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Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Keeping You Informed



[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

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[Continued](#)



[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

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[Continued](#)



[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

You told us, and we listened! In order to better meet the needs of our customers, Acterna is pleased to introduce the new MicroStealth MS-1200D and MS-1300D digital Signal Level Meters. The new MS-1200D now replaces the MS-1200 and the MS-1300D replaces the MS-1300.

[Continued](#)



[New DSAM-2500](#)

Acterna's new DSAM-2500 is a DOCSIS/EuroDOCSIS cable modem installation meter is designed for cable operators and contractors installing advanced services. It is a lightweight, durable, hand-held solution built on an advanced measurement platform that includes both analog and digital testing capabilities in one meter.

[Continued](#)

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

[- Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

[- FleetCare](#)

FAQs

[- Ask us a question](#)

[- Portable Instruments](#)


[- Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

[- New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

[- PathTrak v2.2](#)

[Send Us Your Comments](#) 

Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Keeping You Informed



[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

The most powerful network management software solution for cable networks is now even better. The newest version of Acterna's powerful NetMentor software, v3.0, provides new tools for cable operators to efficiently manage their existing plant, and provides HMS compliance for the future. V3.0 Features:

1. **HMS Transponder Compatibility:** NM3.0 is fully HMS compliant. Customers have the choice of using either polling or contention mode. NetMentor also allows customers to have both legacy and HMS transponders running on the same HEC modem.
2. **Scheduled Measurements:** NetMentor's processing of Scheduled Measurement sessions has been re-architected to eliminate the limitation on the number of concurrent measurements. Now, customers have added flexibility and power in obtaining ongoing operational data from monitored devices.
3. **Link Agent interface:** Customers no longer need to use a separate application to configure the device information and alarm limits for headend equipment monitored through Link Agents. Acterna has added a series of screens within NetMentor's Configuration Wizard that simplify and speed up the process of adding and maintaining Link Agent devices.
4. **Configuration Wizard:** The reliability of the Configuration Wizard application (also known as Bulk/ Add/ Edit) has been enhanced with some improvements to the software code. It is much more robust and flexible with the release of NM v3.0.
5. **Expanded HEC communications ports:** Larger customers looking to add new devices to existing Headend Controllers can now add additional modems and serial ports. NM v3.0 supports an increase of 4 additional

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

- [Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

- [FleetCare](#)

FAQs

- [Ask us a question](#)

- [Portable Instruments](#)

- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

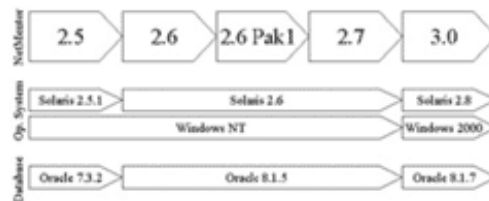
- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

modems (BFMs) and 2 additional RS-485 serial ports.

6. **Phasor Analyst v2.7 integration:** The release of NM v3.0 includes the Phasor Analyst version 2.7 application, the integrated version of the Phasor return path management software. Phasor Analyst v2.7 includes the ability to use the SDA series of meters to remotely obtain information from the Phasor system.
7. **ANSI Standard Alarm Colors:** The color-coding used for displaying alarms in NetMentor's Notifier application has been changed to comply with the ANSI standard. This is a tremendous benefit for those customers who utilize multiple fault management systems and who must become familiar with the applicable color schemes.
8. **GPM-4 Configuration Tool:** Customers who wish to modify the inputs and outputs to the GPM-4 General Purpose Monitor can now make software changes themselves, without having to wait for a lengthy custom integration. This configuration tool allows users to modify the number and names of inputs, where they appear on the screen, and store settings for downloading to multiple devices.
9. **Power Control Module for Alpha BPS interface:** Operators looking to clarify alarms and operational data from the Alpha BPS power supply will now have access to the same level of information as other devices. NM v3.0 software will allow customers to migrate existing BPS information to this new interface, which provides enhanced capabilities as compared to previous software versions.

