



VisualSoft Suite User Manual

VisualSoft Admin Panel 11.0



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1 VisualSoft Admin Panel

1.1 VisualSoft Admin Panel Introduction

The **VisualSoft Suite Admin Panel** includes some essential tools for managing and troubleshooting key parts of the **VisualSoft Suite**:

- Time Synchronisation and Time Zone settings of all VisualSoft computers
- Alarms, warnings and status messages for all VisualSoft computers
- VisualSoft Network Communication settings
- Troubleshooting and Support tools for the local computer
- VisualSoft Suite application licenses for the local computer
- A “Chat” utility to send messages to and from other Admin Panels on the network









The different tools in the **Admin Panel** are displayed as a series of tabs, as shown below, with Time, Alarms, Network Comms Settings, Troubleshooting and Support, Licenses, and Chat.

VisualSoft Suite Admin Panel v11.0.0 - Computer Name: D3GCRQ3, Computer ID: VSA601F68C020141807D4B80D1ADB14326

VisualSoft Suite Admin Panel


Time Alarms Network Comms Settings Troubleshooting and Support Licences Chat

Request Licence Add Licence Activate Licence Update Support Extend a Rental Deactivate Licence Transfer a Product Remove Licence Licence Report Configure Proxy Copy Computer ID

	VisualDataLogger AQZG1Z1Q00GSERYU8PG80B0R9V <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualDVR Four Channel HD AFKQ2Z1P00IF5H6C8HMD7F0FC4 <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualArchive AUVMI1B1500KG2RW28WwZ1P0CXJ <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualEdit A9PD161800CNFSD78CQI280YXB <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualEdit Eventing A6RT111500JBJNGB8GST3A0YA5 <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualEdit Professional A7XA1J1100CG28K78EYJ4W06S4 <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualOverlay Four Channel APHD3S1S00NP93KJ8WJU09024E <i>Owned: This licence is valid and permanent</i>	Support Expiry: 31 August 2023	See Details...
	VisualDataLogger B3K7171B0011F16I878VMOG8NB8VHW5 <i>Rented: This licence is valid until 31 August 2023</i>	Support Expiry: Supported for durati	See Details...

1.2 Starting the Admin Panel

The **Admin Panel** will start automatically when you start any of the online applications of the **VisualSoft Suite** (**VisualDVR**, **VisualDataLogger**, **VisualEventLogger**, **Visual3D-Inspector**, or **VisualArchive**).

The **Admin Panel** can also be started manually by selecting it from the Start menu where you will find it by clicking on  Start, All Programs, VisualSoft Suite and then Admin Panel.

The **Admin Panel** is displayed with the an icon consisting of a clock, a cog and a network connection as shown below. These represent the various different things that you can control from the Admin Panel.



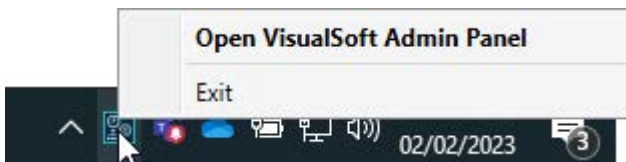
1.3 Minimising the Admin Panel

If you click the minimise button at the top right of the **Admin Panel**, then the window will minimise to the Windows System Tray at the bottom right of the screen, as shown below.



1.4 Restoring the Admin Panel

If the Admin Panel has been minimised, you can restore it to full size with a double click on the system tray icon. You can also right click on the icon and use the pop-up menu, as shown below.



1.5 Closing the Admin Panel

If the **Admin Panel** was started automatically by another VisualSoft application, then it will exit automatically when the other application is closed, but only if there are no other online applications of the VisualSoft Suite running on the same computer. If another application is still using the **Admin Panel** it will not be closed even if the application that started it is closing.

If the **Admin Panel** was started manually then it must be exited manually using the pop-up menu which appears when you right click on the system tray icon. It is not possible to close the Admin Panel if any other VisualSoft online application is still running on the computer.

1.6 Admin Panel – Time Settings

The Admin Panel allows you to view and manage the time settings of your own computer, and also of other VisualSoft computers on the network.

The next few pages explain how time is used by the VisualSoft Suite and how you can control it.

Key topics include:

- How and why data is logged with timestamps
- The importance of setting the correct Time Zone
- The importance of synchronised time on multiple computers

1.6.1 Time in the VisualSoft Suite

Timestamps and Synchronisation

Different data is logged by different computers. There may be one or more **VisualDVR** unit and one or more computers running **VisualDataLogger** or **VisualEventLogger**. All video and other data is recorded with a very precise timestamp that includes both date and time to a resolution of one millisecond. This timestamp is used to link different types of data, such as linking Cross-Profiles or Events to Position data and to the correct video image. It is therefore extremely important that the time source on each different logging computer is synchronised with the time source of all of the other logging computers. In the VisualSoft Suite, one data source or one clock can be selected as the VisualSoft Time Sync Source for all VisualSoft logging. This source might be a data feed from a navigation system into **VisualDVR**, a data feed into **VisualDataLogger**, or any of the other options listed below.

The user will select and configure the Time Sync Source when setting up the navigation feed or other system, and the selected VisualSoft application will then automatically pass this timing information around the network to all other VisualSoft applications.

The Admin Panel will display the selected Time Sync Source and show the UTC time that is being used by the logging applications. Any potential problems or conflicts will be highlighted in the Admin Panel and alarm messages will be published to alert all users.

