

PERVASIVE SOFTWARE FAQ'S

Prepared by Addsum Business Software, Inc.

For TAS/Advanced Accounting users

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What is Pervasive?

Pervasive is the record manager engine component used by some database systems and used to be called "Btrieve." All TAS/Advanced Accounting systems from version 3 through version 6 have used Btrieve as the record manager. For some general background information, see <http://www.btrieve.com>. (See www.pervasive.com for Pervasive's main web site.) The record manager engine is in essence a separate piece of software that sits between your application and the operating system and takes care of data operation chores such as indexing.

What record manager comes with TAS/Advanced Accounting 6?

Btrieve 6.15 (with the initial 12/31/02 release). Advanced Accounting 6.1+ now comes with Pervasive (additional purchase required).

So why haven't I heard about Pervasive before?

Pervasive is licensed differently than was Btrieve 6.15, and it essentially requires a separate license and additional costs. So it is not a component that Business Tools provides with the basic system. Also, Pervasive.SQL did not become an option for TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1 users until Pervasive released Pervasive.SQL 2000i. Most recently they have released **V8** which is an enhanced version of Pervasive.SQL 2000i. (Pervasive.SQL 2000i has been discontinued as of December 31, 2003 and has been replaced by V8).

When is Pervasive.SQL recommended?

Generally for any TAS or Advanced Accounting 5.1 or 6 system where the number of active/concurrent users are going to exceed more than 5-6 very active/concurrent users. (If there will be 6-9 users, but most of the time use is primarily by no more than 5-6 users, then Btrieve 6.15 with TAS/Advanced Accounting 6 may be satisfactory although see below). TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1 (but not 6) can handle users in the 10-20+ user range in a peer (BTRIEVE.EXE) configuration but implementation of Pervasive.SQL will provide much better performance and handling.

For any multiple office/branch office situation, Pervasive.SQL is highly recommended and has been optimized to work with Microsoft's Terminal Services or Citrix Metaframe. We believe that Pervasive.SQL will continue to be the superior option for multiple offices accessing a common system or any system relying on heavy remote access using and accomplishing that via Terminal Services or Citrix (and it has already proven itself to be an excellent solution in this type of environment).

The recently released Pervasive.SQL V8, because of its relative low peer configuration pricing (\$45 per user up to 5 total) and improved level of robustness and performance over 6.15, may be an attractive option for end users with 5 or fewer users.

Any user, regardless of the number of concurrent users, should consider implementing a Pervasive solution simply for its robustness, performance and stability and especially if there was a history of data integrity problems of any kind.

So exactly how will Pervasive.SQL help my system?

Bottom line: performance and robustness. You will see improved performance, and most likely the physical integrity of your data will be considerably improved.

For a recent article talking about V8 performance see:

<http://www.pervasive.com/documentation/Aberdeen.pdf>

(Sept. 2002 high performance embedded database white paper by Aberdeen Group discussing V8)

Also, implementation of Pervasive client-server configuration on existing client-server systems will speed-up your system because, with the older Btrieve (5.10a) as well as 6.15 peer versions, opportunistic locking (“oplocks”) had to be disabled. With a Pervasive.SQL client-server implementation, oplocks can be safely re-enabled and that will then result in not only in better performance with your TAS/Advanced Accounting software but also throughout your system.

Another significant performance advantage is that Pervasive.SQL V8 (and 2000i before it) provides “true” record locking rather than “page” locking which was the case in older Btrieve (including 5.10a and 6.15) systems. So Pervasive.SQL users should also see a reduced incidence of locking problems.

Performance issues aside, few things create more consternation and agony than corrupted databases. While database corruption can occur with any record manager engine or database management system and is dependent on many factors, not just the record manager engine, Pervasive.SQL V8 is a vast improvement over any/all prior versions of Btrieve. And it will help to intercept and prevent problems that would otherwise occur in a peer configuration since file locking/sharing is being controlled centrally. See more below.

Who uses Pervasive?

It is used by many commercial software packages (especially accounting software applications). The user list is extensive and includes IBM and Microsoft. For some Pervasive “success stories” of companies who have implemented Pervasive because of its reliability/cost/scalability, see:

<http://www.pervasive.com/company/successStories>

I am running Microsoft’s Small Business Server, is that a problem?