V3.0 Migration Path - Requirements, Issues



V3.0 Hardware System Requirements/Suggestions: In the process of upgrading the NetMentor software to version 3.0, customers should consider upgrading their computer system hardware at the same time. In addition to the increased requirements of the new operating systems (Windows 2000 and Solaris v2.8) and database (Oracle v8.1.7), the

fact remains that older computer hardware is more prone to failure, and finding spare parts for an older system is very difficult. With improvements in computer performance and concurrent reductions in price, customers should take advantage of this opportunity to fully upgrade their system.

At the minimum, Acterna's Technical Assistance Center engineers recommend that customers replace or upgrade the following components:

- RAM
- Hard drives (if over 3 years old)
- Backup tape drives and tapes

The NetMentor v3.0 System Requirements Product Bulletin provides guidance for purchasing upgraded or new computer hardware for use with the NetMentor system. Please contact your Acterna salesperson or System Support manager to obtain this document if you do not already have a copy.

New computer hardware is faster, cheaper, and better than ever, and it will help ensure a healthy, reliable, and effective NetMentor Status Monitoring System!

V3.0 Pre-Upgrade Checklist:

Before upgrading to v3.0, be sure to read the following questions and make sure you, and your network, are ready:

- Is your software maintenance contract current?
- Have you checked the license limitations on your NetMentor Model? Are your Client licenses verified?
- Have you ordered your Acterna GSS Upgrade Package?
- Do you have a dedicated NetMentor system administrator? Do you have qualified IS resources committed to the upgrade?
- Have you met the system requirements? New hardware ordered, delivered and installed?
- Do you understand the migration path?
- Did you obtain previous versions of NetMentor?
- Did you obtain NetMentor software upgrade? Is it ready for installation complete with documentation?
- Do you have the Operating System software upgrade? Is it ready for installation?
- Did you obtain (or order from Acterna) your database software upgrade? Is it ready for installation?
- Have you checked naming conventions? Have you corrected them for specialty characters?
- Is your server database backed up?

- Are your IP addresses and computer information available?
- Are field technicians, call center, and management notified that v3.0 upgrade is about to occur?

For information on how Acterna's professional staff can assist you with the NetMentor 3.0 installation, see the "Customer Support and Training" section of this newsletter!

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[Keeping You Informed](#)

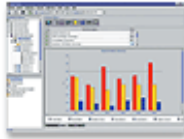
[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Keeping You Informed



[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

Cable operators have struggled in the market to beat their competition (primarily telephone companies and digital broadcast satellite companies) to market dominance for high-speed Internet connections. The fastest company to secure subscribers, by deploying and provisioning their interface solution to the network, wins the race. However, carriers are facing decreased margins and increased competitive pressures that limit them from spending money on additional resources they need to achieve market dominance, speed subscriber rates, and improve customer satisfaction.

As the cable industry in general "matures" in its approach to integrated operations, network operators are seeking operational support systems (OSS) to focus less on cost and more on customer growth. In particular, MSOs deploying large-scale next generation Internet services and other advances services such as interactive TV (ITV), voice over IP (VoIP) and high speed data services (HSDS), are often held-back by the amount of manual intervention needed for installation, provisioning and activation of their systems.

Acterna's new Vision360 OSS Platform addresses these needs by providing a comprehensive platform approach that improves bottom line performance and generates cost-saving efficiencies. Vision360 is designed to address the issues related to customer facing requirements such as Service Assurance, Reduced Time to Repair, Proactive and Preventative Test and Performance of network devices and elements. Specifically, these applications will create and provide for "root cause analysis" in real time while providing a suite of applications to test, isolate and provide proactive testing and maintenance recommendations that will avoid network outages.

The Vision360 platform will automate and integrate network management systems in an effort to reduce costs, speed time to market, avoid costly mistakes and increase customer satisfaction. The increased speed in which new services are brought to market means that operators/MSOs can leverage their existing network infrastructure for installing new services, and have the ability to enforce service level agreements (SLA) and provide for longer

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

- [Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

- [FleetCare](#)

FAQs

- [Ask us a question](#)

- [Portable Instruments](#)

- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)


- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

Term QoS testing and monitoring.

In addition, Vision360 provides an infrastructure by which the operator can develop and create their own applications and maintenance routines, or choose to use the vast knowledge base of Acterna and its partners to build applications for them using the powerful modeling tools in the platform.

