

# Accessing the Raiser's Edge database using SQL

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### ■ SQL

Have you ever thought about accessing the underlying Raiser's Edge (RE) database directly? You can do this using SQL and without any risk to your data. Why do it though? The answer is that it gives you the ability to query the data directly and in more complex ways than with Query. You can do fuzzy matching of names, improve some of your importing by use of a data cleaner prior to import or just generate statistics that you often need but can't see in RE directly.

The RE database is a large beast with many tables but is well named and read-only access to it is within the license agreement with the supplier. You will find a few examples of queries we have used in the past within this forum but in this article we concentrate on getting you access to actually do the querying. It is not complicated and only has to be done once but we cover off all the issues below.

## Connecting to the Database

### Prerequisites

Depending on which version of Raiser's Edge you are running and which database you are using you will either need Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio 2005 or 2008. The safe bet is the later as this will work in all cases and you can download the Express version for free. A guide to installing it and downloading the correct software to support it is [here](#).

Once you have the software installed you will need to have a read only account for the Raiser's Edge database server. Your IT administrators or support teams should be able to sort that out for you – as it is read only you can't damage the underlying data and they should therefore not object. You will need to tell them which server and database it is. You can find this under the Help > About menu in Raiser's Edge which lists the Server Name i.e. LOCALHOSTRE\_EXPRESS, the database name in almost all cases is re7.

### Connecting

In SQL Management Studio select 'Connect to Server' and enter:

- Server type: Database Engine
- Server name: <as above>
- Authentication/Login/Password: <as directed by your IT team>
- Click the Options button and type re7 into the 'Connect to database' field
- Click Connect

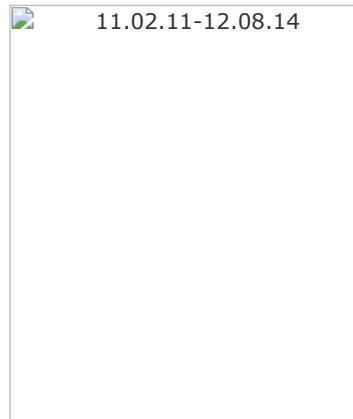
(The above are for the 2005 version of management studio but this is closely followed by 2008)

Expand the 'Databases' folder

Expand RE7 and Tables and you should see a very long list of tables.

Right click on the 'dbo.ADDRESS' table and select 'Open table' and you should see a lot of address data appear in the middle pane.

We have verified that you have a connection and can see data.



### Running our SQL snippets

To run any of the snippets of SQL all you need do is:

Click the 'New Query' button in the top right

Paste in the SQL

Click the '! Execute' or '> Run' button to run it

You can then see the results and can copy and paste them into excel as needed. Note: clicking the top left grey cell will select the entire table.



Note: If you have issues make sure you have re7 selected in the database drop-down to the top left of the window.

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