Time Sync Sources

The Time Sync Source for the VisualSoft Suite may be any **one** of the following:

- A network time-server application, setting all of the internal computer clocks on the network. This is the **most accurate method**.
- A time signal from an online navigation system direct to all VisualSoft applications using the VisualSoft API.
- Time and date in an ASCII "Survey Data" or "Position Data" string (via serial cable or network UDP) from an online navigation system to **VisualDVR**. This is the **most commonly used method** using data sent from applications such as HYPACK, QPS's QINSy, Eiva's NaviPac, Fugro's Starfix and others.
- Time and date in an ASCII data string (via serial cable or network UDP) from an online navigation system to **VisualDataLogger**.
- The internal clock on any one VisualSoft computer, selected via the **Admin Panel**. This method should be seen as a last resort, to be used only if none of the previous methods is possible. This method will not guarantee that the time is correct, but it will still allow all VisualSoft applications to use the same time, so even if the clock is wrong all relative timing will still be OK.

Time Zones and Daylight Saving

The VisualSoft Suite uses UTC time for all video file names and for other file names created by the online logging applications, **VisualDVR**, **VisualEventLogger** and **VisualDataLogger**. The advantage of this is that it does not vary as ships and computers move from one part of the world to another, and it does not jump forward and back by an hour at the start and end of daylight saving.

On the other hand, for many users of the video and other data it is more convenient and more natural to work with displays that show local time. Some companies even specify that they require local time to be displayed in video overlay text, but there are others who request the use of UTC time for everything.

Although the VisualSoft Suite will always use UTC for file names and internal timestamp data, users have the choice to display either UTC time or local time. This works by recording the Time Zone and daylight saving setting of the Windows clock at the time when the video or data was recorded. It is therefore very important that the Windows

Time Zone is correctly configured for both location and daylight saving on all of the computers running applications in the VisualSoft Suite.

Understanding "Local Time"

Local Time has two components to it: First, a Time Zone based on **location** and second (in some locations) there is also a Daylight Saving component based on the **season**. Where you are determines a time zone as a fixed offset from UTC, and what time of year it is may add a further hour's offset for daylight saving. For example:

In Norway the time zone is UTC plus one hour (known as Central European Time), and in summer there is an additional one hour offset for daylight saving, so the combined Local Time in Norway during the summer is UTC plus two hours, known as Central European Summer Time.

In Houston, Texas the location based Time Zone is UTC minus six hours (known as Central Standard Time in winter), and in the summer months there is a daylight saving offset of plus one hour resulting in a Local Time during summer of UTC minus five (i.e. UTC minus six, plus one), known as Central Daylight Time.

Configuring VisualSoft PCs and Applications

1. Ensure that every PC has the correct location based Time Zone selected in the Windows clock settings.
2. Ensure that every PC has daylight saving enabled for places and seasons when it is relevant.
3. Double check that the two settings are the same on all PCs.
4. If sending date and time to VisualDVR or VisualData Logger as part of a survey data string, and if using that for time sync, make sure that you correctly indicate whether the data being sent has UTC date and time, or Local Data and Time. You can send either, but you must "tell" the DVR or Data Logger which it is.
5. If you want your video overlay to show local time, we recommend also sending local time (and date) in any data strings sent to a DVR. That means that when you view the data in VisualReview or VisualEdit everything will match.

If your software knows the Local Time and also has settings for the Time Zone and Daylight savings it can calculate UTC Time. So you can display and log Local Time and still have file timestamps in UTC.

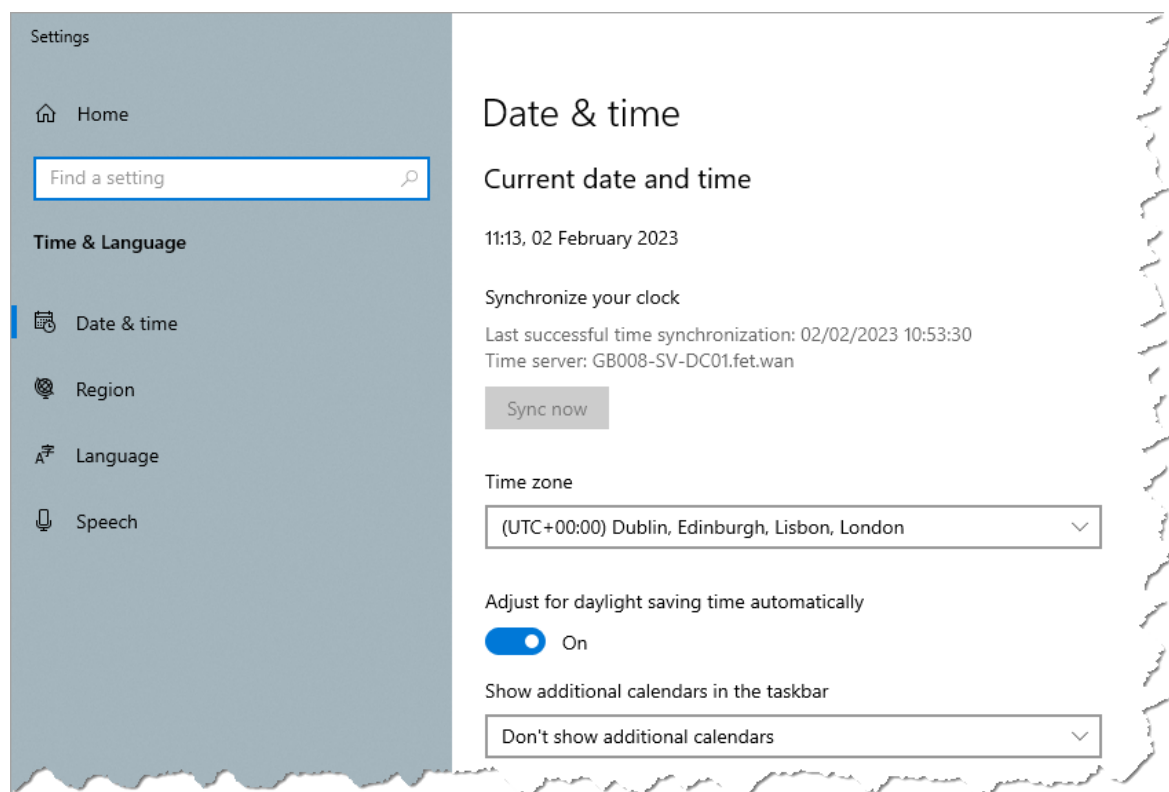
If your software knows the UTC Time and also has settings for the Time Zone and Daylight savings it can calculate Local Time. So you can file timestamps in UTC and still display Local Time.