Acterna's Cable Networks division brings a wealth of solutions experience and proven leadership skills in the test and management industry that will help establish and strengthen Acterna's position in the OSS industry. The establishment of the new OSS Solutions business unit, and the Vision360 platform, coincides with Acterna's expansion into the overall software marketplace in the cable and telecommunications arenas. The OSS Solutions business is focused on delivering integrated software solutions that help operators customize how they deploy, operate and monitor new communications technology effectively in order to realize greater communications network management cost and production efficiency.

Look for more information about Vision360 in our next issue, and be sure to see a demo at the upcoming SCTE Cable-Tec Expo!

[Send Us Your Comments](#) 

Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Keeping You Informed



[NEW MS-1200D and MS-1300D Signal Level Meters](#)

You told us, and we listened! In order to better meet the needs of our customers, Acterna is pleased to introduce the new MicroStealth MS-1200D and MS-1300D digital Signal Level Meters. The new MS-1200D now replaces the MS-1200 and the MS-1300D replaces the MS-1300.

NEW MS-1200D Standard Features

- 5-890 MHz Frequency Range
- Digital measurement, including our patented digiCheck™
- Multiple Customizable Channel Plans
- File Storage
- 24 Hour Auto-test

NEW MS-1300D Standard Features

- 5-890 MHz Frequency Range
- Reverse Ingress Scan (frequency range is now 5 - 110 MHz)
- Digital measurement, including our patented digiCheck™
- Soft Carrying Case

There are important differences between the new MS-1200D and the older MS-1200. Following is a list of those differences:

- The MS-1200D **NO** longer offers Reverse Ingress Scan as an option
- The MS-1200D is **NOT** compatible with StealthWare, **INCLUDING CHANNEL PLAN DOWNLOADING.**
- The MS-1200D **NO** longer has the cloning feature. The MS-1200D can still be used as a remote unit to clone MS-1300Ds, but **CANNOT** clone from remote units. The MS-1200D still is able to copy Remote Channel Plans between both MS-1200Ds and MS-1300Ds

These features had to make way for the much more desirable digital level function, but they are available in the MS-1300D.

Information on Upgrade Paths

Acterna is now offering a great deal for those who have a MS-1300 and wish to upgrade to the new MS-1300D. For a limited time, an upgrade will be included in the price of a calibration. In order to get the upgrade, you must send in your

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

- [Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

- [FleetCare](#)

FAQs

- [Ask us a question](#)

- [Portable Instruments](#)

- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

existing MS-1300 for a calibration.

Unfortunately, the MS-1200 cannot be upgraded to a MS-1200D. The only upgrade option is for the MS-1200 to be upgraded to a MS-1300D. However, the MS-1200D to MS-1300D is field upgradeable. You must have the serial number of each MS-1200D you wish to upgrade, and an email address at the time of order. An email will then be sent to you containing the upgrade license key(s), license agreement, and instructions for the upgrade


All of the MicroStealth meters have an upgrade path to greater functionality. Contact your local sales representative for more information. Also, you will continue to receive support from Acterna for current MS-1200s and MS-1300s in the field.

Product Ordering Information

- **Product: MS-1200D**
- **Part Number:** 1010-00-0626
- **VIAS #:** IMS1200D
- **Includes:** One NiCad battery, 120V or 220V Adapter, and MS1200D/MS1300D Operator's Manual

- **Product: MS-1300D**
- **Part Number:** 1010-00-0627
- **VIAS #:** IMS1300D
- **Includes:** One NiCad battery, 120V or 220V Adapter, MS1200D/MS1300D Operator's Manual, Soft Carrying Case, and Quick Reference Card

- **Product: Soft Carrying Case**
- **Part Number:** 1019-00-1461
- **VIAS #:** IOPTBAGMS
- **Includes:** MS1200D/MS1300D Quick Reference Card

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Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Keeping You Informed



[The Acterna DSAM-2500 Digital Service Activation Meter; A comprehensive cable modem installation tool](#)

Acterna's new DSAM-2500 is a DOCSIS/EuroDOCSIS cable modem installation meter designed for cable operators and contractors installing advanced services. It is a lightweight, durable, hand-held solution built on an advanced measurement platform that includes both analog and digital testing capabilities in one meter. With the DSAM-2500, technicians can install and service high-speed data and video services onsite, and eliminate the need for a second meter. Technicians also can provision and test installations quickly and effectively by increasing the install rate, improving install productivity, reducing call-backs and achieving a superior standard of installation.