No. SBS is considered to be the same as NT and Pervasive is unaware of any specific problems or issues associated with it.

Is Pervasive.SQL difficult to install/administer?

No. It is very easy to install and administer.

Is Pervasive backwardly compatible with Btrieve 5 and 6?

Extremely!

Do I need to convert my data after installing Pervasive.SQL?

While not required (because it is very backwardly compatible), it is highly recommended that you “rebuild” your data into the version 8 (Pervasive.SQL V8) format. Certain performance and

robustness enhancements cannot be accomplished if this is not done. However, this is very easy and fast (even with very large data files), and a rebuild utility comes with the Pervasive software. (Further, this is something we can assist you with although that kind of assistance is not included in the price of the software.)

Once I change over, does this impact my ability to reindex a data file or have my data files customized?

No. The standard "TAS" reindex and restructure/merge capabilities work EXACTLY as they do with Btrieve 5.10a (with the 5.1 versions from Business Tools for example). Nothing changes, only the format of your data files.

Do any of my TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1 or 6 programs have to be changed to work with Pervasive?

No.

So Pervasive.SQL is a complete GUI/Windows 32-bit record manager/application and even though I use TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1 in DOS mode (TPC50.EXE), you are saying that works?

Yes. Very well.

What if I use the Windows mode of Advanced Accounting 5.1 (TP5WIN.EXE)?

Yes. While most of our 5.1 users in the field to date who are using Pervasive.SQL are using TPC50.EXE (DOS) rather than TP5WIN.EXE, from in-house use and client site use, it appears to work equally well with either and simultaneously. There are just some slightly different set-up issues.

And if I run a mix of Advanced Accounting 5.1 "DOS" and "Windows" modes?

We have tested this in-house and it does appear to work as well.

And it works with TAS 6/Advanced Accounting 6 also (TP6RUNTIME.EXE)?

Yes, and with even fewer set-up issues/considerations.

Can some workstations run different versions of Btrieve/Pervasive?

No. It is very important that every workstation runs the exact same version (regardless of which version of Btrieve/Pervasive you use).

What has Addsum's experience been with Pervasive.SQL?

Extremely positive. We support several large installations who have very successfully implemented Pervasive.SQL with TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1. Both are multiple location business with many users (one user has 175 concurrent users, another over 50). Both were using BREQUEST/BSERVER, the highest performance way to implement Btrieve in "DOS" prior to Pervasive.SQL. On both systems, not only did performance increase significantly (for example, reports that used to take 10-15 minutes took 5 minutes after going to Pervasive.SQL), but neither site (after many months) has had a single incidence of physical database corruption! Prior to implementing Pervasive.SQL, both sites were experiencing occasional (at least monthly) Btrieve "02" errors requiring lengthy indexing. These problems no longer occur on either system. Both of these systems include database files with well over 1,000,000 records and that are over 500 megs in size. This is an extremely impressive result.

We wrote a complex TAS 6 technical support system for in-house use by a commercial software publisher interfaced with Pervasive.SQL data files primarily accessed via Terminal Services which has been in continuous, heavy use since March 2001 and in connection with which no data file related problems have occurred. We have also written numerous TAS 6 (the same language that Advanced Accounting 6 is written in) applications that use Pervasive.SQL as the record manager, some simultaneously running with TAS/Advanced Accounting 5.1 systems that share the same data files. Pervasive.SQL has allowed us to therefore implement transitional applications in heavy multi-user environments that would not have otherwise been possible, and without incident.

We have also provided consulting and programming services for several years for users of a manufacturing software system that has over 4,000 users and which successfully uses the Pervasive.SQL record manager.

I'm already using another application using Pervasive.SQL – is that a problem?

Probably not (see also below).

Could Pervasive.SQL cause conflicts with other applications?

It can, since Pervasive.SQL and its predecessor Btrieve 6.15 can conflict with one another. But, there are workarounds, and usually the conflicts can be resolved. A Btrieve 6.15 app and a Pervasive.SQL cannot be running at the same time as the engine component has to be running in memory (even on a workstation). One Pervasive or Windows Btrieve installation on a given PC normally “serves” any and all applications that are run on that PC. Fortunately fewer and fewer applications are using Btrieve 6.15, but it is a good idea to take an inventory of any applications that may use Btrieve/Pervasive before purchasing/installing Pervasive.SQL.