Set the Time Zone

How to set the Time Zone in Windows 10

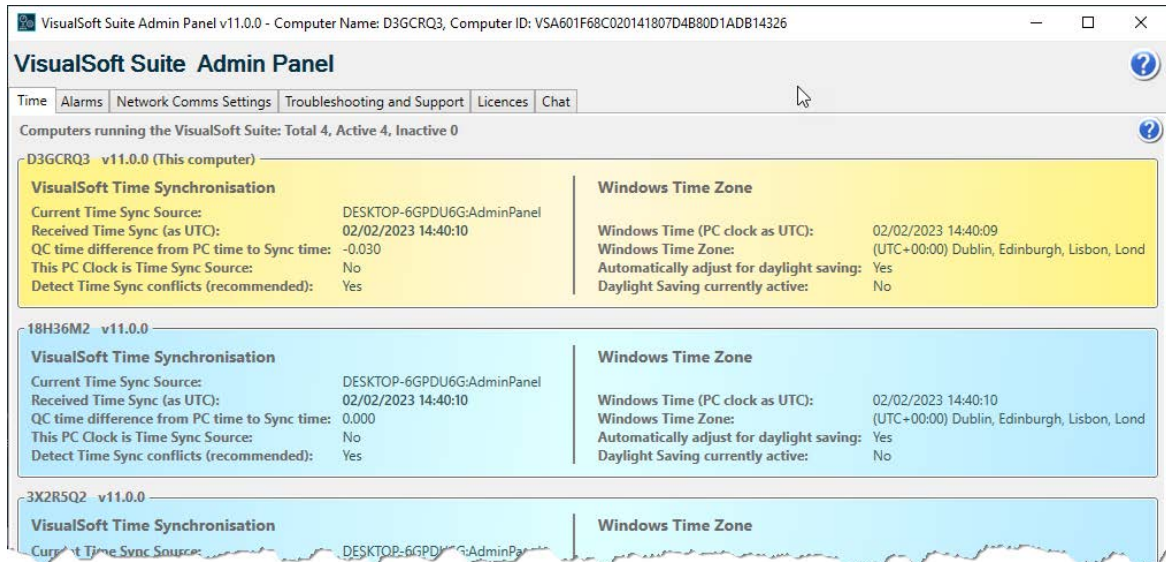
Open the “Date and Time” window by clicking on the clock at the bottom right corner of the PC display. Select the menu option to “Adjust date/time”. This will open the window shown below.

Use the drop down list to change the Time zone, and select the appropriate use of daylight saving.



1.6.2 Time in the Admin Panel

The Time tab of the Admin Panel monitors the time and time zone settings on every VisualSoft computer and provides warnings if there are any problems or potential problems. The local computer is always shown at the top, in a box with a pale yellow background, and is labelled as "this computer". Most other VisualSoft computers on the network are shown in boxes with blue backgrounds.



Which computers you can see in the Time tab depends on what applications are running on other computers and also depends on the Network Comms Settings, which are described [here](#).

A computer which is not part of the same Restricted Comms Group as the local computer, but from which time sync messages are being used will be displayed in a pink box and will be labelled as "Time Sync Source only". This is only possible if the Restricted Comms settings of the local computer are set to "Allow Time Sync commands from other Restricted Comms groups".



If you use a VisualSoft Time Sync source, then there should be one, and only one, "Time Sync Source". This might be a data string received from an external source such as a navigation program sending time and position data to a VisualDVR. Other possible Time Sync Sources are data strings being sent to and received by VisualDataLogger, or (as a last resort if nothing else is available) the Time Sync Source might be the internal computer clock of one of the computers on the network.

The Time Sync Source provides the time that all VisualSoft applications will use for the timestamps of all data records, for all video files and other file names, and for the time display in VisualDVR.

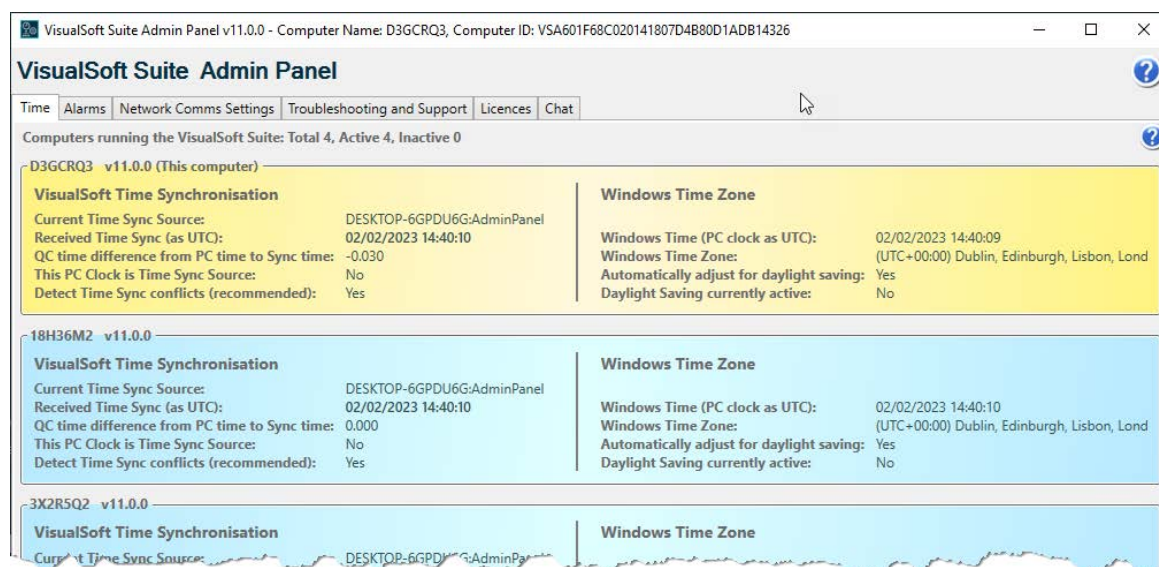
It is not essential to use a VisualSoft Time Sync source, but it is essential to have synchronised time on all VisualSoft computers. The other way to do this is with a 3rd party application, such as a network time server linked to a GPS receiver, and use this to ensure that the Windows clocks of every computer are always synchronised. Using a network time server is usually more accurate than using a VisualSoft Time Sync source via serial cable or network UDP.