The DSAM-2500 guides even the novice technician through a DOCSIS cable modem installation. It features an intuitive graphical interface complete with an informative online help system. Upgrading the meter can be as simple as downloading a file from the Web and installing it onto the device using optional DSAM PC software. Additionally, cable operators can expand the meter's capabilities to meet the needs of new technologies as they are added to the network.

The DSAM-2500 includes a single port that provides full 4 - 1000 MHz coverage of all major cable analog and digital transmission technologies. Additionally, the user interface presents the meter as either an automated pre-configured instrument, or as a full-function signal level meter for the higher skilled technician. The DSAM-2500 achieves faster installs through its Autotest capabilities and intuitive test result displays.

The DSAM-2500 has a rich automated test capability that can be custom-configured and protected by an administrator to assure specific tests are conducted the same way by all technicians in the field. Results of the test may be saved for further analysis and archiving on a PC.

DSAM-2500 Features

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

- [Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)
- [FleetCare](#)

FAQs

- [Ask us a question](#)
- [Portable Instruments](#)
- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)
- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

- DOCSIS v1.0 and 1.1 compatible
 - Downstream measurements include digital signal level, MER/EVM, and pre/post FEC BER
 - Upstream level margin displayed after successful ranging with CMTS
- 4 to 1000 MHz tuning range; 8 MHz and 6 MHz models
- Quick QAM summary of 64 and 256 QAM carrier performance
- Install Autotests allows pre-configured automated tests for digital, analog and DOCSIS channels
- Weather and shock resistant enclosure; weighs less than 3 pounds (1.4 kg)
- Analog Signal Level Meter capabilities include: Ingress spectrum scan with zoom for analyzing local upstream ingress
- Up to 12 channel mini-scan that can contain mix of analog and digital channels
- Unique job-based filing system
- Multiple language support, including intuitive help system



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Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Customer Support & Training

Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade

Acterna makes it easier for you to upgrade to the new NetMentor 3.0 by offering a service that installs the new software and firmware for you. This service includes the complete installation of NetMentor 3.0 on all equipment including servers, clients, and Acterna headend equipment (if plant communications do not allow for remote installation, the customer will upgrade field device firmware).

This service can be customized to meet your needs and can optionally include a system assessment, database back-up analysis and evaluation, new feature training, as well as a report on Acterna's findings and the work performed. It even includes the complete installation of earlier versions of NetMentor necessary to successfully install v3.0.

Whether it is installation only, or a complete implementation program, if it is a challenge to locate the resources to install this new version, or if you just prefer to have Acterna's service professionals assist you with the installation of your NetMentor system, we can help. Contact your local service representative for more information.

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

[- Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

[- FleetCare](#)

FAQs

[- Ask us a question](#)

[- Portable Instruments](#)


[- Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

[- New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

[- PathTrak v2.2](#)

[Send Us Your Comments](#) 

Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Customer Support & Training

FleetCare

Acterna has launched a new service, called **FleetCare**, designed to help customers save money on calibration and repairs of their handheld Acterna meters.

Designed for customers owning 10 or more instruments, FleetCare is an economical service plan that maximizes your equipment investment while minimizing costs and paperwork. The FleetCare program provides customers with significant savings over per-incident repair and calibration prices. The program includes an **extended warranty** and **annual calibrations** with optional service choices such as the calibration plan manager.

FleetCare allows you to:

- Maintain instruments under a single budget, reducing administrative costs
- Ensure your Acterna equipment has the latest updates and is in calibration
- Extend the life cycle of your instruments
- Control and minimize repair costs & related expenses
- Simplify the decision-making process

A list of the Acterna cable meters eligible for the FleetCare program is shown below.

- SDA-5000
- SDA-5500
- SDA-5510
- SDA-4040D
- Stealth 3SR
- Stealth 3SRT
- Stealth 3HRV
- 3SRV
- SAM-4040
- SAM-4040D
- SSA-1000
- 3ST
- MS-1300
- MS-1400
- CLI-1450
- CLI-1750
- HWTK
- DSAM-2500

FleetCare is available on other Acterna equipment as well. Call your local Sales representative or visit www.acterna.com for more information.

