Counterpoint Engineering V1.0
System Operation Manual

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Section 1: User Manual

Engineering System Overview

The Counterpoint Engineering system is for networks that need more than just a spot export to an automation system. It is intended to be used by networks that have hundreds of audio sources, and hundreds of audio outputs, all of which must be controlled in sync with each other.

1. When the engineering service program is run it takes the templates and libraries and produces a schedule of events for a day. (schedule file)
2. The engineering system looks for a spot file from the traffic system. When it finds the traffic spot files, it merges the spots into the schedule file. (merged schedule file)
3. The Engineering system then takes the merged schedule file and produces the automation file(s) to air. (automation file)
A bonus feature of the Engineering system is a “Time Finder” command. This allows the engineers to locate ‘unused’ feed time that they can then use to schedule events to be sent. To use it, the user specifies the earliest and latest times that a program must air, and what audio devices and buses are needed for it. The system calculates all possible times that those audio devices and busses are free.

The system runs on a Windows PC network, with complete hardware redundancy.

Because the files generated can be so huge, all major processing takes place overnight, automatically, at a time preset by the user. When necessary, these processes can be started manually, during the day.
The Engineering Service program is constantly running on the server, in the background of the Engineering System performing the following four major functions: creating daily schedules, merging with spot import from traffic, creating load file for automation.
Four Main Functions of Engineering Services:

1. **Daily Schedule** - Creates a viewable/editable daily schedule five days in advance. The creation of the daily schedule is done overnight. The engineering services window displays when a new daily schedule will be created, what day it is for, when a daily schedule will be purged, and the date after which all schedules will be purged from the main schedule screen:

![Daily Schedule Window](image1)

2. **Commercial Merge** – Engineering Services checks for the Spot export file from Traffic. If there are new spots it imports them into the schedule, if there is a spot change, it deletes the existing schedule and re-imports a new schedule containing the spot change (usually every 2 minutes, but can be adapted to client needs in the lists screen). The engineering services window shows the time and date it will look for a new merge file.

![Commercial Merge Window](image2)

3. **Load File** - Converts the accepted schedule into an automation file called a load file. The engineering services window displays the time and date a new load file will be created and the date of that load file. It also displays the time and date old load files will be purged prior to a certain date.

![Load File Window](image3)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Create at</th>
<th>For</th>
<th>Purge</th>
<th>Prior to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>3/20/12 02:00:00</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>3/20/12 12:05:00</td>
<td>3/12/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automation</td>
<td>3/20/12 00:02:00</td>
<td>3/21</td>
<td>3/20/12 12:05:00</td>
<td>3/12/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merge Check</td>
<td>3/19/12 17:05:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Support: support@counterpoint.net
States of Engineering Services

The status of the background processor engineering services can be determined in the engineering system at the top of screen at all times.

There are three states of engineering services.

1. **Service Status: Not Determined (Black).**

Service Status not determined will appear when the counterpoint engineering software is first opened for the day. This indicates that the software is still determining the status of the background processor. When you open the counterpoint engineering software it may take up to five minutes to determine the status of the background processor.
2. **Service Status: Running (Green).**

This indicates that the background processor (engineering services) is running. This generally is the correct status of engineering services.

It indicates that Counterpoint Engineering Software is creating new daily schedules, merging daily schedules with spots from the traffic export. Looking for a commercial merge file, load files, and exporting the daily schedule to automation.
3. **Service Status: Not Running (Red)**

This indicates that the background processor is not running. This is generally an incorrect state for the background processor. In this state the background processor is NOT looking for commercial merges, daily schedules, load files, or exporting to the automation system. If you receive this as a status contact counterpoint service ([service@counterpoint.net](mailto:service@counterpoint.net)), unless directed otherwise.

![Service Status: Not Running](image_url)
FAQ’s Engineering Services

1. Where do I define where the background service is looking for new files to import, and exporting?

The path where the background processor is looking for certain documents and sending certain documents is defined in the lists screen “Automation” tab, under the Export/Import tab.

Image 1: Lists Screen. Select Automation.
Image 2: Choose Export Paths Tab, under Site Options.
2. Where do I determine how long the counterpoint engineering system retains a daily schedule?

This is determined in the lists screen under the “Site Options” tab, in the “Options” tab.

Image 1: Choose Site Options in Lists Screen.

![Image 1: Choose Site Options in Lists Screen.](image1.png)

Image 2: Choose Options tab. In Site Options.

![Image 2: Choose Options tab. In Site Options.](image2.png)
3. Where do I determine when background service creates: daily schedules, and creates a load file?

All this is determined in the Lists screen under “Site Options” under the “Schedule & Automation Creation” tab.

Image 1: Choose Site Options in the Lists Screen.

Image 2: Choose Schedule & Automation Creation tab under Site Options.
Image 3: Note Schedule Creation Field. This is where lead time in creating schedules is defined.

Image 4: Note Automation Creation. This is where lead time for the creation of load files is defined.
Where is the timeline for the commercial merge file defined?

Image 1: Choose Site options in lists screen.
What is defined in the Commercial Merge Tab:

**File Name Date Format** – is the format of the import file from Counterpoint Traffic (for example yyyymmdd would indicate the file that engineering will import is the date).*

**File Name Format** – is the format the import file from Counterpoint Traffic has including a unique letter combination (example dateAE would be a file 20110409AE.txt)*

**File Name Time Format** – the same as file name format?*

**Extension** – is the extension that the file will have when it is imported into Counterpoint Engineering from Counterpoint Traffic.*

*The file format defined in the image below is: dateAE (yyyymmddAE) with an extension of .txt so the file name that Counterpoint Engineering will look for is 20110409AE.txt (April 9, 2011 with an AE after it and an extension of .txt)

**Primary Server Path** – indicates the location of the csi folder on the server itself, where Counterpoint Engineering will look for a commercial merge file with the above naming convention.