VisualSoft Time Synchronisation

The left half of the Time tab shows the settings that are being used for Time Synchronisation on each VisualSoft computer.

The Current Time Sync Source is displayed with the name of the computer and the application which is providing the Time Sync information. The received time is shared between all VisualSoft computers so the displayed source should be the same on all of the computers.

The right half of the Time tab shows the Windows Time Zone and Windows clock time for each VisualSoft computer. The Windows Time Zone is used when decoding received data strings with time and date in them, and when creating new Datasets during the process of copying or transferring video and other data from VisualDVR or VisualDataLogger an offline storage drive.



Understanding the Time display

Introduction

The Time tab of the Admin Panel shows one coloured time-bar for each VisualSoft computer on the network which has communication settings matching the local

computer. The sections below explain what information is shown in these coloured time-bars.

The colours of the boxes

this computer	
VisualSoft Time Synchronization	Windows Time Zone
Current Time Sync Success	Windows Time Zone (UTC)
Current Time Sync (UTC)	Windows Time Zone (Local)
Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync	Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success

The yellow time-bar shows the details of the computer that you are using. The title of the box is labelled as "this computer". There can only be one yellow box, and it is always shown first.

this computer	
VisualSoft Time Synchronization	Windows Time Zone
Current Time Sync Success	Windows Time Zone (UTC)
Current Time Sync (UTC)	Windows Time Zone (Local)
Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync	Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success

The blue time-bars are other computers on the network where the Admin Panel is running, and from which "this computer" is receiving messages. (Computers with Restricted Communications might not be shown if their settings do not match the settings of "this computer".)

this computer	
VisualSoft Time Synchronization	Windows Time Zone
Current Time Sync Success	Windows Time Zone (UTC)
Current Time Sync (UTC)	Windows Time Zone (Local)
Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync	Is Time Synchronization from PC Sync by Time Sync
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success
Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success	Is Time Sync by Time Sync Success

A pink time-bar is used to display a computer which has Restricted Communications that do not match the settings of "this computer" but from which "this computer" is receiving Time Sync messages. This is only possible if the Restricted Comms settings of "this computer" are set to "Allow Time Sync commands from other Restricted Comms groups".

Displayed settings

GB011-WL-1201 v10.0.0 (this computer)

TRAINING2 v10.0.0

TRAINING0 (Time Sync Source only) v10.0.0

The top left of each coloured time-bar shows the name of the computer, and shows which version of the VisualSoft Suite is being run on that computer. It also has labels to help if you cannot distinguish the colours: The local computer is labelled as "this computer", and a computer from a different Restricted Comms group but which is being used for time sync is labelled as "Time Sync Source Only".

VisualSoft Time Synchronisation

The left half of the Time tab in the Admin Panel displays the following information for each coloured time-bar:

Current Time Sync Source: Training0:VisualDVR

The **Current Time Sync Source** shows the name of the computer and application which is sending time sync information to the computer shown in each time-bar. If this does not match the other computers shown in all other time-bars it will turn **red**.

Received Time Sync (as UTC): 02/10/2013 10:38:25

The **Received Time Sync** shows the UTC time that is being received from the computer and application shown just above. This is the time used for all logging and file naming in the computer shown in this time-bar. If this does not match the other computers shown in all other time-bars it will turn **red**.

QC time difference from PC time to Sync time: -15.007

On each computer the received time which is used for logging and file naming is compared with the Windows clock of that computer. The difference between the two is displayed as the **QC time difference** which is measured in seconds. This value should be stable. If it is changing by more than a fraction of a second, check that your time sync source is working correctly.

This PC Clock is Time Sync Source: No

If no other time sync source is available you can use the internal computer clock of any one (and only one) computer as the time sync source. If the internal clock of the computer in this time-bar is being used as the Time Sync Source it will be shown here.

Detect Time Sync conflicts (recommended): Yes

It is possible to turn the alarms and warnings that are normally published when a computer receives time sync messages from more than one source. You should not do this unless you are totally certain that the duplicate messages are not a problem. If the warnings have been turned off this setting will show "No".

Windows Time Zone

The right half of the Time tab in the Admin Panel displays the following information for each time-box:

Windows Time (PC clock as UTC): 02/10/2013 10:38:40

The **Windows Time** shows the time on the internal computer clock of the computer shown in this time-box. The time is displayed as UTC.

Windows Time Zone: (UTC) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London

The **Windows Time Zone** shows you which time zone is active on the computer shown in this time-box. If this does not match all of the other computers shown in all other time-boxes it will turn **red**.

Automatically adjust for daylight saving: Yes

This shows you whether or not the computer shown in this coloured time-box is configured to turn daylight saving on and off automatically each spring and autumn.

Daylight Saving currently active: Yes

This shows you whether or not the computer shown in this time-box is currently using a daylight saving adjustment. If this does not match all of the other computers shown in all other time-boxes it will turn **red**.

Problems and warnings

If the **Current Time Sync Source** is not the same on all computers it will be **displayed in red** to warn you that there is a problem.