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

[- Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)

[- FleetCare](#)

FAQs

[- Ask us a question](#)

[- Portable Instruments](#)

[- Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

[- New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

[- PathTrak v2.2](#)

[Send Us Your Comments](#) 

Download the Cable Newsletter in PDF format, 256k

[Keeping You Informed](#)

[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

FAQs

Cable Customer Frequently Asked Questions

For more detailed information, [click here](#).

Portable Instruments:

1. [How do I build and edit a channel plan in my MicroStealth or CLI unit?](#)
2. [Can I listen to audio with the MicroStealth?](#)
3. [What voltage should my wall charger be?](#)

Acterna Systems:

1. [Why don't some alarms clear from System Manager?](#)
2. [What is the best way to determine if all my devices have current alarm profiles?](#)
3. [What is r-code and p-code?](#)
4. [If you are experiencing problems with getting schedule measurement results from transponders in the field, try the following.](#)
5. [How do I Setup PathTrak Clients?](#)

Portable Instruments Answers:

1. **How do I build and edit a channel plan in my MicroStealth or CLI unit?**
 - Turn the unit ON and go to the Navigator Screen.
 - From the Navigator Screen, select the "Configure" icon and press the Enter Button.
 - From the Configure Menu, select Channel Plan and press the Enter Button.
 - From the Channel Plan Menu, select "Build Channel Plan" and press the Enter Button.
 - View the edit box at the bottom of the screen. There you can type the name of your channel plan.
 - When you are finished with the name press the softkey "OK".
 - Select the base plan using the arrow keys. Press the softkey "OK".
 - Select the frequency that you want to stop searching for channels. Look at the edit box at the bottom of the screen.
 - Type in the frequency using the number keypads then press the softkey "OK".

Cable News Service

Customer Support & Training

- [Let Acterna Install your NetMentor v3.0 Upgrade](#)
- [FleetCare](#)

FAQs

- [Ask us a question](#)
- [Portable Instruments](#)
- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)
- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

- The unit will now build the channel plan.
- Once the channel plan is built. Press the "Exit" softkey. This will take you back to the channel plan main menu.
- You now must edit the channel plan to verify it is built correctly. For details on how to verify the channel plan, and for a graphical representation of the instructions, [click here](#).

[Back to top](#)

2. Can I listen to audio with the MicroStealth?

No. The Micro Stealth does not have audio capability. The SAM 4040 and the 3SR can be used for this application. You can also find this [on our website](#).

[Back to top](#)

3. What voltage should my wall charger be?

- **MS-1000/1200/1300:** 12 volts DC, 500mA
- **CLI-950/1450/1750, MS-1400:** 12 volts DC, 800mA
- **SAM-4040, Stealth 3SR:** 18 volts DC, 800mA
- **SDA-5000, SDA-4040D:** 16 volts DC, 750mA (During charge); 15 volts DC, 750mA (During Trickle charge)
- **All Old SAMS:** 24 volts DC, 550mA
- **Sam Jr.:** 16 volts AC, 300mA
- **CLM 1000:** 24 volts DC, 550mA

[Back to top](#)

Acterna Systems Answers

1. Why don't some alarms clear from System Manager?

The transponder operates by a change of state rule. This means once the transponder has its current alarm profile it monitors its device (i.e. Node or Power Supply) for any changes in the assigned states.

So if a power supply goes into standby, the transponder will sense a change in voltage on a given channel. When asked by the HEC, during its polling cycle, for the status of the transponder, the transponder will relay the change of status to the HEC. The HEC passes this information on to the system, where it gets recorded in the database and passed on to the clients. If commercial power is restored prior to the batteries draining and the transponder losing power, the transponder will see that the power supply has changed to voltage states again at the same channel and pass the information on to the HEC, resulting in a cleared alarm.

If the transponder fails due to battery failure, when power is restored the transponder will come back

online and begin to monitor for changes in states again. The transponder has no memory of the previous changes in states so it doesn't know to send a clear for the standby alarm. This results in alarms in the system that can't be seen when viewing the data display of a transponder. This could also happen if a technician changes out low batteries or disconnects the transponder to back repairs and then reconnects it after the repairs are made. The transponder comes back online not remembering it had a previous alarm. This is why it's important to verify alarms through data displays prior to rolling a technician.