Can I still get outside access to my data?

Yes. Pervasive.SQL is fully ODBC compliant. If you want, you can access your data through Microsoft Access or through an ODBC connection relating to a web site. This is something that was not really possible or easily possible with prior versions. And, you can still access your data through Crystal Reports (natively thru version 8.5 of Crystal) and thru essentially anything that provides for an ODBC connection.

Will I have to know how to issue SQL commands to use Pervasive.SQL?

No. In fact, we don't either! SQL is embedded within Pervasive.SQL and is therefore transparent to end users and programmers alike.

So what does it cost and what are the options?

Compared to other client-server alternatives, Pervasive's pricing is economical.

See:

http://www.pervasive.com/documentation/whitepapers/pdf/AberdeenTCO_white_2000i_0202.pdf

(Sept. 2001 white paper by the Aberdeen Group, which discusses the total cost of ownership of Pervasive.SQL vs Microsoft SQL Server - Microsoft SQL Server is not an option with Advanced Accounting 5.1 or 6 but it still provides some interesting observations and comparisons.)

Note: all of the below assumes Microsoft NT/2000 server, client-server configuration. But equivalent products with the same or similar pricing are available for Novell NetWare (as well as

for Linux).

Note that the licenses are not transferable - so in other words, if you purchase a Novell license and later change to a 2000 server, you will have to purchase another license! Pervasive.SQL 2000i supported Novell 3.2 (and up) and V8 will support Novell 4.2 (and up).

There are also "peer" products available for smaller networks or for systems that cannot support a client-server architecture. There is no maximum limit of users with the peer products, but at 8-10 users, pricing starts to favor the client-server options outlined below. Performance with these peer products will also start to decline at this level of use, but the integrity of databases will still be high.

In late 2002, Pervasive released V8 which is reportedly faster than 2000i and has some further ease of operability. V8 has a dynamic cache which cuts down on read time. We began to have users running V8 in February of 2003. Based on the extensive testing by others, we have seen no problems with the V8 engine.

For the latest pricing, please see the Addsum store page at <http://www.addsuminc.com/store.htm>.

Adding users:

Licenses are initially sold as groups of 10, 20, 50, 100 but are stackable. So a user needing 30 licenses can obtain a 20 user license and add a 10 user count later.

Upgrading from 2000i to V8:

Upgrade pricing from 2000i to V8 is available.

Peer configuration

With 2000i (no longer available after December 31, 2003), a more or less unlimited of users could be configured in a peer or workgroup configuration. With V8 however there is a limit of 5 concurrent users.

What kind of after-purchase support do I receive?

Pervasive provides some initial free support in the first 30 days after registration (which if required, we will help schedule for you). The 30 days does not start until the product is actually registered (rather than from the purchase date). There is no limit on the number of incidents/calls within that period, although it is rare to have more than one incident. Thereafter, Pervasive charges on a per incident basis (normally not needed, but available).

Why purchase from Addsum?

Addsum is first and foremost a services based company rather than a reseller of software. However, in July of 2002 we became a Pervasive authorized reseller/partner. We initially did that solely at the request of a large customer who felt that by so doing we would have better access to Pervasive support. As a result we have had access to information that wouldn't have as easily been available to us. Through our contacts, in the event of a problem, we can get to a Pervasive engineer and receive other support that wouldn't be available via a mass merchandiser/E-commerce or general software store purchase. Further we provide installation and administrative notes not available elsewhere that includes information specific to Advanced Accounting/TAS and we will arrange for any install support that might be needed. For Advanced

Accounting/TAS users who purchase Pervasive thru us, we typically have a better understanding of the needs and issues and can often tailor our advice accordingly and we know what specific Advanced Accounting/TAS issues exist with getting Pervasive to run. Plus, on top of this, we can possibly obtain as good or better pricing than could be obtained elsewhere (if you find a better price in fact, please let us know!).

How do I purchase?

Simply call us at 888-923-3786, go to our Store page or send us an E-mail to support@addsuminc.com and we will fax you an invoice after determining exactly what you need and answering any questions you might have. We cannot accept credit cards for Pervasive software purchases over \$500. Upon arrangements for payment (usually upon receipt of a check), we will proceed to process your order. Normally we will have Pervasive ship the package directly to you to save time and costs. Sales tax will apply if required. Freight is normally an additional \$10.

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