If the **Received Time Sync** is not the same on all computers it will be **displayed in red** to warn you that there is a problem.

If the **Windows Time Zone** is not the same on all computers it will be **displayed in red** to warn you that there is a problem.

If the **Daylight Saving** setting is not the same on all computers it will be **displayed in red** to warn you that there is a problem.

Selecting the Time Sync Source

In most day to day operations the Time Sync Source will be a data string received by **VisualDVR** or **VisualDataLogger**. In that case the Time Sync Source will be selected and enabled in the setup menu for that data string in VisualDVR or VisualDataLogger. Alternatively there may be a network time server in operation, in which case that would be configured within the 3rd party time server software.

If you do not have either of these types of external time source available then as a last resort you can use the internal clock of one of the VisualSoft computers. To do this right click on one of the yellow or blue time display boxes in the Admin Panel and use the pop-up menu to choose that computer's internal clock as the Time Sync Source.

NOTE: Use of the internal computer clock as the Time Sync Source is not recommended. This option is provided only for use as a last resort. If no other, external, time source is available it is better to select one of the internal clocks than to have no synchronisation.

Windows Time Zone

The right half of the Time tab shows the settings for the Time Zone on each of the VisualSoft computers. The VisualSoft Suite uses the Time Zone of various computers when calculating UTC time from Local Time or vice versa. It is therefore very important that the Time Zone is set the same on all of the VisualSoft computers. If all the time one settings of all of the displayed computers are the same, they will all be shown using black text. If any of them does not match then they will all be shown using **red** text to warn you that there is a problem.

1.7 Admin Panel – Alarms & Warnings

Alarms and Warnings in the VisualSoft Suite

Each VisualSoft application sends out status messages, warnings and alarms. These are all displayed in VisualAlarm, in the alarm windows of applications such as VisualDVR and VisualArchive and also in the Alarms tab of the Admin Panel.

For information on the older VisualAlarm displays, see VisualAlarm.

For information on the newer displays, see the following sections about the Alarms tab of the VisualSoft Admin Panel.

Time Alarms Network Comms Settings Troubleshooting and Support Licences Chat					
Time (UTC)	Time (Local)	Severity	Computer	Application	Message
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WS-1202.
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:57	14:16:57		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WL-1201.
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:55	14:16:55		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:54	14:16:54		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	Application closing: AdminPanel (version 10.0.0) is closing on GB011-WS-1203.
Filter					
Time (UTC)	Time (Local)	Severity	Computer	Application	Message
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WS-1202.
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:57	14:16:57		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WL-1201.
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:55	14:16:55		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:54	14:16:54		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	Application closing: AdminPanel (version 10.0.0) is closing on GB011-WS-1203.

1.7.1 Alarm Display

Time Alarms Network Comms Settings Troubleshooting and Support Licences Chat					
Time (UTC)	Time (Local)	Severity	Computer	Application	Message
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WS-1202.
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:57	14:16:57		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WL-1201.
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:55	14:16:55		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:54	14:16:54		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	Application closing: AdminPanel (version 10.0.0) is closing on GB011-WS-1203.
Filter					
Time (UTC)	Time (Local)	Severity	Computer	Application	Message
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WS-1202.
13:17:00	14:17:00		GB011-WS-1202	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:57	14:16:57		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	Application started: AdminPanel has started on GB011-WL-1201.
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:56	14:16:56		GB011-WL-1201	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs have non-synchronised times
13:16:55	14:16:55		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	VisualSoft PCs now have synchronised times
13:16:54	14:16:54		GB004-LT-1306	AdminPanel	Application closing: AdminPanel (version 10.0.0) is closing on GB011-WS-1203.

The Alarm display of the Admin Panel is divided into two sections, as shown in the picture above.

The upper section of the display will always scroll to show the newest messages at the top. If there are many warning or status messages then you may find that messages are lost off the bottom of the list before you have time to read them fully. The lower section of the display is configurable and the normal setting is to not scroll automatically. This allows you to move up and down in the lower display to find and read any message that you want.

In both sections of the display, if you place your mouse cursor over a message in the list, you will see the same message in a “tool-tip” pop-up. This is useful if the column width in the alarm display is not wide enough for the full message; the tool-tip will show you the complete message.

Severity Level

Each message has a Severity level as follows:

A **Green** message is a Status or information message. It indicates that the relevant application is working OK, but that something has just happened that may be of interest.

Green Status messages are for information only. Usually you will not need to do anything.

An **Orange** message is a Warning. Read the warning message to check if it is important.

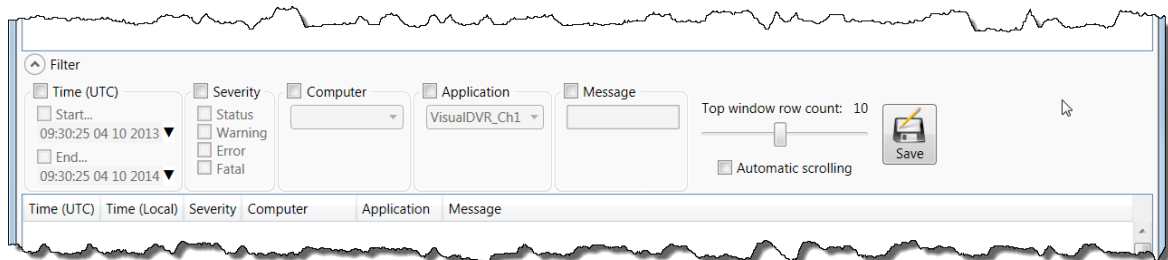
You should always check the orange Warning messages.

A **Red** message is an Error alarm which indicates that there is a significant problem. Look in the message details to read the alarm and then try to fix the problem.

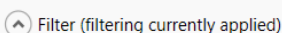
Red Error alarms should never be ignored.