[Back to top](#)

2. **What is the best way to determine if all my devices have current alarm profiles?**

It is important to maintain current alarm profiles on all the transponders. Failing to do so will generate unwanted alarms. Instead of downloading alarm profiles to all the devices on a regular basis, you could pull up all your devices through the add device wizard in system manager. We recommend doing this by device type (i.e. nodes or power supplies). Launch the wizard like you are going to add new devices and place a check in Display All Resources and click Filter Resource List. This will give you a total list of your devices by type. The far left column will be gray, yellow, or red. Red means the device is not communicating, yellow means the device doesn't have the current alarm profile, and gray means that everything for the device is current. Ensure the correct alarm profile is selected for each device in yellow, then select all the device rows while holding down the control key. Click the download alarm config button on the toolbar, and then do this for each device type in the system.

[Back to top](#)

3. **What is r-code and p-code?**

R-code is the device boot up code. It is similar to a computer bios. It tells the device how to get up and running, and allows new instructions, or p-code, to be written to the device. P-code is the run code. It is similar to a computer OS (operating system) in that it tells the device how to operate and process information. Transponders and Line Monitors will require p-code updates as changes and enhancements are made in the firmware, while the r-code for these devices will remain the same.

[Back to top](#)

4. **If you are experiencing problems with getting schedule measurement results from transponders in the field, try the following:**

The following parameters in the seg.ini file control the timing in seconds before SEGserver looks for the data:

CmmSchdMeasLatency=60
CmaSchdMeasLatency=60

GatewaySchdMeasLatency=60

Currently all settings are to 60 seconds. This means that if the schedule is set to start at 12:00 the server will wait until 12:01 before looking to the HEC for the data (in essence giving the HEC 1 minute to gather the data requested from the devices requested). Depending on the schedule and the network, sometimes this needs to be raised. We recommend not going above a setting of 300 (5 minutes). Under normal circumstances a setting of 180 (3 minutes) works well. Be sure to restart the segserver application after editing the seg.ini file.

[Back to top](#)

5. How do I Setup PathTrak Clients?


- I. Client user must be set up as a user on the PathTrak server.
 - A. Go to Start>Programs>Administrative Tools (Common)>User Manager.
 - B. Select the "User" menu then "New User".
- II. Enter new user name.
 - A. User name and password must match the Windows login on the user's PC.
 - B. New user should typically be part of the "Users" group only.
- III. New user must log on to the PathTrak server to create a user profile.

On the client user's local machine:

- I. The Client for Microsoft Networking must be installed on the user's PC.
 - A. Client user must be logged in using the identical username and password set up on the PathTrak Server PC.
- II. Client must be set up as a user in the PathTrak software.
 - A. Launch the PathTrak software.
 - B. Select the "System" menu then "Administration".
 - C. Click on "New User".
 - D. Add the user.
 - E. Set the user's privileges.
- III. Log in as newly created user.
 - A. Select the "System" menu then "Logout".
 - B. Log in using the new user name. (No password)
 - C. The user can choose a password when logged in.

[Back to top](#)



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[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

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[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Other News

[New Acterna Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

Acterna will soon be releasing an upgrade to the CMX-A Transponder firmware. The new v4.19 firmware release includes new features designed to meet specific customer requests, and includes fixes for several transponder problems encountered in the field.

The new firmware v4.19 includes a new DICMD function that provides a method of clearing active alarms without resetting a transponder. In addition, a hysteresis setting enhancement for alarm clears has been added that can help lead to a major reduction in nuisance alarms. The new firmware also fixes unit alarms that may now be appearing out of synch, and addresses the RF modem transmitter drift issue. More details are provided below.

Current customers using PCODE v4.18 and RCODE v4.17 can replace those older versions with new PCODE and RCODE v4.19 firmware. However, RCODE changes made are intended for use by Acterna Manufacturing and do not represent any modifications to field operation.

