



Technical Document

VoxPro Control Panel Troubleshooting Tips

USB Controllers

USB extenders are the most common source of control panel problems. If the control panel is attached to the computer via an extender, remove the extender, attach the controller directly to the computer and see if the problem goes away. Keep in mind that USB cannot be extended beyond 15 feet without using an active extender which provides an external power supply at the remote end. For long runs, invest in a good quality active extender. In our experience, the USB ports included with many inexpensive KVM extenders do not work reliably.

The **USB ports** on a typical computer are NOT all the same. In addition to bandwidth differences, some USB ports supply more power than others. The VoxPro controller draws 500mA, which is a relatively large draw. If the controller does not work on one port, try another.

In rare cases, a control panel that does not work on one computer will work fine on another. This phenomenon is endemic with USB ports in general, and we have observed it with a wide variety of USB devices, on many different computers.

Do not be afraid to swap controllers from one machine to another – it is an effective technique for confirming or eliminating hypotheses.

If the control panel is functioning properly, it should show up in two places in the **System Device Manager**. In the **USB Controllers** list, it should appear as a Universal Serial Converter. In the list **Ports (COM and LPT)**, it should show up as a USB Serial Port. If one or both of these is missing, and the Device Manager is displaying an Unknown Device (usually with a yellow or red exclamation icon), then there is either a hardware problem with the port or the controller, or you don't have the proper driver installed.

One common problem occurs when Window assigns a high COM port number to the USB Serial Port. In general, the control panel is happier with a low number, say in the range 1-5. If you find a higher port number has been assigned, change the port by right-clicking the device, select **Properties**, then the **Port Settings** tab, then click the **Advanced** button. Select the lowest unused COM port you can.

The USB control panel driver is available here:
<http://www.wheatstone.com/voxpro-helpful-links>

Serial Controllers

The most common problem we see with serial controllers is actually the loss of the computer's RS-232 port. Serial ports actually do wear out after several years of use – the hardware components tend to be inexpensive and they drift out of spec after some time. Replacement PCI serial ports are available at very reasonable cost. There are a number of serial-to-USB converters available on the market, but the only one that we have found so far which works with the VoxPro controller is the **ATEN UC-232A**.

Serial controllers do not show up in the System Device Manager, nor does the Device Manager seem to recognize hardware failures in serial devices, so it may not give you any clues about problems with your serial port or controller.

Repairing the Controller

The VoxPro control panel is manufactured for Wheatstone by J.L. Cooper Electronics, which provides parts and refurbish/repair service for the controller. You will find a parts list, as well as an RMA form and instructions for sending the controller in for repairs, on the Tech/Manuals tab of this page:

<http://www.wheatstone.com/voxpro-recorder-editor/voxpro-system>

VoxPro 3 and 4 Only

VoxPro versions 3 and 4 allow users to select the older (and now obsolete) “Classic Mac” controller (which is actually a keyboard). If you are using that controller, you must have the Classic Mac option selected in Settings/ControlPanel. This option must **NOT** be selected if you are using the RC-400 and RC-500 series control panels.

The Administrator's control panel settings are the default settings for all other user accounts. Only the Administrator may select the “PC Controller” option, although other users may override this setting to chose the Classic Mac controller instead.