1.7.2 Filtering Alarms

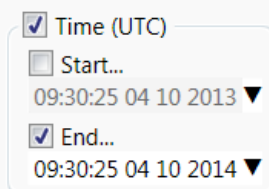
The lower section of the Alarm display has Filtering and other settings to help you find and manage the important messages, or to focus your attention on just one computer or one application. If you click the Filter button, you will see these options:



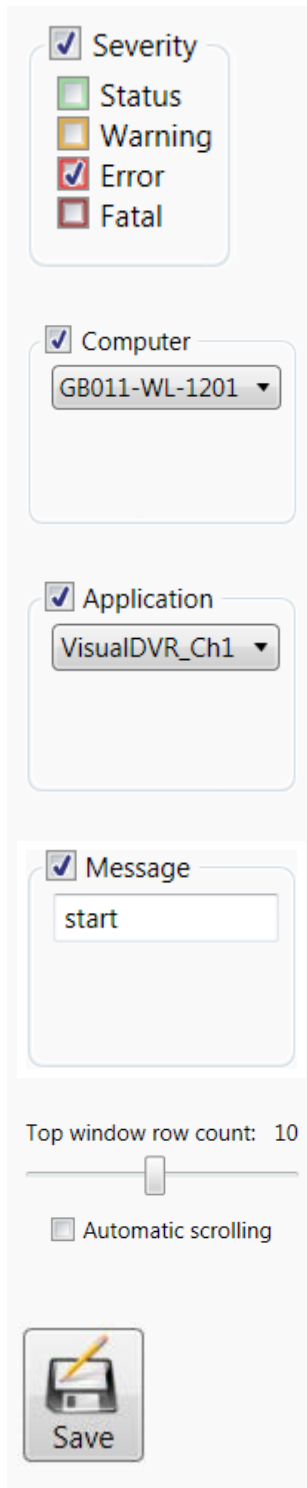
Click the Filter button to open and close the configuration settings.



The label to the right of the Filter button changes to show you when the filter settings are applied.



You can filter the messages using a start and/or end time. This allows you to focus on a time when you think that there might have been a problem, or where you want to check some status messages.



The image shows a vertical sidebar of filter settings for the VisualSoft Admin Panel. It includes sections for Severity (with checkboxes for Status, Warning, Error, and Fatal), Computer (with a dropdown menu showing 'GB011-WL-1201'), Application (with a dropdown menu showing 'VisualDVR_Ch1'), and Message (with a text input field containing 'start'). Below these are controls for 'Top window row count' (set to 10) and 'Automatic scrolling' (unchecked). At the bottom is a 'Save' button with a floppy disk icon.

You can filter the lower display to only show one (or more) of the severity levels. It is sometimes useful to turn off the green status messages so that you can more easily concentrate on the most important Warnings and Errors.

You can use the Computer filter to show only the messages from one particular computer.

You can use the Application filter to show only the messages from one particular application or program, for example to allow you to concentrate on the VisualArchive messages, or the VisualDVR messages.

The Message filter allows you to show only the messages that contain specific text. You might for example want to see all messages about the start of recording, or about file transfers.

You can change the size of the upper section of the Alarm display, and also turn on Automatic scrolling of the lower window. Automatic scrolling is always on for the upper window, and you cannot change it. For the lower window, Automatic scrolling is usually off, but you can turn it on if you like.

All of the filter settings and scrolling settings can be saved to a file so that they will be reloaded if the Admin Panel is closed and re-opened. If you do not save the settings, they will be lost when the Admin Panel restarts.

1.8 Admin Panel – Network Communications

Time Alarms **Network Comms Settings** Troubleshooting and Support Licences Chat

Communication Method

☐ Broadcast - Communicate with computers in the current subnet only. Messages will be broadcast to each computer in the same subnet.

☒ Multicast - Communicate across multiple subnets if permitted by the network hardware. (Warning: IT staff may set Network Switches to block Multicast communications.)

☐ Point to Point - Do not receive messages, and allow this computer to send messages to only one other computer with IP address:

Restricted Communications

☐ Do not restrict communications. This computer will send and receive messages to and from all computers as allowed by the Communication Method chosen above.

☒ Add this computer to a Restricted Comms Group:

If added to a Restricted Comms Group, this computer will send and receive messages to and from other computers in the SAME group.

If added to a Restricted Comms Group, this computer will NOT send or receive messages to or from computers which are in DIFFERENT groups.

This computer will always send and receive messages to and from any computers which do not have restricted communications.

☐ Allow Time Sync commands from other Restricted Comms groups - Time Sync sources from other groups will be displayed in pink on the Time tab.

Apply Changes

Advanced Network Interface Card Metrics

The Network Comms Settings tab has three sections. The upper section controls the **Communication Method**, and the middle section allows you to configure **Restricted Communications** so that things like Start or Stop logging messages only affect a defined group of computers and not all of the computers on the network. The third section is generally hidden because most users do not need it, but it can be expanded by clicking the chevron arrow beside **Advanced Network Interface Card Metrics**.

The following sections describe these settings in detail.

1.8.1 Communication Method

Communication Method

☐ Broadcast - Communicate with computers in the current subnet only. Messages will be broadcast to each computer in the same subnet.

☒ Multicast - Communicate across multiple subnets if permitted by the network hardware. (Warning: IT staff may set Network Switches to block Multicast communications.)

☐ Point to Point - Do not receive messages, and allow this computer to send messages to only one other computer with IP address:

The usual Communication Method is Broadcast, which will be restricted to a specific subnet. Use Multicast only if you are unable to use broadcast, and only if you are certain that your network hardware and software supports it.

The Point To Point option may be used to allow an individual PC to send (but not receive) communications to another individual PC. This is useful if you are running 3rd party software for eventing (or similar tasks) and need to communicate through a firewall to start and stop an encoder or to log event data.

1.8.2 Restricted Communications

Restricted Communications

☐ Do not restrict communications. This computer will send and receive messages to and from all computers as allowed by the Communication Method chosen above.