Firmware v4.19 New Features - PCODE

Updated DICMD operation:

The DI command has been modified to provide a method of clearing active alarms without issuing a reset command to the transponder. A second request type has been defined that will tell the transponder to reset its current alarm states before sending back the command reply. This will allow the polling master the ability to synchronize alarm states that may become unknown or discontinuous. More details about the Command Function will be available in a separate Product Bulletin for v4.19 to be distributed in the coming weeks.

Hysteresis setting for alarm clears:

The SEG2WAY "1000" command has been modified to provide a second request type that allows configuration of the alarm clear hysteresis. This feature provides the ability to extend the alarm clear to a value which will "filter" input signals that are generating a large number of alarm and clear events.

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- [Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

- [New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

- [PathTrak v2.2](#)

This number of seconds for the clear hysteresis will be equal to the current alarm hysteresis setting multiplied by a 16-bit multiplier stored in EERPOM. The maximum length of time that can be set is 10 days, however, we advise a time significantly shorter than this!

This feature is accessed using existing HEC software and the HTML diagnostics pages. The alarm clear hysteresis is manually configured using the EEPROM write command, "5753", and the reset command, "4448". The multiplier is stored as 16-bit data and is located at EEPROM addresses, 0CC0 and 0CC1, where address 0CC0 contains the high byte of the 16-bit word. If it is desired to configure a number of units with updated clear hysteresis values, the HTML macro utility can be used for the this operation.

Examples of this can be found in the upcoming Product Bulletin for v4.19 firmware (mentioned above).

Bug Fixes

Unit Alarms Appearing Out of Synch

Alarms and clears arrive in the Notifier database with the timestamp in the same second. When this condition is present the clear is often shown to have arrived before the alarm. When the user performs alarm analysis, this causes confusion as to which clear goes with which alarm; this is interpreted as a missing clear.

The above condition was verified to exist in the transponder by analysis of the data transferred from the transponder to an HEC. This condition was tested using fast and slow polling methods. It was found that in order for this apparent failure to occur, the polling cycle time was significantly high and an alarm channel was oscillating in and out of alarm. To address this issue the following changes were implemented:

1. The new firmware does not allow the internal transponder alarm condition to become out of synch with the alarm condition reported to the HEC. If the alarm queue becomes full, the transponder will not update any channel alarm states until there is space in the alarm queue to store the updated alarm state. (Note: in general, the queue should not fill. The queue filling is generally a sign of an oscillating alarm).
2. The timestamp for each alarm will be reported as the actual alarm timestamp, not the current time on the transponder.

RF modem transmitter drift

This firmware provides a continuous verification of the RF transmitter frequency lock. If it is found that the transmitter is

not locked, the modem will be immediately re-tuned to the current frequency before transmitting a response.

Customer should be watching for an upcoming Technical Bulletin on firmware v41.9. This bulletin will include more detailed information about the firmware, recommended actions and work-arounds, plus installation instructions.

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[New Software Version - NetMentor 3.0](#)

[New Vision360 OSS Platform](#)

[New MS-1200D and MS-1300D](#)

[New DSAM-2500](#)

Other News



[PathTrak v2.2](#)

MAINTAINING ADVANCED SERVICES THROUGH EFFECTIVE RETURN PATH MONITORING Using PathTrak v2.2

The continued expansion of advanced services such as cable modems, digital set-top boxes, and Video on Demand increases the pressure on cable providers to maintain a reliable return path. Recognizing the increased importance of the return path, Acterna is launching a new version of our PathTrak Return Path Monitoring System. PathTrak uses distributed scanning spectrum analyzers with advanced network-based software to provide users full visibility of the Return Path Spectrum of every node from their desktop computer. Using a host of analysis tools, PathTrak users can quickly troubleshoot issues before they impact the customer. PathTrak Version 2.2 represents Acterna's sixth release in the evolutionary improvement of PathTrak and demonstrates our continued global leadership in return path monitoring.

FASTER TROUBLESHOOTING WITH NETMENTOR INTEGRATION

PathTrak users who also use Acterna's NetMentor Status Monitoring System can now view alarms from both systems on the NetMentor Notifier screen. To use this feature, customers must be using NetMentor 2.7 and purchase the PathTrak Integration Module for NetMentor. Once installed, NetMentor's Notifier screen will show both NetMentor and PathTrak alarms. Alarms from multiple PathTrak servers can be consolidated onto a single NetMentor Notifier screen for greater visibility at the regional or national level. Using the sorting and filtering tools of Notifier, users can quickly prioritize issues related to both forward and reverse path performance.

