

Information Technology and Services

Tip of the Week – Dec 5, 2005

Helping the Helpers

The IT&S Helpdesk receives a number of calls and messages where the information provided is not as specific as we need it to be to accurately diagnose a problem. Towards that end, here are a couple of steps users can do to help us help you.

First, note the date and time when the error occurred. This will help us when we look at logs on the computer to determine what the problem is.

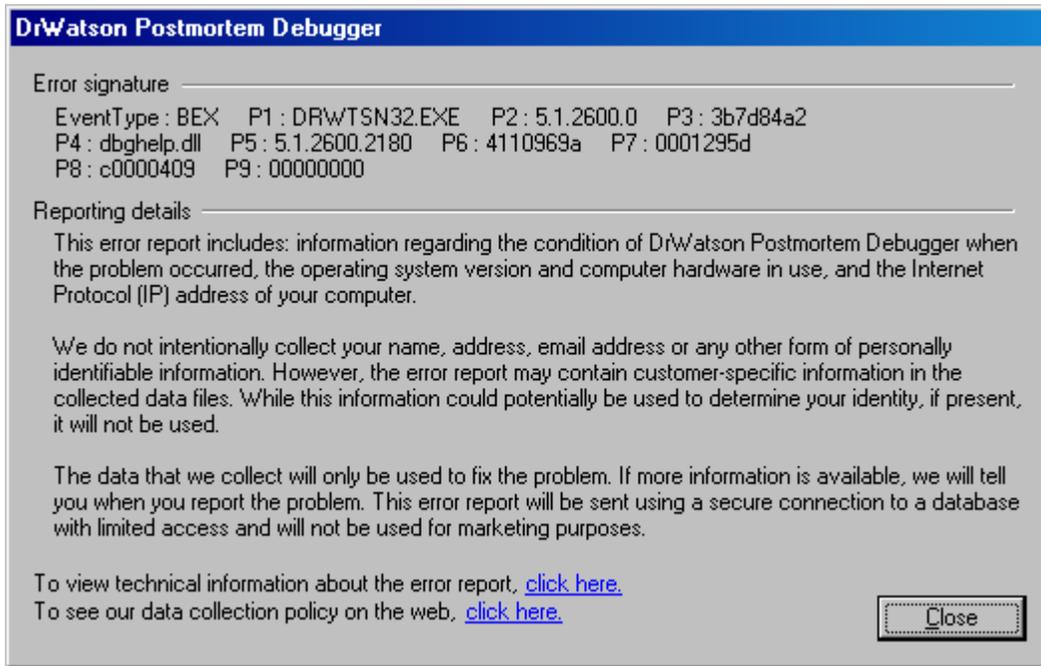
Second, capture or note the error message. With any window (e.g. error message) on the screen, the user can press Alt-Print Screen and the window/error message is captured to the Clipboard, which in turn can be pasted into a Word document. Specifically the user can follow these steps:

1. Press Alt-Print Screen. The Print Screen button is next to the F12 button.
2. Start Microsoft Word
3. Somewhere in the blank document, click on **Edit...Paste** or press Ctrl-V or the **Paste** button.
4. The captured window is placed into the document. If not, return to the error message box, make sure it is highlighted, and press Alt-Print Screen again.
5. If appropriate, type in some information into the document about the error.
6. Save the document in your user directory, i.e. K:\ drive with some appropriate name.
7. Or, click on **File...Send To...Mail Recipient (as Attachment)** and send the document to the Helpdesk.

For example, users sometimes get a message similar to the following:



Capture this window using the steps described above. This type of error message has more information which will be useful to us. Click on the **click here** link and a window similar to the following will appear:



Capture this window also, putting it in the same Word document. Close this window and click on **Don't Send** in the previous window.

In an email or phone call to the HelpDesk, tell us the name of the document saved. We will retrieve it and use it to help us solve the problem.

If an error occurs and Windows is not running, please write down the exact language of the error and include it in a message to the HelpDesk.