☒ Add this computer to a Restricted Comms Group:

If added to a Restricted Comms Group, this computer will send and receive messages to and from other computers in the SAME group.

If added to a Restricted Comms Group, this computer will NOT send or receive messages to or from computers which are in DIFFERENT groups.

This computer will always send and receive messages to and from any computers which do not have restricted communications.

☐ Allow Time Sync commands from other Restricted Comms groups - Time Sync sources from other groups will be displayed in pink on the Time tab.

If you need to separate different groups of PCs, perhaps because you have more than one ROV on a vessel, this can be done by adding the computers to a “Restricted Comms Group”. This is best explained by an example:

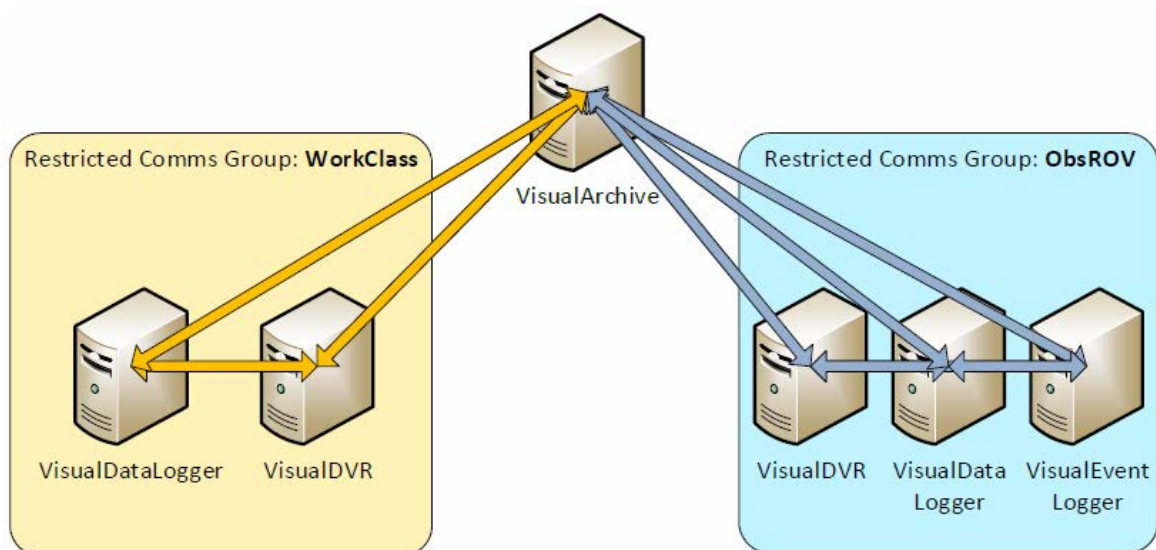
A ship has two ROVs: a work-class ROV with three cameras, and an observation ROV with a single camera. All data is to be archived by a single PC running VisualArchive, but the VisualDVR of one ROV must not start or stop the VisualDVR of the other ROV.

To do this set the VisualDVR of the work-class ROV to have Restricted Comms, and type in a Restricted Comms Group name “WorkClass”. Set the VisualDVR of the observation ROV to also have Restricted Comms, and type a Restricted Comms Group name of “ObsROV”. On the VisualArchive PC do not restrict the comms so that VisualArchive “listens” to both VisualDVRs and archives the recorded video data.

If you want to use a single time source for all Restricted Comms Groups, you can enable the option to Allow Time Sync messages from other groups.

You can also add computers with VisualEventLogger or VisualDataLogger into one or both of the Restricted Comms Groups. It is quite common for a workclass ROV to be using both VisualDataLogger and VisualEventLogger, while the observation group might only include VisualDVR and VisualEventLogger.

The picture below shows a simple example of this.



When video recording is started on the VisualDVR of the WorkClass ROV, the VisualDataLogger in that same Restricted Comms Group will also start. The VisualDVR in the ObsROV area will NOT respond to those commands. Similarly if the ObsROV VisualDVR is started or stopped, it will not affect the computers in the WorkClass group.

1.8.3 NIC Metrics and Network Priority

If a computer has more than one connected and enabled network the VisualSoft communications that are used between different applications on the network will always use whichever connection has the highest priority in the Windows OS. This is defined by the **Metric** of each Network Interface Card or **NIC**.

A connection with a low Metric will be used in preference to one with a higher Metric. Low Metric means high priority.

For most systems, each VisualSoft PC will have only one network connection and you will not need to worry about the NIC Metrics; if there is only one connection it clearly has the highest priority.

In some cases you may decide to connect a VisualDVR or other PC to more than one network, on different IP ranges. For example, this is sometimes done so that a VisualDVR can receive position and overlay data via a "survey network" but also connect to VisualDVR and a NAS drive for file transfers via a second "VisualSoft network". In this case you need to make sure that the connection used for the link to VisualArchive and the NAS has the highest priority (lowest value) Metric setting.

You can adjust the NIC Metrics using Windows settings, but this is a bit complicated. It is usually far quicker and easier to view and adjust the NIC Metrics inside the VisualSoft Admin Panel. On the Network Communications tab, click to expand **Advanced Network Interface Card Metrics** as shown below.

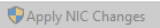
The NIC with the lowest metric, of those that are enabled and also connected will be shown first. This is the one that the VisualSoft comms will use. You can change the metrics by typing in the right hand column. If you make a change, you must click the Apply button at the bottom - and you will need local admin permissions to do that. If your current login doesn't have admin permission you will be prompted to enter account details of a user account that does have admin permission. You may need your IT staff to provide that for you.

After changing the metrics you should close all your applications and restart the PC.

☐ Advanced Network Interface Card Metrics

Messaging between VisualSoft applications on different PCs will use the Network Interface Card (NIC) with the lowest Metric value, i.e. the first in this list. To change the NIC order, edit the Metric values.