Users can then perform more accurate root-cause analysis to see if forward path issues are causing return path performance problems.

USERS HAVE GREATER ACCESS AND CONTROL VIA SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

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[- Acterna Systems](#)

[Acterna Cable Contact Information](#)

Other News

[- New Transponder Firmware v4.19](#)

[- PathTrak v2.2](#)

To provide PathTrak system administrators with more flexibility to control which users are allowed onto the PathTrak system and what they are allowed to do, Acterna is introducing the Security Administrator suite of functions.

EXPANDING CONCURRENT PATHTRAK USERS FROM 10 TO 30

Recognizing the increased demand for more concurrent users of PathTrak, Acterna is expanding the maximum number of concurrent users to 30 per server from the current limit of 10. Key to making this expansion possible is the introduction of Security Administration. As each deployment of PathTrak is unique, the recommended maximum number of concurrent PathTrak clients is highly dependent on the system configuration and what functions the users are attempting to use. The previous maximum of 10 clients was set based on the conservative assumption that all 10 users were classified as PowerUsers and were simultaneously accessing all the capabilities of PathTrak. The new limit of 30 clients is based on the assumption that not all clients will require full functionality simultaneously. Acterna does not guarantee that 30 users will be able to exercise all functions of PathTrak at the same time, only that 30 users can log on and review alarms. To manage the demand for PathTrak data, Security Administrator provides the administrator with the tools to limit what specific functions each user can use and how many users can access certain functions at the same time. By manipulating these settings, the individual system can optimize their PathTrak system to maximize the number of concurrent users without making the system prohibitively slow.

Customers must still purchase additional client licenses (Part Number 1019-00-1146) to add additional concurrent users beyond their current limit.

MANAGE PATHTRAK CAPACTIY VIA GROUPS AND ACCESS RIGHTS

PathTrak administrators can now use the administrator tools to modify the access rights of individual users or groups of users. The group function allows the administrator to define for a "class" of users, such as field technicians, the functions within PathTrak they are allowed to perform. Administrators have the ability to limit access to all system views such as monitoring view, spectrum view, performance history view, or enhanced alarm view as well as to functions such as event log or modifying monitoring plans. Additionally, administrators can control which HCUs individual groups have access to for views and receiving alarms. This is especially useful for large systems that may have remote users only interested in certain portions of the system connected to PathTrak. Administrators can set the maximum number of concurrent users from

any group, as well as reserve a minimum number of concurrent client licenses for access by a particular group. This provides controls to ensure the "critical" system users have access to PathTrak on a priority basis.

PathTrak system administrators should consider the following factors which impact system speed when setting up user and group profiles:

- Number of HCUs
- LAN Network Bandwidth
- Number of Spectrum Views Open
- Number of Performance History Queries
- Number of concurrent users
- Usage of the FieldView Broadcast Mode
- Clock Speed of PathTrak Server Microprocessor
- Number of data points in the Monitoring Plan

ENSURE IMMEDIATE ACCESS VIA CONCURRENT USER CONTROL

PathTrak now displays which users are currently logged on. The administrator can then kick-off users from the system to free up a client license for other users. The administrator can also disable a user which prevents them from logging back into the system until they are re-enabled by the administrator. These controls ensure the administrator can allocate PathTrak access to critical users during an emergency.

DETAILED ANALYSIS USING EVENT LOG EXPORT

PathTrak stores the history of when alarms occur and clear in a file called the Event Log. Users have the ability to query the Event Log to see specific types of events for defined periods of time. Now users have the option of downloading these event log queries to a .csv file. Exported files can then be modified in compatible spreadsheet programs to perform any desired analysis of trends or event correlation. Examples include sorting events to see which nodes have the highest number of alarms or correlating the time between when an alarm occurs vs. when it's cleared to see how long problems take to fix.

CONTINUED TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP

Acterna remains committed to ensuring that our customer's investment in monitoring systems such as PathTrak keep pace with changes in the cable industry. Through regular product upgrades and enhanced integration to other Acterna systems and meters, PathTrak will continue to add new abilities to solve return path issues faster and easier.