



VBrick Digital Signage

VBrick Digital Signage v4.5

Release Notes



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About VBrick Systems

Founded in 1997, VBrick Systems, an ISO 9001 certified vendor, is a privately held company that has enjoyed rapid growth by helping our customers successfully introduce mission critical video applications across their enterprise networks. Since our founding, VBrick has been setting the standard for quality, performance and innovation in the delivery of live and stored video over IP networks—LANs, WANs and the Internet. With thousands of video appliances installed world-wide, VBrick is the recognized leader in reliable, high-performance, easy-to-use networked video solutions.

VBrick is an active participant in the development of industry standards and continues to play an influential role in the Internet Streaming Media Alliance (ISMA), the MPEG Industry Forum, and Internet2. In 1998 VBrick invented and shipped the world's first MPEG Video Network Appliance designed to provide affordable DVD-quality video across the network. Since then, VBrick's video solutions have grown to include Video on Demand, Management, Security and Access Control, Scheduling, and Rich Media Integration. VBrick solutions are successfully supporting a broad variety of applications including distance learning and training, conferencing and remote office communications, security, process monitoring, traffic monitoring, business and news feeds to the desktop, webcasting, corporate communications, collaboration, command and control, and telemedicine. VBrick serves customers in education, government, healthcare, and financial services markets among others.

Summary

These release notes are for internal use only by Visix and VBrick. These notes are not intended for distribution to VBrick resellers or customers.

Enhancements

Media Handler Selectable for MP4 File Playback

The default media handler for MP4 files is the QuickTime player ActiveX control (which is a subset of the QuickTime player application). Customers have reported that on Windows 7 the QuickTime player control cannot play full HD video, 1080, but there was no way to direct the channel player to use a different media handler, such as the Windows Media Player. This problem is even larger on new operating systems, like Windows 8, where the QuickTime player control cannot play lower-end HD video, 720.

To address this shortcoming, a new utility, `mediamap.exe`, has been added to the channel player. You can run this utility to designate which media handler, QuickTime or Windows Media plays MP4 files. This utility may grow in the future to direct handling of other media types. Note that the settings maintained by `mediamap.exe` are global on the player – all MP4 files will be played by either QuickTime or Window Media – and that the content server and other players don't share these settings.

Unused Alert Modes can be Easily Removed

Customers have requested the ability to remove unused Alert modes so that no one can accidentally trigger them. VBrick now offers a screen for this purpose – you can remove one, some or all unused alert modes from a single installation. This action is irreversible (sort-of). In the Content Server's web user interface, navigate to Manage | Purge. A list of unused alert modes is displayed – unused is defined as a mode that points to only empty or VBrick marketing populated playlists. VBrick marketing message are automatically added by both Initialize and Upgrade Device.

The "Select All" button provides a quick shortcut, otherwise you can check only the individual modes you wish to purge. Once the modes have been selected click "Purge Selected Alert Modes" at the bottom of the page.

Purging unused Alert modes is irreversible in the sense that you cannot undo that action via a corresponding menu option, but Upgrade Device will always assert the stock Alert modes so customers will need to purge unused Alert modes after every upgrade.

Channel Player Descriptions Added to Workflows

Channel player descriptions are now visible in the following workflows:

- Configure | Publisher | Assigned Players tab
- Configure | Security | Users | General tab

Bugfixes

News and Event Schedules Bulletins cannot be Foldered

Users were having issues attempting to schedule folders containing News and Event Messages as a Group. There is a "Schedule All as a Group" command available when Messages are filed in a Folder. If this command is issued for a folder containing either News or Event Messages, the web user interface would report an error.

News and Event Bulletin messages are generated as multi-bulletin reports. Each configured News and Event Schedule bulletin constitutes a group of bulletins. The Manage | My Content and Manage | My Tickers pages don't understand the details of these special multi-bulletin (and multi-ticker) reports so we have updated them to prevent users from filing either in folders. News message, event messages and news tickers can no longer be placed into folders – attempting to do so causes a dialog to display stating the action cannot be performed.

Purge Unused Events is Consistently Accessible

Customers and support have reported that the Purge Unused Event Values page isn't consistently available – from the Configure | Event Schedule | Purge Unused Event Values menu. The page was intentionally transferring to the Welcome or Dashboard page if Dean Evans EMS wasn't licensed. This kind of test is meant to guard against bookmarking or direct URL entry, but the test was incomplete. The guard has been removed and now the Purge Unused Event Values page can be accessed as long as the menu option appears.

Scheduling Clamps Years to between 2003 and 2020

Customers have reported that accidentally scheduling content with far-out dates, such as 7014, causes the channel player to display a C++ runtime error dialog, interfering with normal playback. As it turns out, none of the scheduling screens were properly clamping the years to a reasonable value. Now, all schedule screens enforce a range of 2003 to 2020.

The range enforcement has been applied to the following schedule and report pages:

- Messages
- Messages for Publishers
- Tickers
- Layouts
- Video Streams
- Video Feeds
- Message Playback Reports

"&" Symbol Allowed in Web UI Import Screen

Users requested that the VBrick Content Servers Import screen allow a user to specify an ampersand in the message name because the workflow failed when trying to do so. The workflow now supports importing media with and without ampersands in the message names. The Now Playing workflow supports edit, schedule, remove, re-sequence, and group/ungroup for messages with and without ampersands in the names.

