources

PC HelpDesk uses ODBC to read and write to the HelpDesk database. This allows PC HelpDesk to work with a variety of database formats (although Microsoft Access is encouraged). If you have a PC HelpDesk in a format other than Microsoft Access or Power SQL, create then select the ODBC data source to connect to the database.

An ODBC data source is a method of providing sufficient information about a database, including what type of database, where it is, and other necessary information, to connect to the database. By using the ODBC Administrator (usually in the Control Panel, under Settings in the Start menu), you can select a database type, then specify where the database is. This creates an ODBC data source.

If an ODBC data source is selected, the PC HelpDesk first try to open the data source. If the data source does not exist, the connection string generated from this data source will be tried. If that fails, the Alternative Data Source (if one is provided) will be tried. When installing a help system with a PC HelpDesk to a users system, either the data source must be created, or the connection string for the data source must be valid on all users systems.

HelpDesk Database Properties

Select the HelpDesk to display in the PC HelpDesk control. When connecting to the HelpDesk, this HelpDesk will be tried first, if unsuccessful, the Alternative Data Source (if one is provided) will be used. There are three types of HelpDesk you could display:

Access File

Select the HelpDesk (PHD) file to be displayed in the HelpDesk. When the Help system is installed on the users system, the HelpDesk file can be installed either to the same folder as the Help file, or to the location entered here. Press the Browse button to find the HelpDesk file.

ODBC Data Source

Select the ODBC Data Source to be displayed in the HelpDesk. ODBC Data Sources are only used if you have a PC HelpDesk in a database format other than Microsoft Access or Power SQL. Press the Browse button to select from a list of ODBC Data Sources.

Power SQL Internet Data Source

Browse for the Power SQL Server and Data Source to be used. A Power SQL Data Source may be reached from across an intranet, or through the Internet. By using Power SQL, the HelpDesk can be maintained with up to the minute information. To specify a Power SQL Data Source, the Browse button must be used.

Advanced

The Advanced button allows you to edit the ODBC connection string used to locate the HelpDesk. You should not edit this string unless you know the correct syntax for the ODBC driver.

Display logon dialog box

If checked, your users will be required to enter a user name and password before viewing the HelpDesk. The user name and password will be checked by the database. If your database has a user name and password, and the users should not be required to enter a user name and password, set the correct user name and password in the User Name tab.

Alternative Data Source Properties

The Alternative Data Source is used if unable to find the HelpDesk Database specified in the first tab. For example, this data source would be used if you are using Power SQL to provide access to a HelpDesk database across the internet, and the user does not have internet access, or if the HelpDesk (PHD) file cannot be found. For this case, you can provide a HelpDesk (PHD) file, installed on the users machine, and install a data source for that HelpDesk file.

Select the data source to use if the main HelpDesk database is unavailable. This data source should be installed on your users systems.

User Name Properties

If your HelpDesk database requires a password, you can enter the user name and password here, so that the users will not need to remember and enter a password. By default, neither Access nor Power SQL requires a user name and password, in which case this is not required.

User Name

Enter a valid user name for the database.

Password

Enter the password

HelpDesk Logon

This PC HelpDesk requires a valid user name and password. If you do not have a user name and password, contact the vendor for more information.

PC HelpDesk Troubleshooting

PC HelpDesk was unable to locate the HelpDesk Knowledgebase. The error message should indicate if the problem is an Internet or Network Error, or an ODBC Error. Some of the possible problems and solutions are listed below.

Internet or Network Errors

For an Internet or Network communication error, the error message may be something like:

'Communication error: Invalid Server. Check to be sure the IP Address is correct, and that the Power SQL Server is running.'

The most likely reasons you cannot connect to PC HelpDesk through the Internet are:

Your computer does not have Internet access

If the Help Desk Knowledgebase is on the Internet and your computer does not have Internet access, you cannot view the PC HelpDesk Knowledgebase.

TCP/IP is not installed

Contact your network administrator to get TCP/IP and Internet access installed.

Your Internet connection is down

Try to get to the Internet through a browser. If this is not possible, it indicates your Internet connection is down. Contact your network administrator, or wait, and try again later.

Your network has a Firewall (Proxy Server)

Speak with your network administrator about using a system outside the firewall. Your network administrator will need to know that PC HelpDesk uses TCP/IP port 4545 for inbound and outbound communications.

The PC HelpDesk has been moved.

Contact your vendor for more information.

ODBC Errors

For other errors, the most likely problem has to do with your ODBC setup. ODBC is typically installed with your Windows 95 or NT operating system, as a standard method of accessing database files. PC HelpDesk uses ODBC to access the HelpDesk Knowledgebase. The most likely problems with accessing PC HelpDesk are:

Your computer does not have ODBC installed

ODBC is required to access PC HelpDesk. To check to see if you have ODBC, from the Start menu, go to Settings, and open the Control Panel. If there is an icon labeled ODBC or 32-bit ODBC, then ODBC is installed. Otherwise, you will need to install ODBC from your Windows 95 or NT CD.

The correct ODBC driver is not installed

If the driver is not installed, you will get an error message indicating that the driver (for example, 'Microsoft Access Driver') is not recognized, or could not be found. Contact your vendor to get the ODBC driver.

PC HelpDesk File not present

If the error message indicates the PC HelpDesk Knowledgebase could not be found (for example, HelpDesk.phd, or HelpDesk.mdb), check to see if the file may have been deleted or moved. You may need to reinstall.