NIC Name	IP Address	Metric
VisualSoft	172.16.145.126	5
Internet	172.15.24.142	10



1.9 Admin Panel – Troubleshooting & Support

The Troubleshooting and Support tab includes some useful tools to help you when things seem to be going wrong. These tools will also help our support team to provide you with advice as quickly as possible and as accurately as possible.

All of the things on this page are designed to “help us to help you”.

Time | Alarms | Network Comms Settings | Troubleshooting and Support | Licences | Chat

Tools and Information

VisualSoft Suite Status Reports

Basic VisualSoft Suite Status

☒ Items 1 to 4

- ☒ 1. VisualSoft Program Settings (Configuration and Version)
- ☒ 2. Network Settings (IP Configuration, Shared drives, Mapped drives, Communication Method, Named Group, etc.)
- ☒ 3. Current VisualSoft AuditLog file
- ☒ 4. Video encoding Quality Profiles

Advanced VisualSoft Suite Status

☒ Items 5 to 8

5. VisualSoft AuditLog files since: 14 May 2013

- ☒ 6. File lists for all VisualSoft logging and data folders
- ☒ 7. Crash Dump debug files
- ☒ 8. Project and Dataset properties:

Windows System Information

☒ Items 9 to 12

- ☒ 9. DirectX Diagnostics
- ☒ 10. Microsoft System Information (MSINFO)
- ☒ 11. Windows Event Logs
- ☒ 12. File list for selected disk drives:

Output Folder

C:\ProgramData\VisualSoft\VisualWorks\Support

Details

One zip file will be created in the chosen folder for each selected information type. Older files will be removed automatically. When the information has been collected, the folder with the zip files will be opened so that you can send the files to the VisualSoft Support Team.

Please email the information to: visualsoft.support@f-e-t.com

☒ Use a password ("VisualSoft") for all zip files

At the top of the display there are two buttons. One of them takes you straight to our File Viewer which we might sometimes ask you to use to look inside the logging files without the need to load the files into VisualEdit. The second button is a simple short-cut which will open Windows Explorer and take you straight to the folder where we save all of our settings and configuration files. **You must never manually change the settings and configuration files unless we ask you to do so. If you make an incorrect change to one of the files your applications might stop working.**

The main section of this page, “VisualSoft Suite Status Reports” has options to collect lots of different data about your system and how it is configured. The information is divided into three numbered groups and we might ask you to select one, two or all three of these groups, or perhaps just one or two individual items. Which items we ask you to send will depend on what problem we are trying to solve, and what we think might be causing it.

When you click the “Collect and View” button, all of the selected items will be copied, and then we will create a series of zip files (one for each numbered item). These zip files will be saved into the Output Folder, which you will not normally need to change. As soon as the last zip file has been created, the Output Folder will be opened in Windows Explorer – all that you need to do is send us the numbered zip files.

1.10 Admin Panel – Licensing

The Admin Panel includes tools to help you manage the VisualSoft application licences on your computer.

For full details, see the many topics in the section named Software Licensing:


- Licence Expiry and Support Expiry
- Request Licences
- Add Licences
- Activate Licences
- Update Support
- Extend a Rental
- Deactivate Licences
- Transfer a Product
- Remove Licences
- Licence Reports
- Configure Proxy User Settings
- Copy Computer ID

1.11 Admin Panel – Chat

The Chat window allows you to send messages to other VisualSoft users working on the same network.

This may be useful when mobilising and configuring the computers if you do not have a telephone close to the computer.

Note that chat messages can be seen by all users on all computers where the Admin Panel is running.

To send a message type it in the box at the bottom of the window and press  Enter.

You can change your name in the User box at the left of the display.

When a message is received from another computer you will see it in the Admin Panel. If the Admin Panel is minimised you will see a small pop-up window in the Windows System tray at the bottom right corner of your display.

2 Contact Details

Forum Subsea Technologies has offices in many parts of the world. The VisualSoft team is mostly based in Aberdeen in the UK, but we also have regional sales staff and some support services in other parts of the world.

The following pages have details of how to contact either our sales team or our support team, by telephone, email or by post.

2.1 Contact Details – Support



Website: f-e-t.com/visualsoft

Most support questions are most easily answered by email:

Using email gives our support team time to think about your problem before they reply, and time to test the software if necessary. If your question is urgent, do not hesitate to telephone us, but even then it may be best to send an email before you call, even if only a few minutes before you call. Sending us an email will allow you to include screen captures, data files and other things that may make it easier for us to quickly and accurately understand your problems.

Support Email (recommended)	visualsoft.support@f-e-t.com
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Phone: UK & Global, during UK office hours	+44 (0) 1224 744 000
Phone: UK & Global, outside UK office hours Available for clients with a valid support contract. Operates from 17:00 until 08:30 UK time each night Monday to Thursday, and all through the weekend from 17:00 Friday evening until 08:30 Monday morning.	+44 (0) 1224 363 999
Phone: USA, 24/7 During Houston office hours this will connect you to our US team. At other times, or if the US team is busy, it diverts to the UK team.	+1 713 454 7091

2.2 Contact Details – Sales



Website: f-e-t.com/visualsoft

For address and telephone/fax details, please select the appropriate office for your region:

Aberdeen, UK	FET – VisualSoft Cumberland House Endeavour Drive Arnhall Business Park Westhill Aberdeenshire AB32 6UF UK
Sales and rental enquiries:	visualsoft.sales@f-e-t.com
Telephone:	+44 (0) 1224 744 000

Houston, USA	FET – VisualSoft 10344 Sam Houston Park Drive, Suite 300 Houston TX 77064 USA
Telephone:	+1 713 329 8273

Singapore	FET – VisualSoft Asia Pacific Rental Service
Email	visualsoft.sales@f-e-t.com
Telephone:	+65 9643 7433 / +65 9230 8138

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