

Troubleshooting SQL VSS Writer issues

This article covers the most frequent problems related to the SQL VSS Writer used by Zmanda Cloud Backup, and how to fix them.

Resources

When diagnosing SQL Writer problems, take full advantage of the resources at your disposal.

The "vssadmin list writers" command

The most important command when diagnosing any VSS issue is "vssadmin list writers". This command will display all of the writers active on your system and the status of each.

To run this command:

1. Open the Windows Command Prompt and type:
2. `vssadmin list writers`

Windows Event Logs

ZCB will record errors in the Application Event logs. Often, the ZCB errors are matched with a System Event or Application Event that indicates a failure.

Common Issues

The SQL Writer is not shown when "vssadmin list writers" is run

When you run the vssadmin list writers command, the SQL Server Writer is not shown and there is no error message in the Application Event logs. However, the SQLserver VSS Writer Service may be running.

Resolution

1. Check if there are any spaces in the database names.
 - a. Run the query:
 - i. `select '#' + name + '#' from sys.databases`
 - b. Look at the output and check for spaces in the names. Trailing spaces (such as #example #) are easy to miss, so pay attention!
 - c. If any spaces are found, you must rename that database. Please follow [this article](#).
2. Check that the SQL Server VSS Writer Service is added to the sysadmin role in the SQL Server Management Console.

After following those steps, run the vssadmin list writers command again. The writer should be present.

"vssadmin list writers" shows that the SQL Server Writer has failed

When you run vssadmin list writers, the SQL Server Writer is marked as failed.

First, check the Windows Application Event logs for the errors. I've included three examples below:



Example #1

Event Type: Error

Event Source: SQLWRITER

Event Category: None

Event ID: 24583

Date: 4/30/2006

Time: 11:38:44 AM

User: N/A

Computer: ComputerName

Description:

SqlLib error: OLEDB Error encountered calling IDBInitialize::Initialize. hr = 0x80040e4d. SQLSTATE: 28000, Native Error: 18456

Error state: 1, Severity: 14

Source: Microsoft SQL Native Client

Error message: Login failed for user 'NT AUTHORITY\SYSTEM'.

DBPROP_INIT_DATASOURCE: ComputerName
DBPROP_INIT_CATALOG: master
DBPROP_AUTH_INTEGRATED: SSPI



Example #2

Event Type: Error
Event Source: SQLWRITER
Event Category: None
Event ID: 24583
Date: 4/30/2006
Time: 11:38:44 AM
User: N/A
Computer: ComputerName
Description:
SqlLib error: OLEDB Error encountered calling IDBInitialize::Initialize. hr = 0x80040e4d. SQLSTATE: 28000, Native Error: 18456
Error state: 1, Severity: 14
Source: Microsoft SQL Native Client
Error message: Login failed for user 'NT AUTHORITY\SYSTEM'.
DBPROP_INIT_DATASOURCE: ComputerName
DBPROP_INIT_CATALOG: master
DBPROP_AUTH_INTEGRATED: SSPI



Example #3

Event Type: Error
Event Source: VSS
Event Category: None
Event ID: 6013
Date: 4/30/2006
Time: 11:38:44 AM
User: N/A
Computer: ComputerName
Description:
SqlLib error: OLEDB Error encountered calling IDBInitialize::Initialize. hr = 0x80040e4d. SQLSTATE: 42000, Native Error: 18456
Error state: 1, Severity: 14
Source: Microsoft OLE DB Provider for SQL Server
Error message: Login failed for user 'NT AUTHORITY\SYSTEM'.

Resolution

This [Microsoft KB article](#) will give you all of the details on how to handle connectivity issues. However, here are the key points:

1. Open the SQL Server Configuration Manager
 - a. Under Client Protocols (Both 32- and 64-bit), the TCP/IP, Shared Memory and Named Pipe protocols should be enabled.
 - b. There should be no Aliases . If you select Aliases (again, both 32- and 64-bit) and see an Alias on the right side of the screen, you must remove it.
2. Check that the SQL Server VSS Writer Service is added to the sysadmin role in the SQL Server Management Console.

Run vssadmin list writers again. If the SQL Server Writer is now in the Stable state, you found the issue. If not, review your particular error messages against the [Microsoft KB article](#).

If SQL VSS Writer Problems Continue to Occur

Open a support case via the [Zmanda Network](#). Be sure to [collect logs](#) and upload with your case.