

# What's New in Ascent 2009

The Ascent 2009 software is a 'performance improvement release' with a small number of new features in addition to performance and compatibility improvements. New features include an extended internationalization engine, a Universal Plug and Play driver for USB communications with vbX portable instruments, and a new Attached File Schedule Entry type.

This document is intended as an overview only. To learn how to use any of the new software functions, 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>.

## Internationalization

Ascent 2009's internationalization engine now fully supports the software's newest features, such as licensing and the Advanced Reporting Framework. This support will ensure a smoother experience for customers using non-English user interfaces.

Languages are license-controlled. Additional regional language packs must be purchased as part of your software license to access additional interface languages. Regional language packs currently supported include:

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

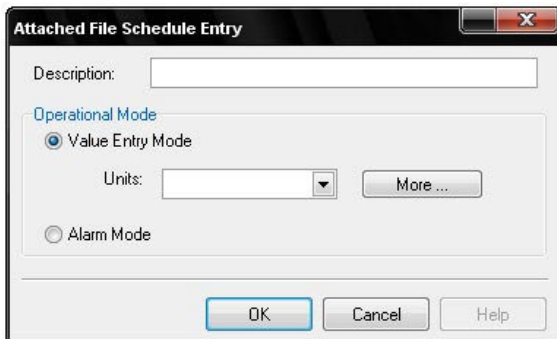
Language usage may, in some cases, be restricted to specific regions.

**NOTE:** Ascent 2009 build 9.10.149 includes only English, Chinese and Russian language translations. Additional languages will be made available separately as they become available. If you require a specific language interface please contact Commtest Instruments Ltd.

## Attached File Schedule Entry

The new Attached File Schedule Entry allows external documents, such as Word documents and databases, to be attached to a schedule entry.

An attached file schedule entry is similar to a keypad schedule entry. However, rather than being entered via a portable instrument, they are entered directly into the Ascent software. Files of any type including images, audio files, report documents etc., may also be attached to this type of schedule entry measurement for later reference and use. This functionality would be appropriate for attaching files associated with an oil analysis report at a single location, for example.



*Attached File Schedule Entry*

Typically the data associated with this function are alarm states. However, like keypad schedule entries, attached file schedule entries could also be used to collect measurements such as machine temperature or motor current, as well as arbitrary user-defined measurement values.

## USB Plug and Play Driver

The Ascent 2009 software incorporates a new USB Universal Plug and Play (PnP) driver for instrument communications with vb5™, vb6™, vb7™, vb8™, vbBalancer™ and vbBalancer+™ instruments.

Communication between the PC and instrument has, until now, been via TCP/IP over USB and subject to failure due to varying network, firewall and antivirus conditions. The Ascent 2009 software release introduces a WHQL (Windows Hardware Quality Labs) signed USB Plug and Play driver. This driver allows vbX instruments to be used as peripheral rather than networked devices, improving stability and compatibility between the Ascent software and Commtest's range of portable instruments.

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

## Database Utilities

Database utilities for updating and merging schedule entries and parameter sets have been enhanced. These utilities will help users who encounter duplicate schedule entries and parameter sets in their database, allowing them to remove unwanted duplicates and streamline their database. It will also help improve overall performance and reduce the risk of software errors.

These utilities can be accessed within the Ascent software by clicking the **Database** toolbar button and selecting **Utilities>Clean up Schedule Entries and Parameter Sets....**

## Miscellaneous Updates

In addition to the previously discussed improvements, the following general changes have been made in Ascent 2009.

### General usability and stability enhancements

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

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**Additional documentation and help material added**

- The Ascent Software Reference Guide has been updated to reflect revised procedures and new functions.

**Improved network compatibility**

- Ascent 2009 no longer requires regular network broadcasts to communicate with vbX portable instruments.