

Cool tool for reporting problems

The Problem Steps Recorder gives you another way to understand what's going wrong.

Tamar E. Granor, Ph.D.

Windows 7 introduced a cool tool that can help you understand your customer's bug reports.

The Problem Steps Recorder, PSR.EXE, records whatever actions the computer user takes. The report is in MHTML format and includes screen shots of almost every step.

To try it out, in the search textbox of the Windows menu, type PSR and PSR.EXE should show up at the top of the list. Run the application and a little toolbar, shown in [Figure 1](#), opens.

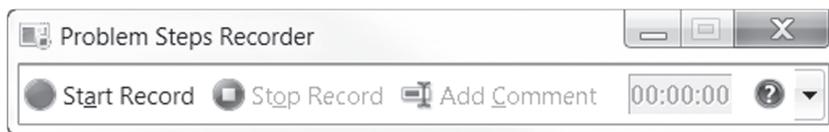


Figure 1. When you run the Problem Steps Recorder, this toolbar appears.

Click Start Record and then perform the steps that demonstrate the problem. When you're finished, click Stop Record. You're prompted for a location to store the recording document. It's stored as a ZIP file, which contains a single MHT file.

To demonstrate the tool, I started recording, then clicked on Firefox in the task bar and used Google to search for information about this tool. [Figure 2](#) shows part of the document created. The complete report is included in the downloads for this issue.

The Problem Steps Recorder is easy enough to use that I can imagine having my clients do so to improve their bug reports. In fact, it was a client who introduced me to it. The only downside is that there's no equivalent for earlier versions of Windows.

Author Profile

Tamar E. Granor, Ph.D. is the owner of Tomorrow's Solutions, LLC. She has developed and enhanced numerous Visual FoxPro applications for businesses and other organizations. Tamar is author or co-author of nearly a dozen books including the award winning Hacker's Guide to Visual FoxPro, Microsoft Office Automation with VisualFoxPro and Taming Visual FoxPro's SQL. Her latest collaboration is VFPX: Open Source Treasure for the VFP Developer. Her books are available from Hentzenwerke Publishing (www.hentzenwerke.com). Tamar was a Microsoft Support Most Valuable Professional from the program's inception in 1993 until 2011. She is one of the organizers of the annual Southwest Fox conference. In 2007, Tamar received the Visual FoxPro Community Lifetime Achievement Award. You can reach her at tamar@thegranors.com or through www.tomorrowssolutionsllc.com.

Problem Steps

Next

Problem Step 1: (7/6/2012 11:51:18 AM) User left click on "Google - Mozilla Firefox (push button)"

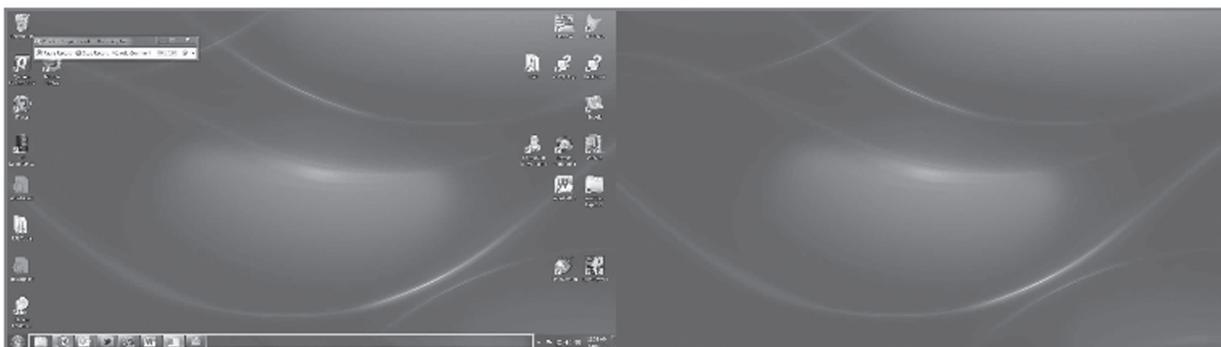


Figure 2. This is part of the file created as I used Firefox to search for information about PSR.EXE.