**Merge Check Start Time** – indicates the time of day when Counterpoint Engineering will start looking for a commercial merge file.

**Stop Merge Task** – indicates the time of day when Counterpoint Engineering will stop looking for a new commercial merge file.

**Primary Client Import Path** – the path that the user’s PC looks at to see the Primary Server Path.

Image 3: Note the fields highlighted in yellow are defined above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Option</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item ID Test Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule &amp; Automation Creation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Merge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File Name Data Format:</td>
<td>mm/dd/yyyy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File Name Format:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Subdirectory Path:</td>
<td>C:\COMMS\ED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merge Check Start Time:</td>
<td>06:00:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop Merge Task</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Client Import Path:</td>
<td>C:\COMMS\ED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Two Main Screens in the Counterpoint Engineering System:

Troubleshooting: If information is behaving incorrectly in the jobs screen it is possible it is not defined correctly in the lists screen.

Lists Screen:
Data in the lists screen feeds the jobs screen. This is where all basic data (i.e. Buses, netcues, audio sources, event types, silences, time types, automation, relays, site options (i.e. import, export, and automation information), and user options (users restrictions) must be defined in order to correctly populate the jobs screen. Once these fields have been input into the lists screen they can be used in the jobs screen to define events in libraries, templates, and the daily schedule.
**Jobs Screen:**
The Jobs screen is the first screen you will see when you log onto counterpoint. This is where most daily tasks/jobs are done. This screen is where libraries and templates are defined. It is also where the daily schedule can be accessed and edited, and available feed time can be located. All information that populates the fields within the jobs screen is first determined in the lists screen.
Navigating from the Jobs Screen to the Lists Screen: The Jobs screen can be accessed by clicking on the “task” tab in the upper left hand corner of the screen. Then choosing “lists” from the drop down menu. It can also be accessed by left mouse clicking on the Counterpoint Star at the bottom right hand corner of the lists screen.

Navigating from the Lists Screen to the Jobs Screen: The Jobs Screen can be accessed from the Lists screen by clicking on the task tab and choosing “Jobs” from the drop down menu.
Jobs Screen Overview:

General Navigation in the Jobs Screen:
Choosing a screen in the Jobs Screen: You can access any of the screens by highlighting your choice and left clicking on your mouse, either in the main menu area or by using the tabs at the top of the page.

Four Main Functions of Jobs Screen:

Time Finder - is used to locate ‘unused’ feed time that can then be used to schedule new events or move existing events (for example finding a bus for a new vehicle).
Libraries - are where all programs or vehicles are defined using a structure programs and avails. Libraries are defined with specific start dates and times. Libraries are used for ongoing programs.
Templates - are most often used for sporting events where the internal format is known, but not the airing dates and times. Whenever desired, start dates and times can be entered.
Schedules - At a pre-determined time Counterpoint automatically takes the information defined in Libraries and Templates and creates a daily schedule of all events. After that daily schedule file is created the NY Export from Traffic in Dallas merges spot information with that daily schedule filling the avails with spots. This is a merged schedule. From the information in libraries, templates, and the NY Export, a load file is created for the automation system. This is a loaded schedule. A loaded schedule file means that the schedule file has been sent to automation and has certain restrictions on editing (see below).
Schedules Screen

Two main screens within the Schedules tab they are:

The Main Schedule screen

![Main Schedule Screen]

The Daily Schedule screen

![Daily Schedule Screen]
The Main Schedule Screen:

Overview: The main ‘schedule’ screen displays schedules for the past X days (the number of days the Schedules screen retains a daily schedule is defined in the lists screen). You can access daily schedules through this screen to view or to change.

Field Definitions Main Schedule Screen (the column names at the top of the main schedule screen are defined below):
**Date** – indicates the date of a daily schedule.

**Conflict** – indicates if there is an event conflict in the daily schedule. If a conflict exists a conflict check should be manually performed.

**Merged** – indicates if the daily schedule file has been merged with the Traffic Department’s spots import, (in traffic it is called the NY Export).

**Load Created** – Indicates that a Load file has been created for the automation system for a specific day.

**Easy Access Reports in the Main Schedule Screen:**

**Get #’s** – Clicking this field populates the below fields with the below information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Merged</th>
<th>Load Created</th>
<th># Events</th>
<th># Filled Avails</th>
<th># Partial Avails</th>
<th># Open Avails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1/2012</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2/1/2012</td>
<td>2/1/2012</td>
<td>15990</td>
<td>2393</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2/2012</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2/2/2012</td>
<td>2/2/2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3/2012</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2/3/2012</td>
<td>2/3/2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**# Events** – this is the total number of events: programs, spots, avails, in the schedule for that day.

**# Filled Avails** – this is the number of filled avails the NY Export has populated (a filled avail is a spot).

**# Partial Avails** – this the number of partially filled avails populated by the NY Export. For example if a 60 second avail was populated with only a 30 second spot, it would be a partially filled avail.

**# Open Avails** – this is the number of avails that where not populated with spots by the NY Export.
The Daily Schedule Screen:

Overview: The daily schedule screen is a viewable, editable list of all events that are scheduled to air on a given day. The date is located in the top left corner. A key for color coding meanings is also in the top left corner and can be accessed by holding down your right mouse key.

3 Types of Daily Schedules:

Daily Schedule

A Daily Schedule is a schedule which has been created (normally 5 days in advance).

Merged Schedule

A Merged Schedule is a schedule which has been merged with spots from the NYC Export in Traffic.

Loaded Schedule

A loaded schedule is a schedule that has a load file created to be sent to automation. Editing of a loaded schedule is somewhat limited.