

What's New in Ascent 2011

The Ascent 2011 software is a 'feature release' with a number of new features in addition to performance and compatibility improvements. New Ascent features include improved support for RPM and linear speed machines, machine assessment report updates, automated importing and exporting of vbz3 files into and from Ascent, a new Cumulative Pulse Count schedule entry type, Portuguese language support and the display of additional process variables on vibration charts.

This document is intended as an introduction and overview only. To learn how to use any of the new functionality, please refer to the Help files within Ascent (available from the **Help** menu). Alternatively, download the latest *Ascent Software Reference Guide* from our website: <http://www.commtest.com>.

NOTE: The Ascent 2011 software supports only English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese languages. Hungarian language support, found in the previous Ascent 2010 release, is no longer available.

RPM and Linear Speed Support

The Ascent software suite is now more intuitive when configuring RPM-based and linear speed machines. Machine speed configuration has been moved from the schedule entry/parameter set panel to the Machine Editor in the navigator list and Point multipliers are now automatically applied by vbX instruments.

Machine Assessment Report Update

The associations between Machine Assessment Report databases and Ascent databases have been streamlined, resulting in tighter integration between the two. Several key Machine Assessment Report database fields are now stored within the primary Ascent database, binding each Machine Assessment Report database with an Ascent database companion. This process ensures that only appropriate Machine Assessment Reports may be displayed for each Ascent database, and that users cannot inadvertently edit reports created for other clients. The Ascent software's backup and restore systems now also include Machine Assessment Report databases.

In addition, XML/HTML reports generated from the Machine Assessment Report tool can now be configured to include company logos.

NOTE: The Machine Assessment Report system is included only in Ascent Level 2 and Ascent Level 3. It is not included in Ascent Level 1.

Import/Export to File via Command Line

It is now possible to export a .vbz3 file from an Ascent database, and import a .vbz3 file into an Ascent database, using a standard DOS command line. These simple commands instruct the Ascent software to perform a data export or import using a standard set of instructions, thereby eliminating the need to manually open the Ascent software or interact with the software's user interface.

This ability is particularly useful for customers with large online systems, allowing them to maintain a small and efficient 'active' database together with a separate larger 'archive' database containing all historical measurements. Using the automated export and import system, data can be copied from the active database and imported into the archive database. Once transferred, these measurements can be removed from the active database using data thinning tools. This process ensures that all data is retained while preventing system slowdowns that may result from overly large databases.

When these commands are saved as a conventional Windows batch file (.bat format) these operations can be scheduled to occur at regular intervals using the Windows scheduling system.

Cumulative Pulse Counts

The Ascent software is now able to store 'pulse counts' from oil particle sensors as an ongoing 24 hour monitoring task. The new Cumulative Pulse Count schedule entry type stores cumulative values; that is, the cumulative number of 'pulses' detected over a user-specified period, rather than the 'rate' of pulses detected (per minute/hour/day etc.).

Process Variables

Numeric schedule entries can be useful tools for recording machinery process variables -- the state of various processes and components within a mechanical system as a whole -- such as wind turbine power output and speed, drive temperatures, process flow rates or any number of other measurements. When process variable measurements and vibration measurements taken at approximately the same time are compared to one another, these snapshot recordings can frequently provide valuable insight into the underlying conditions that may have resulted in a particular vibration measurement, or vice versa.

The Ascent software is now able to automatically display Average Value, Keypad, SDI (Serial Data Input) and OPC import measurements on spectrum and waveform vibration charts in just such a way, together with an indication of the time differential between the acquisition of the vibration measurement and the process variable measurement.

Portuguese Language Support

Ascent 2011 and its associated components (including AscentOPC, AscentWatcher and OnlineManager) now include Portuguese language interfaces in addition to English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian.

Languages are license-controlled and must be assigned to your CLK before they can be accessed. Contact Commtest customer support at help@commtest.com for more information. Regional language packs currently supported include:

- English
- Americas
- Europe
- China (Simplified Chinese)
- Russia

Note: Language usage may, in some cases, be restricted to specific regions.

Additional languages will be made available separately as they become available. If you require a specific language interface please contact Commtest Instruments Ltd.

Miscellaneous Updates

In addition to the previously discussed improvements, the following general changes have been made in Ascent 2011.

vbOnline setup report

- The Ascent software now includes a vbOnline setup report that will display setup details of all vbOnline devices configured within a datafolder. Information included in this report includes device serial numbers, IP addresses, the machines that vbOnline devices have been assigned to and types of sensors configured on each instrument.

vbX memory state

- When sending to, or receiving from, a vbX instrument the Ascent software now displays the instrument's memory state (amount of internal flash memory used) on the Send and Receive panels. Once the instrument's memory reaches 80% of its maximum capacity, an alert will also be displayed advising that memory use should be reduced (by receiving data into the Ascent software, or emptying the recycle bin, for example).

New Demod bandwidths and recommendations

- To help users choose an appropriate bandwidth to use on their vbX (and vbOnline) instruments, new 'recommended' options have been added to the vbX instruments and the Ascent software. The five available recommendations (from below 100 RPM to above 3000 RPM) are based upon the configured machine speed and the instrument type being used.

General usability and stability enhancements

- Various software bugs and compatibility issues identified in previous releases of the Ascent software have been resolved.