

Doug Rathbone

A blog about Life, Code and Beating level 99 to brag to your mates...

(/)

Testing connectivity to Microsoft SQL Server without any tools installed (/blog/2013/11/18/testing-connectivity-to- microsoft-sql-server-without-any-tools-installed)

5

18 November 2013

**8 Comments (/blog/2013/11/18/testing-connectivity-to-microsoft-sql-server-
without-any-tools-installed#disqus_thread)**

Often you'll find yourself logged into a web or application server and need to simply test that you can get to the SQL server you've unsuccessfully been trying to point your app at. Luckily there is a nifty trick built into Windows that allows you to save the day without having to install anything on your box – and it works on both client and server operating systems just as well.

Why would i ever need this?

Your app is having trouble connecting to SQL and you don't know what's wrong.

Is something wrong with your app?

Is it a network or firewall issue?

Is SQL even there...?

The "so easy it almost can't be true" solution

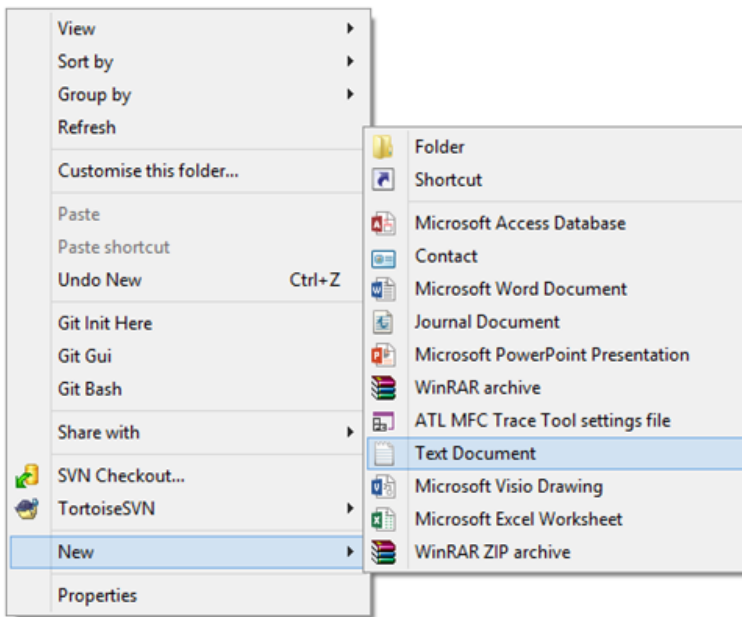
The guys at Microsoft have baked a SQL Connectivity tool right into Windows with the creation of Microsoft *Universal Data Link* files (*.UDL) – something designed for another purpose.

These were designed as a way to save SQL connection data for use in a whole range of applications and are available on pretty much every version of Windows since *eternity*.

They also provide an awesome way to test SQL Connectivity.

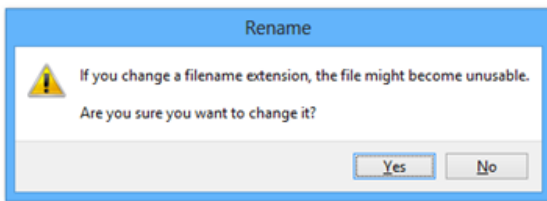
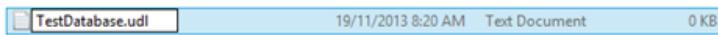
To make this work simply follow the bouncing ball:

Create a new file anywhere. For arguments sake create a new Text file on your desktop



(/asset/blogimages/299956ec-b130-4d18-bb29-03387791419a_image_2.png).

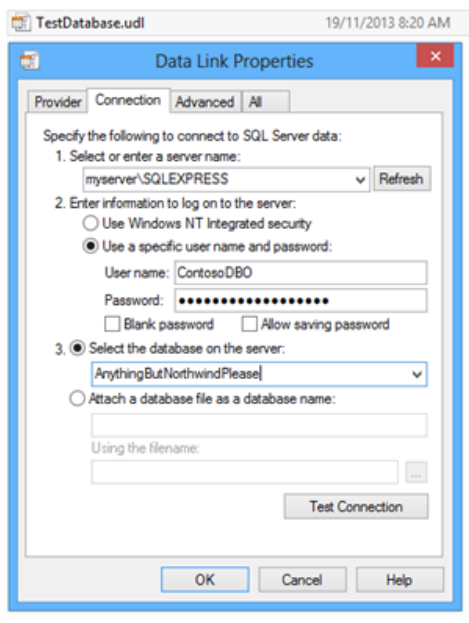
Now rename that file and change it's file extension to *TestDatabase.udl* (take note of the file extension).



(/asset/blogimages/e7fcf320-449f-427b-a9f7-bf3a30f504a8_image_4.png).

Select "Yes" when asked if you want to change the file extension.

This will give you a Data Link Editor that allows you to test the connection.



(/asset/blogimages/410aa672-77f3-485d-bed7-

45d2da14fcaf_image_6.png).

Pretty nifty in times of need!

(For the older web developers among us this might remind you of the panel you used for configuring a DSN for your ASP classic app... that's because it's the same panel!)

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8 Comments

Doug Rathbone

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wwb_99 • 5 years ago

Older developer checking in -- you can get to the same panel by finding the ODBC data sources applet, no need to create a text file to convince it to fire off.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Doug Rathbone Mod → **wwb_99** • 5 years ago

This is true! thanks for the note.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Kevan Riley → **wwb_99** • 5 years ago

The critical word there, 'finding'. That's why I always use the text file trick, I can always find the desktop!

9 ^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



wwb_99 → **Kevan Riley** • 5 years ago

Fair point, and the ODBC panel / administrative tools bits are surely burned into my brains but every modern version of windows has a very effective start -> search for something workflow so I wouldn't think it would be too hard to find.

The tools have the advantage of working with other data types and drivers if you need that as well.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



P. Roe • 5 years ago

Truly ninja!

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Matt • 3 years ago

Thank you sooooo very much for this quick and simple check. I am definitely going to add it to the "bag of tricks".

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



stephen jerald • 2 years ago

For remote host! How can be this setup? Can you help me out this?

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›



Chuck • a year ago

Thank you for this little trick...

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

So you want your Team to start using Git? – Part 4: Team Workflows

4 comments • 4 years ago

Gerardo Rosiles — On the command line example to push the develop branch to origin you have written:\$ git push origin

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10 comments • 4 years ago

YJ — I'm using x230t. x240 seems bad. what an awful keyboard...

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4 comments • 5 years ago

sl33kr — In our situation we need TeamCity to be able to access the internet through our Corporate proxy for NuGet purposes.In

Add Custom Call-to-actions to your Customer's Gmail Inbox by sending with

3 comments • 2 years ago

Praze — Kindly Share full source code

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