

Understanding Platinum SQL

An article from Tabs3 Software

Platinum SQL is the top tier of Tabs3 Software. It includes all of the features found in Platinum: Tabs3 Connect, Accelerated Reports and Filtering, HotBackup, and eNotes. For more information on these features, visit Tabs3.com/Platinum. It also includes the following performance and data access enhancements.

Platinum SQL supports 64-bit servers, which allows you faster data access. The native database server software in Platinum SQL utilizes 64-bit server capabilities for faster data access. In comparison, the standard Platinum Server Software is a 32-bit application. It will run on a 64-bit Windows server, but it is still subject to 32-bit memory limitations.

For example, a 64-bit Windows server with 128 GB of physical memory can only allocate up to 2GB to the standard Platinum Server Software for caching purposes. You can significantly boost your performance by caching frequently used data and index files in memory. Firms often require more than 2GB when managing large amounts of data and running complex reports and filters. Because Platinum SQL is a 64-bit application, it is not subject to the 2GB limitation of the 32-bit server software, thus allowing you to take full advantage of your server's memory—in this case, 128 GB¹.

Example on a 64-bit Windows Server with 128GB of physical memory

	Native Database Server	Allowable Cache
Platinum Server	32-bit	Restricted to 2 GB
Platinum SQL Server	64-bit	128 GB

Platinum SQL allows you to run SQL queries on the Tabs3 Software database with multiple ODBC and OLE DB compatible products, including Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio. SQL stands for Structured Query Language. It was developed by IBM in the early 1970s to enable ad-hoc queries of data without writing new programs. For decades it has allowed users to access database information without understanding the internal file structure of the databases. From the beginning, easy access was the goal of this language, not performance.

A query that used to take five minutes in Platinum may take as few as 15 seconds in Platinum SQL.

Platinum SQL, like other Tabs3 products, uses the FairCom c-tree database that is optimized for performance. Rather than replace the c-tree database with an SQL-branded database such as MS SQL Server, Platinum SQL maintains a set of SQL tables that link to the Tabs3 data and are accessible using SQL queries. This allows you to read the Tabs3 data from Microsoft Access, Crystal Reports, Microsoft SQL Server, etc., using OLE DB (another data access standard) and ODBC, while still maintaining solid performance within the software itself. To maintain the integrity of Tabs3 data, access is limited to reading the data. You cannot write directly to the Tabs3 database from other programs.

¹ Your operating system can also limit the size of your cache. This varies by operating system.

Platinum SQL includes accelerated ODBC processing. One of the standard benefits of any client server product like Platinum is improving performance by using the server more, and using workstation computers and the network less. The standard ODBC driver for non-Platinum and Platinum versions of Tabs3 Software processes all queries at the workstation. That means all of the data is sent to the workstation via the network and then filtered based on the query. With Platinum SQL, all queries are processed at the server, and only the results are returned over the network. Sending all of that data across the network takes a lot of time, and it increases the load on your network. In general, the server is also much faster than a workstation computer. This leads to ODBC operations in Platinum SQL that are typically 10 to 30 times faster than they would be in non-Platinum or Platinum versions of Tabs3. For example, a query that used to take five minutes in Platinum, may take as few as 15 seconds (20 times faster) in Platinum SQL.

ODBC operations in Platinum SQL are typically 10 to 30 times faster.

In addition to faster ODBC queries, **Platinum SQL also includes ODBC access for every user at a firm and ODBC drivers for both 32-bit and 64-bit programs.** The standard ODBC driver for non-Platinum and Platinum versions is purchased per workstation. The ODBC driver included with the Platinum SQL software allows ODBC access for everyone at the firm, giving more people easy access to reports and spreadsheets that use ODBC to update data. The SQL ODBC driver included with the Platinum SQL software is available in both 64-bit and 32-bit versions. This allows you to access the Tabs3 database from 64-bit programs such as 64-bit Microsoft Excel® as well as 32-bit programs like Crystal reports and 32-bit Excel. Users with 64-bit workstations can install both drivers.

Platinum SQL also provides more detailed access rights for ODBC users. You can grant ODBC access rights to users by product with Platinum SQL. For example, one user can have rights to the Tabs3 Billing data files without having access rights to the General Ledger data files. This gives you greater control over what information each user can access. Keep in mind that any user who has ODBC access rights to files has rights to all records. The built-in security features available in Tabs3, including secure clients, private calendar records, and assigned timekeepers, do not prevent access to the individual Tabs3 records in the database, regardless of which version of Tabs3 Software you are using.

All of these features make Platinum SQL the top tier Tabs3 Software product. For more information on Platinum or Platinum SQL, contact your local consultant, or our Sales Department at sales@tabs3.com.

Summary of who may be interested in Platinum SQL

	Platinum	Platinum SQL
Firm has 32-bit server hardware or Operating System	✓	
Firm uses ODBC to access the Tabs3 database	✓	✓
Firm uses ODBC and would like accelerated ODBC performance		✓
Firm has large Tabs3 data set or large number of users and would like to utilize 64-bit server processor and memory		✓
Firm wants to use 64-bit software to access the data via the ODBC driver		✓
Firm wants to use MS SQL Server Management Studio to query the Tabs3 database		✓